

August 2010
Issue 08

mail:
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www.mtsc.org.nz



Photo: Marie Inkpen | Waikanae Walkway | 30 June 2010

Upcoming club nights

7.30 pm, 1st Tue of the month | Rose City Aquatic Club Room, 50 Park Road, Palmerston North

3 August 2010 “Camino of St James”

In 2008 Margaret Riordan walked the Camino of St James, across a distance of over 1500km in France and Spain, along old pilgrimage routes. She began walking mid-April from Le-Puy-en-Velay in the Auvergne region of France, and nearly three months later finished in Santiago de Compostela, in Galicia, Spain. She took many photographs of the varied landscapes and towns she passed through along the way, and will share some of these in her presentation.

7 September 2010 “MTSC Photo Competition”

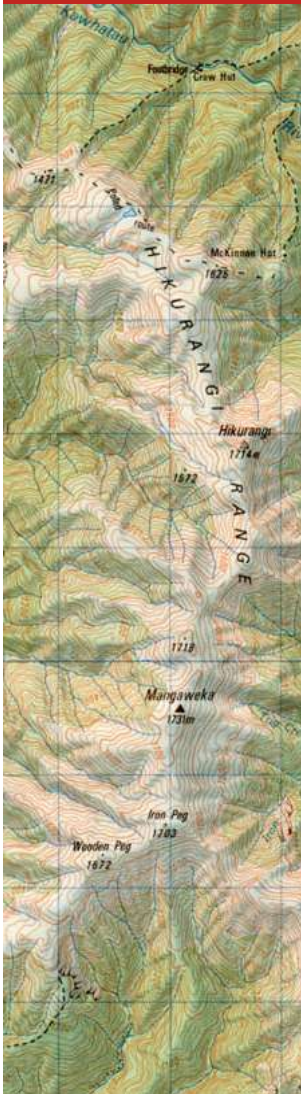
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If you'd like to receive your newsletter by email as a pdf in full colour rather than by post then please send an email request to editor@mtsc.org.nz. Change of contact details please email the club membership secretary at membership@mtsc.org.nz as well as copying the message to 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 1024x768 pixels or greater if possible. For example a 2 megapixel image is 1600 x 1200 pixels. Please include the date and an appropriate caption for the photo.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT
KEN MERCER
 president@mtsc.org.nz
 PHONE (06) 356 7497 or (027) 364 6475



SKI CAPTAIN
ROB PRINGLE
 rob.kate.pringle@gmail.com
 PHONE 06 354 0218

It was with sadness that I learned of the death on 11 June of Mr. Jack Body. Jack was already a member of the MTSC in 1949, became President in 1962-63, and was afterwards made a life member. In his later years he lived in Auckland but I was delighted to find him mentioned several times in Mary's copy of the 1978 50th Jubilee publication.

This has an impressive 130 pages and reading portions was much more enjoyable than contemplating doing my tax return. Jack pops up here and there. He seemed to have a serious appetite and a penchant for stealing potatoes off neighbouring plates as well as leading the way to the construction site of our "new hut" on Mt Ruapehu.

Unfortunately there's little more I can say about Jack and I welcome a contribution from someone who actually knew him. However, one of the things that former members such as Jack have left us the legacy of our lodge on the mountain. From modest beginnings, it was constructed in many small stages by "amateur builders, labourers, and beasts of burden". Today we use an occasional helicopter but the greater legacy of people mucking in together remains. Well done everyone!

New Members

Brent Bissett-Clark - Auckland
 Paul Carroll - Palmerston North
 Linda Darbyshire - Palmerston North

All prospective members are encouraged to go on a club trip or attend a club night before joining. This is a great way to meet current members who can nominate you. Prospective members must be nominated by a Proposer and a Secunder who are current MTSC members and have been so for at least one year. New memberships are usually confirmed at the next monthly committee meeting.

For further information or an application form please visit: www.mtsc.org.nz



I write this report with the anticipation of getting on the slopes.... soon. Kate and I recently took our 1 year old to the lodge and although he has been with us many times before, it highlighted the excitement a small child can have at simple things, like snow.

Xander has adapted well to being rugged up, having his waterproofs and gummