

February 2010
Issue 02

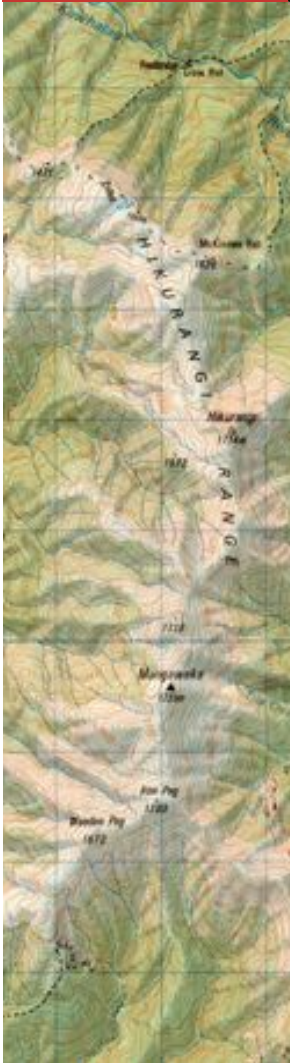
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The sulphur factory

(Photo: Adam Matich | White Island | 24 December 2009)



Upcoming club night

Introduction to Geocaching

7.30 pm, 1st Tuesdays of the month at the RSA, Palmerston North, 200 Broadway Avenue

2nd February - A BBQ and an introduction to geocaching - a stroll through the Ashhurst Domain using a GPS

First club night of 2010. Come along and enjoy a barbecue at the Ashhurst Domain at 5.30 pm and then learn or test your GPS skills in a search for some geocached items. Fellow club members will be on hand to help on this geocaching event. Bring along some meat for the BBQ and a salad. The club will provide non-alcoholic beverages. Please contact the social convener, Rochelle Beaumont for further details on (06) 354 4929.

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If you'd like to receive your newsletter by email as a pdf rather than by post then please let me know on editor@mtsc.org.nz.

Items for the newsletter: The deadline for newsletter items is the end of the month. Please include a date with trip reports. Photos are appreciated, any number of images at a resolution of 1024x768 or greater if possible. For example a 2 megapixel image is 1600 x 1200 pixels.

Happy New Year to all of you!

President's Report

by Ken Mercer

email president@mtsc.org.nz or phone (06) 356 7497 or (027) 364 6475

It's not always easy making a decision, especially when one is tramping with a Bulgarian and an Indian! We were less than one hour from the hut making our way up the Hopeless river (in Nelson Lakes NP) and running out of daylight. The side stream we encountered was very steep and running so high that there was no decision to be made - we couldn't cross.

The closest alternative would take four hours to reach with the strong possibility of another sidestream making it too unreachable. Fortunately we were carrying tents and, much to my companion's surprise, carved out two spaces in the beech forest only ten minutes from the crossing.

Next morning the rain was clearing and, after a decent breakfast, we easily made the crossing and, later, lake Angelus. We were very pleased we had carried the tents.

Thanks to Daniel and Shailesh for being such great companions.

New Members

The club welcomes the following new members. We look forward to seeing you out on a tramp or up at the lodge.

Daniel Petkov (Palmerston North)

Guillaume Brisson and family (Palmerston North)

Yvonne Callis and family (Levin)

New Maps

Contributed by Howard Nicholson

Most people will be aware that the new Topo50 series of maps is now available. This 1:50000 scale series replaces the NZMS260 series, and is based on a new projection and origin. Emergency services, including SAR, are using the new maps, and people are strongly encouraged to use Topo50 maps from now on.

I intend to coordinate a bulk purchase of maps on behalf of our club members. If you are interested in purchasing Topo50 maps at a discounted price, then please email me at maps@mtsc.org.nz. I am not sure what the final price will be, but I will follow this up with LINZ in January. Send me your contact details (preferably an email address), and an indication of the number of maps that you require, and I will let you know further details as they become known.

More information about Topo50 maps (and the Topo250 series of 1:250000 scale maps) is available from: www.linz.govt.nz/topography/topo-maps/index.aspx

Switching your Garmin GPS to the new grid system

Contributed by Adam Matich

As outlined in the earlier article, there have been changes to the mapping system we use. For those of you with Garmin handheld GPS units, there is a straightforward way to adjusting your unit to recognise these changes. If you haven't done this already head to the following link published by the Department of Conservation for instructions: www.doc.govt.nz/upload/documents/parks-and-recreation/plan-and-prepare/garmingps-to-nztm-factsheet.pdf

Waikato Tramping Club 60th

We invite past members to join us to celebrate our 60th birthday on the 15-16th of May 2010. Please send your contact details to us and the contact details of any other past members you know.

Waikato Tramping Club 60th
PO Box 685
Hamilton 3240
Email: wtc60th@paradise.net.nz
Website: www.wtc.org.nz

Looking out to sea from White Island

(Photo: Adam Matich | White Island | 24 December 2009)



Upcoming trips

TRIP GRADING

The times listed below include tramping, rest and meal stops. In assessing the trip times and grades, terrain, weather and party fitness (a party is as fast as its slowest member) must be considered. As these factors will never repeat themselves, times are only estimates. Contact the trip leader if you are unsure about trip gradings for a specific trip.

ALL	All welcome
EASY	4 hours per day, pace slower than Easy/Med. Does not relate to terrain.
EASY/MEDIUM	5 hours per day at a pace slower than medium.
MEDIUM	7 hours per day at a standard walking pace.
MEDIUM/FIT	8 hours per day at a pace faster than medium.
FIT	Over 8 hours per day at a pace faster than medium/fit.
TECHNICAL	Qualifying requirements to be announced by the trip organiser.

TRIP SAFETY

Trip leaders are reminded that trip intentions can be emailed to intentions@mtsc.org.nz, although this is not a substitute for leaving full written details with the designated contacts within the club. If you require further information on this please contact the Chief Guide. The club also has tent flies and personal locator beacons available free of charge, the club transit van will always have these so there isn't any reason not to take these on a trip short or long, they way next to nothing.

Shute's Hut

16-17 January

Duncan Fraser

Easy
355 5496

Shute's Hut is an historical stone and cement hut in the north of the northern Ruahines in a lovely low location a few hours from the road end. We plan to travel up on Friday evening and stay at the road end Komata Hut.

Just a quick nip down the big hill from comet road to visit this neat little hut and out again the next day. Duncan will be taking a fishing rod as its a great backcountry fishing area and I will be taking a book to read. However if anyone is wishing to go exploring or further afield I could be persuaded to come along too..

Shute's Hut Loop

16-17 January

Brian Webster

Fit
357 0189

Brian's even vaguer plan is to go tramping/camping somewhere near there, no need to be licenced and especially no need to be certified.

Hemi Matenga North

17 January

Adam Matich

Medium
359 2796

This trip starts at Waikanae, from where we climb the northern arm of the Hemi Matenga track. Once on the ridge we head north into un-tracked territory. If it is a miserable day then we may only head a few km north before finding ourselves a road end to escape to.

However, if is a really nice day then we will plan on a trip of maybe up to 10 km which could see us escaping the wilds somewhere on the Mangaone North Road. Given that it is a two vehicle trip we may have to put the hard word on those of you who sport vehicles with very large carbon foot prints.

Mountain Biking in Taupo

23-25 January

Tim Swale

Biking
(06) 376 6556

The Taupo area has got a wide range of great riding possibilities. The plan is to have the first day at the mountain bike park at Wairaki on superb singletrack. Other rides I am keen to do are Tree Trunk Gorge (grade 3) and the riverside track to Aratiatia Dam (grade 2).

Makorako Peak

23-25 January

Adam Matich

Medium
359 2796

This is the highest peak in the Kaimanawa Range and one of the eight highest in the north island. I haven't discussed this with my advisors yet, but at the moment the intention is to helicopter into somewhere in the Rangitikei River, or on the tops south or west of Makorako peak, and to make out way over the peak and down into the Mangamaire River to camp for the night. Next day we have a choice of two routes out. Either to Boyd lodge via the Mangamingi Stm or the Makokomiko Tops, and on the third day exit down the Oamaru River and Poronui Station. Otherwise we take the Mangamingi Stm and head up through the North arm to Cascade Hut, to exit from there on the third day by heading north to Clements Mill Road. We will cross a fair whack of private land, and so will probably be weighed down with permits. Given that we are flying by helicopter, numbers are necessarily restricted to one or two helicopter loads.

Park's Peak Hut

30-31 January

Bev Akers

Easy/Medium
325 8879

I've put this trip back onto the card but this time I'm going even if I'm on my own as I really want to get there to see the newish hut. We'll decide (notice I'm including

you) at the time, which way we'll go. It will be hot with a clear sky so the views will be great. It's meant to be a neat place, on a nice summers evening, sitting on the deck – relaxing!!! Shall I pencil you in?

Gorge Walk
31 January
Ken Mercer

Family
356 7497

If you have some friends, or children, who are "thinking" about tramping encourage them on this meander through the Manawatu gorge. We won't leave early, we won't go fast, and we'll stop for a brew on the way so bring a cup!

Triangle Loop
6-7 February
Jean Garman

Fit
354 3536

Please call for more details.

Tongariro Crossing
6-7 February
Tim Swale

Medium
(06) 376 6556

Please call for more details.

Mayor Island
12-14 February
Mark Learmonth

Medium
355 9143

Tuhua is a dormant shield volcano with a large caldera. The volcanic crater contains two lakes both near sea level. It's been a wildlife refuge since 1953 and contains the largest concentration of pohutakawa forest in NZ.

Tracks lead through impressively tall forest to both lakes plus round the rim of the crater. This private Maori owned island is administered by the Tuhua Trust Board. At present the island is closed to the public, however in previous summers it has normally been open to limited numbers who have obtained landing and camping permits. I have twice before visited the island and really keen to go again. The scenery is magnificent, the views on the crater rim track of the Islands interior and coastline are quite stunning.

The weekend would start by taking a charter boat leaving around 8 am from the Mount to Tuhua, taking a little over 2 hours. On arrival set up camp for the weekend (tent or cabin option available) then until we are picked up around 3pm Sunday you can explore, go tramping, relax or do what you please for as long as you wish. As permits are limited and the island is very popular with both boaties & trampers I need to purchase them as soon as they become available in October. I assure you this will be a weekend to remember. As the owners say it's a privilege not a right to visit this magnificent Island.

If you are keen please advise me of your interest as soon as possible. I can be contacted in the evenings on (06) 355 9143 or during the day on (027) 224 960.

River Camping
13-14 February
Howard Nicholson

Easy
357 6325

A few hours tramping, enjoying good company around an open fire, toasting marshmallows, and sleeping under a tent fly near a pleasant stream - summer camping MTSC style! We will make a final decision on which river closer to the time, but it will likely be somewhere on the eastern

side of the Ruahine Ranges. We will be taking our 10-12 year-old kids, and don't intend pushing them too hard this trip! Give us a call if you are interested in this trip.

Oroua Stoaat Line
20-21 February
Kim Fraser

Medium
355 5496

No set plan as yet, there are quite a few traps set in the oroua valley and I plan on getting a team/s together to check them. so depending on how many people are keen will determine what we do or if we divide into groups which can be done and there's a wide variety of places to check traps ranging from triangle hut, the river, track to iron gates, tunipo, umutoi streams, down to the gorge etc. hopefully there is enough people to divide into groups which can vary from easy to fit one day only, to easy overnight, to slightly longer overnight (to triangle and back). so please let me know well in advance if you wish to help out, how far you want to go and I will make a plan from there.

Mt Taranaki/Kaitake Ranges
27-28 February

Medium

Linda Campbell (06) 323 3836 or (027) 333 4493

The plan at this stage is to travel to Taranaki on the Friday evening. If the weather is suitable we will climb Mt Taranaki on the Saturday. If not we will take a walk in the Kaitake Ranges instead and try again for a summit climb on the Sunday. Thinking positively, we will climb from the northern side making our way up the 'Puffer' to Tahurangi Lodge. From there we climb the stairs, the scree and finally the rocks that form the Lizard before dropping into the crater. From there it is a short climb to the summit.

Tararua Trundle
27-28 February

Brian Webster

Fit
357 0189

Please call for more details.

Pretender
28 February
Adam Matich

Medium
359 2796

Pretender is peak 967 in the southern Ruahines and is accessible from the Coppermine road end. Pretender is much visited by the Thursday trampers, who may have even done some of the track maintenance. We head up Coppermine Stream past the hut site and near the end of the track, just before a stream crossing, climb the old trail up to Pretender, a 550 m climb. We then head SW along the tops towards Wharite, being careful not to fall off the side on one or two spiteful "I am going to lead you nowhere" tracks. Once we reach the little saddle the route is easy and the climb up onto the Wharite track system is easy, as is the descent back down to the Coppermine Stm track. It is a bit of a scramble and a bush bash in places, as the route is somewhat overgrown and not always easy to follow, but I don't expect there to be any tears before bed-time. Last time we travelled this route we had poor visibility and thrashed around a bit, but still managed the loop in about six hours. This time it will be a nice sunny trip, or I am staying home to have a good sulk!



Landing on White Island

(Photo: Adam Matich | White Island | 24 December 2009)

Trip Reports

Mangahao Flats Work Party 6-8 November by Jean Garman

Working to a tight timeline we gathered seven people together after work on Friday stuffed them in the minibus and headed for the road end with not a minute to spare. Shame about the road works round Tokomaru that held us up followed by the very bouncy Mangahao road which reduced our speed more than normal - we were still traveling along the road below the number one dam when we saw the helicopter. Thinking he would have seen us too and landed to wait for us we were rather surprised to not see him at the road end. Never mind, he turned up again a few minutes later and we scrambled on board for a 3min flight to the hut. Apparently we all came as a bit of a shock to the lone hut resident who was getting 'away from it all'. When everything was hauled up from the helipad and sorted out it was time to clean the toilet (best done at the start of a work party) then have a hot drink and a chat about what/when/how needed doing followed by a relatively early night. Wayne, our DOC man, slunk off at the crack of dawn to check out the Barra bridge for some up coming work and we all got up not long after and were ripping into work by about 7.30am. The woodshed was cleaned out, the inside/outside of the windows were cleaned and we started on scrubbing the entire outside of the hut to ready it for painting/staining. Before long Wayne was back and we started on painting the eaves and the bargeboards while he cranked up the

chainsaw to provide more light and air movement around the hut. We were all impressed with his skill in not hitting the hut or even one of the numerous dog kennels scattered around the place. The non- firewood bits were dragged off down to the river for disposal and the firewood bits were ringed, split and stacked in the wood shed. More trees would have come down if the chainsaw hadn't gone on strike and as the all important allen key was missing from the chainsaw box proved to be unfixable. Time for lunch and Dave and Fred, who had been unable to make the Friday night kick off, joined us at the hut. After lunch there was more prepping and painting and general vegetation clearance. The girlies got into incendiary mode and disposed of the excess vegetation as well as clearing back encroaching vegetation from the helipad. The toitoi was sprayed, the drains round the back of the hut were cleared and opened up again then it was time to knock off. By the time we got through drinkies and nibbles followed by a BBQ diner and chocolate cake darkness had fallen so it was outside with a few bangs and flashes to scare the living daylights out of any nearby deer, then off to bed. Another relatively early morning and we were BBQing left over sausages for breakfast. The weather was a bit more stable today so Ivan and Brian tackled putting a coat of paint on the roof. Not an easy job due to the steep pitch of the roof but a degree of safety was achieved by tying 2 ladders together (one each side of the ridgeline) to provide some secure footing. More painting was carried



Jenny getting into some spring cleaning.

(Photo: Jean Garman | Mangahao Work Party | 6-8 Nov 09)

out and the wood shed got one complete coat of paint and stain. Kim and Adam headed off down the track to Harris creek to clear any bow saw capable windfalls along the way. A bit more vegetation was cleared back from the helipad and then it was time for steak and onions for lunch. With a 2pm pick up and a pilot known for being early we packed up and headed down to the pad to wait. Fred wasn't at all happy about the noisy whirly bird but we crammed him in the back anyway. Another quick flight back to the dam and we were on our way home by about 2.30 pm stopping at Tokomaru for a well earned ice cream on the way home.

Many thanks to Jenny McCarthy, Brian Webster, Adam Matich, Dave Mitchell and Fred, Malcolm Thomas, Kim Fraser, Ivan Rienks and Jean Garman for all their hard work and to Wayne Boness from DOC for organising it all.

Makahika Track

12 November

by Royce Mills

The plan was to drive the van up the Mangahao dam road and drop everyone off so that they could walk through to the Makahika (Levin) end. Nigel and Jill were in front of us in their own car and discovered that a logging truck had come off the road, and the recovery exercise had left the road totally blocked. So it was Plan B, drive to the Makahika end and walk in and out. At least for some of us this was new territory. We made it to the viewing platform "Horowhenua Lookout" and some continued on even further. The weather was deteriorating at higher levels so there were no views and we didn't linger over lunch. There was lots of counting of stream crossings (21 each way?). This certainly is a pleasant walk in the bush. 14 in the group.

Opawa Stream

15 November

by Jean Garman

David had a plan to travel all the way up the Opawa Stream from the farmland to the Maharahara crossing. Expecting a real adventure with possible lashings of pain and suffering (waterfalls, cutty grass, stinging nettle, leatherwood) thrown in for good measure Brian and I tagged along. Due to the unknown difficulties in store we opted for an early start meeting up with David in Ashhurst a little before 7am and headed up the Pohangina valley to the Maharahara carpark. A cold wind was blowing and the day was grey and dull as we set off on our 2km walk over the farm track to the start of the stream. The mist got lower and lower till we were getting damp so it was out with the raincoats, all PVC in anticipation of the difficulties ahead.

The first bit of the stream where the stock grazed was very easy but soon the sides got steeper, it started to close in and get darker and darker. Before long a waist deep wade was involved. Round the next corner we found our first waterfall so it was back through the waist deep wade to find a little ledge to scramble up to get out of the deeply trenched stream bed. Where the terrain changed from near vertical to near horizontal we picked up a strong animal trail which kindly lead us back into the stream beyond the waterfall. From here the travel was pretty good for quite a while. Mostly in the stream which obviously doesn't flood much as evidenced by the proliferation of slippery brown rocks. The plant life was quite big and robust – or at least the stinging nettle was. As we progressed up stream more waterfalls and cascades were encountered but we managed to find ways around and/or up them without excessive drama. The drizzle had gone away but the strong cold wind was blasting up our backs so the day remained quite chilly. There was little evidence of other visitors to the stream apart from what appeared to be an old campsite at one point. The goat we saw obviously wasn't aware of the dangers of humans as it hung round for quite a while as we ate our lunch trying to figure out if we were friendly or not before deciding on the later.

As we entered the upper reaches of the stream the frequency of obstacles increased and there was a very strong incentive to get up them as a the thought of having to head back downstream was very very unappealing. It is a lot easier to climb up a slippery waterfall than it is to climb down one. The maps were frequently hauled out as we had to be very precise in finding the exact spot to leave the stream to aim for the track as getting it wrong would mean hundreds of extra metres of leatherwood to bash through. Eventually we reached a bit of a slip which David had noticed when checking out the route on google earth as a marker to leave the stream. We had relatively easy travel upwards through horopito and tree fuchsia until the last 50 m when it suddenly turned into full on leatherwood. Nothing for it but to get down on our bellies and grovel and if headway could not be made to back up and try a different line. As we moved from the steeper slopes onto the rounded top of the ridge the struggle got a little easier and then the track was spotted. All up it took us about 6 hours to come up the stream with only 10 min of leatherwood groveling at the end. We had a little climb from the saddle to the east of



Opawa Stream waterfall

(Photo: Jean Garman | Opawa Stream Trip | 15 November 2009)

Maharahara where we had popped out to the top and then it was all downhill back to the car. The rain never quite eventuated and we actually took our coats off for the final stroll across the farmland. Roughly an 8 hour day and I am still tingling thinking about it – no hang on a minute I think that is just the residual effect of the stinging nettle. We were David Harrington, Brian Webster and Jean Garman

Knights Track **25 November** **by Marion Beadle**

Following several Wednesdays of fair to very poor weather, we finally struck lucky and 20 keen trampers set off up Knights Track in warm sunshine. Nine reached Toka, despite the gale on the ridge. Knights Track has some steep sections but is a glorious route which does not seem to get much traffic. There are however several major patches of fallen branches on the track and a boggy scramble around a major tree fall.

The Camelbacks **29 November** **by Adam Matich**

We started off on the Te Araroa walkway where Gladstone Road runs into Poulton Drive. The walkway follows along the true left of a tributary of the Makahika Stream, but before it entered the bush we cut off and followed the fence line to reach the logging track which was going to obligingly lead us up to the tops 1 km north of Marquee. People seemed to be in a terrible hurry, and so it only took us 2 hours to reach the unlabeled high point at 680 m. After the logging track ran out at around 400 m we had a marked trail to follow. Fortunately someone thought to suggest we consult the map and compass because 680 is a trail intersection. If we had

sailed on ahead, instead of turning right (South) we would have ended up on Makahika. So that little adventure avoided, we headed south along the marked trail through the trees to 711 and then up through the scrub to Marquee. We wasted half an hour on Marquee because we couldn't find the ridge heading SW off to Camelback, because visibility was poor and not because of our incompetence. We will leave that to surface on another trip. We went 5 min along one spur to see it plunging off down below us, but with a promising-looking treed ridge dimly visible to the south of our position. We backed up and headed south off Marquee on the next spur, only to see the ridge-of-our-desires now dimly visible to the north of us. Damn! Our ridge started from a face on Marquee and couldn't be found from the peak when the visibility was poor.

We had a easy sidle from our second spur-of-deception to the desired ridge, upon which we began our shimmying through the scrub and the leatherwood. Surprisingly, it wasn't too bad. There always seemed to be a faint route/trail to be found between the vegetation and the leatherwood was not at southern Ruahines density. Lunch was in a little open area (4 hr 20 min) just before Camelback, which we then continued on over and shimmied down into the next saddle. The climb out of the saddle onto Pyramid Knob was back in the forest under trees, with faint animal? trails to follow. All too easy really. We were expecting worse to come. Strangely, it got better. Just over Pyramid Knob we fell onto a well-marked hunter's track which wound merrily through the forest to the bottom of the saddle just before the climb up to Scrub Dome. There we lost the track and so avoided the nasty scrubby climb by sidling, through the forest, around the eastern side of Scrub Dome, climbing all the time, until the forest allowed us up onto the top of the Dome itself. From thereon we had a 140 m climb up through the

forest to the well-cut Square Knob - Tawirikohukohu private track system. Maybe 50 horizontal metres before meeting this track system, we again found ourselves on a track which was fortunate as it was cut through a patch of excessively sociable leatherwood. It had taken us 5 hours to travel across the tops from bump 680 to the Square Knob - Tawiri track system and we were a little disappointed. Where was the ravenous, impenetrable leatherwood? Where were the tears of frustration and desperation? The cries of pain and despair, and the sitting down to have a good cry and to refuse to go on any further? It was all a bit of an anticlimax really. We did get scratched and scraped, fall over a bit, and do some crawling as is proper on a tramp, but I for one know that the Tararua has worse to offer than the Camelbacks. Never mind. David assured us that his next trip will be a lot nastier than this one....something to look forward to! We made our way around to Square Knob (1 hr) and then took the northern track down to reach the Waiti Stream road bridge (140 min) after a 10-hour day.

We were Mark Learmonth, Gary Bevens, Jean Garman, Adam Match, and David Harrington (Trip Leader).

Colenso Trig 2 December by Rita Hodson

Although the forecast was against us 15 Wednesday trampers made their way to the start of the Colenso Trig. There was a small unplanned detour to have a look at part of the new Omatane cycle trail that goes inland from 2kms north of Utiku round to Mangawaka a lovely scenic ride.

After the steepish start of the Colenso track we enjoyed the easy pace through the lovely Beech forest and flowering Olearia slightly marred by having to scramble over or around several large trees fallen on the track in different places. Although work had been done on the track obviously there is a lot more to do there. Out of the forest and into the open climb up to the tarn we had some lovely views and found a nice spot above the tarn for lunch. We watched some of the group make their way up the track to the trig with the cloud coming down making them invisible and then the cloud lifted so we could see them standing at the trig. With the sound of thunder in the distance we decided to leave the



Having a rest back on the track after crossing the Camelbacks
(Photo: Jean Garman | Camelbacks Trip | 29 November 2009)

pleasant lunch spot and make our way down a bit slippery but we all got back in one piece.

On the way home the rain arrived with a vengeance just before we approached Mangaweka so the coffee stop at the Art Shop Cafe was canned for another time but it had been an enjoyable day.

Ngamoko/Piripiri Loop 5-6 December by Kim Fraser

Well as per usual the weather interfered with my nicely planned trip so after a consultation with the only other party member we had settled on Cow creek hut as a suitable destination for a weekend consisting of swollen rivers. but after more consultation just before the trip the exec committee consisting of Adam and myself had changed plans again and decided on joining Bev and Gary (and their 3 dogs) on a trip to Tutuwai hut but with a slight twist of course (and no me taking a dog too is not the twist). so we took off in nice sunny weather and after a quick lunch at Smith creek shelter we parted from Bev and Gary and crossed the river and started a hot sweaty climb up onto the Tauherenikau ridge and along it to meet Reeves track and finally Tutuwai hut. after a lovely 7.5 hour day we were just unpacking our stuff and heard Bev outside counting aloud up to about 30. upon asking her if her sanity had disappeared she said no there was a school group just arriving on the flats below and looked like they were setting up camp. GREAT. our entertainment for the night was set and we happily watched 30 or so children come past the hut in a steady stream on their way to the loo in a wide range of PJ's, clothes, footwear etc and back again it was great obviously a first

tramping experience for most. After a surprisingly peaceful nights sleep we went back to the car via the track.

We were Bev, Gary, Adam, Kim and 4 dogs.

Totara Flats Hut 10 December by Graham Pritchard

It is nearly 9 years since the Thursday trampers last made the trip to visit Totara Flats hut via the Holdsworth Gentle Annie route and the hut then was quite some way beyond the bridge. There were a few complaints about the length of that particular trip. With the new hut now sited just over the Waiohine Bridge, I thought it would be worth another try to check out whether it was now more feasible for a day trip. Eleven trampers volunteered for the experiment. Ten of them reached the hut after three and a half hours (one didn't make it all the way – the leader no less!). The return trip was a bit slower especially the long grind up from Totara Creek to the Holdsworth track junction. Total time for the return trip just 8 hours. A poll to test the waters for putting it on the menu for future Thursday tramps drew an inconclusive response like “maybe” or “we'll think about it”. But thanks to the volunteers for checking it out. It's a lovely walk alongside Totara Creek even in the drizzly rain.

Circumnavigation of the YTTY headwaters 11-15 December by Jean Garman

The forecast was for very heavy rain Friday night so we altered the plan slightly and instead of having a nice comfy night in the YTTY hut aimed to cross the unbridged YTTY River before the rain came. All went to plan and we left the car park around 3.45pm on Friday afternoon and scuttled in along the track. A quick 10 min dinner break was held when we reached the plateau, then we were off once more. We didn't bother to visit the hut but deviated from the track to head in a more direct line to the YTTY river which we reached as the light was starting to fade.

The river was quite crossable and we found a very handy campsite in the trees on the other side. The fly was quickly put up and we had all unpacked by the time it started to drizzle. When we were all tucked up in our sleeping bags it began to absolutely bucket down. The noise of the rain on the fly drowned out the sound of the river. It rained hard all night long but by morning the rain could no longer drown out the river which roared mightily as it rumbled boulders along the riverbed. Inspection in the dim dawn light showed that it had risen over 2 m in the night and looked very very unfriendly. No going back now. It must have peaked around dawn as while we were breakfasting and packing up it dropped a little even though the rain carried on.

Getting away at 6.45 am we climbed up the Oriwa Ridge which was relatively easy going although very boggy and damp. The rain eased off around 9 am but did nothing to lesson the wetness as it was still very misty and murky with a strong wind blowing that kept everything wet and made stopping for more than a few minutes uncomfortably cold. Lunch was preceded by adding more layers and was consumed in great haste before the shivering got too much and we carried on to the Oriwa high point. From there we dived off the side along a zig

zagging ridge line which required a bit of careful navigation to start with but rapidly turned into an unofficial track. This was most unexpected as there hadn't been a track there last time we were in the area.

Life was pretty cruisey through to the YTTY peak where we left the track again and followed a rather indistinct ground trail that was frequently interrupted by windfalls. It improved a little as we dropped into a saddle and what with it being later in the evening (about 6.30pm) and the saddle having some flat ground and being relatively close to water we decided it was a good time to set up camp. Although the wind was blowing rather strongly through the saddle once the fly was up we had good shelter for a relatively comfortable night (see photo below).

Up not quite so early the next morning we didn't manage to leave till 7.15 am for the climb up to the logging roads of Thompson. A short stretch along a road then it was back into the trees again following a reasonable trail along to Mick. This far we had come without coats but the density of the upcoming damp scrub caused us to put them on once more. The track fairies were still in evidence as we headed off towards the patches of scrub on the ridge line. Unfortunately the fairies abandoned us right in the middle of a scrub patch which made the rest of it and the ones that followed rather unpleasant. Once more into open forest and the day was improving, the bush was drying out and we were starting to think about abandoning the coats when it suddenly started to rain again. The ridge was initially easy to follow but later on as it broke into many spurs greater care was required and eventually we decided that it would be easier to take a spur to the saddle at the western end of the plateau and follow the track than to navigate the ridge down to the biter end. Our navigation was spot on and it was a relief to be back on a track where the water only fell on you from above instead of being applied in all directions by the close foliage. Heads down we plodded off down the track with the rain never letting up at all, in fact it seemed to intensify as we reached the more open areas. Long after maximum saturation had once more been reached it suddenly relented and for the last 20min we could relinquish our hoods and even get changed in the relative dry back at the car. So mission accomplished and it only took about 27hours all up to do it.... best not to mention the chaffing. We were David Harrington, Brian Webster and Jean Garman



Club Information

Annual Hut Passes

Buy your Annual Hut Pass through DoC. The full price of an Annual Hut Pass is \$90 but is reduced to \$63 with your Federated Mountain Club (FMC) card discount. Jean Garman will provide you with a form to fill in which will be sent off with your cheque and FMC card (if you have one) to DoC Waikanae who will post you an Annual Hut Pass. Note that MTSC family memberships only pay one FMC sub so only one FMC card (and therefore discount) is available per family. Contact Jean at jeanandivan@value.net.nz or phone (06) 354 3536.

Accommodation at the MTSC lodge on Mount Ruapehu

The lodge is close to Iwikau Village, has mains power, heating, hot showers and is well stocked with food. Members and their guests are welcome. (Lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860).



Lodge bookings should be made by e-mail where possible (lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz). If for some reason you cannot e-mail, then phone between 9.30 am & 9.30 pm on any day. Please do not call outside these hours. Please also note that bookings are not confirmed until all fees are paid. Payment is to be made in advance by personal cheque, bank cheque or cash (in person). Don't send cash through the post. There is no internet banking for lodge fees. Contact Liz & Hugh Wilde on (06) 356 9450.

	Members	Guests
Adult	\$25	\$38
Secondary School	\$22	\$35
Primary School	\$19	\$30
Pre-school (3-5 yo)	\$10	\$10

Booking and use of the MTSC Transit Van

The normal run-of-the-mill things you need to do if using the Transit Van are:

1. Book preferably by Thurs day, and certainly no later than 6 pm Friday.
2. Cancel bookings by these times so others needing the van have time to amend travel arrangements.
3. A fly should be carried on every tramp, there is always one in the passenger door of the club van and they are available from the Gear Custodian at no charge. There is a Personal Locator Beacon, in the glove box, for people using the van to take with them.



Trip leaders and those planning trips should use this club asset. Adam Matich is our minibus custodian and he can be contacted at (06) 359 2796 or at work (06) 953 7679.

Club Equipment

We have two personal locator beacons (PLB), packs, 2 and 3 person tents, fly-sheets, snow mats, sleeping bag cover, gas cookers, size 8 and 9 boots, billies, two bivvy bags and two big tent flies. Ice axes, crampons, and helmets are also available. Food Dehydrator: ideal for drying large and small quantities of fruit, vegetables, and meat for tramping rips. Easy to use, works well, and is available for hire from the Gear Custodian. Hire cost for members, \$1 per day (no charge for PLB). Contact the Gear Custodian: Peter Rawlins on (06) 356 7443.

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the **end** of each month to Wei-Hang Chua at editor@mtsc.org.nz. Please contact me if you'd prefer to receive your newsletter by email only. Send changes of address to the Membership Secretary at P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North or email membership@mtsc.org.nz.

Club website | www.mtsc.org.nz

This includes a list of contact details and a club email address. The club webpage is maintained by Howard Nicholson and is kindly hosted by InSPire Net.

People to contact

If you would like to contact the club with general inquiries, please drop a line to MTSC, P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North and it will reach the appropriate person. If you want a particular topic discussed at Committee meetings, this is a good way to go about it.

MTSC 2009-10 Committee

President	Ken Mercer	356 7497 president@mtsc.org.nz
Secretary	Tim Swale	06 376 6556
Treasurer	Christine Scott	354 0510 treasurer@mtsc.org.nz
Chief Guide	Kim Fraser	355 5496
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Lodge Manager	Ryan Badger	027 445 1997
Lodge Booking Officers	Hugh & Liz Wilde	356 9450 lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz
Mini-bus Custodian	Adam Matich	359 2796
General Committee	David Newstead	025 576 175
	Geraldine Fovakis	356 4327
	Linda Campbell	323 3836
Imm. Past President	Howard Nicholson	357 6325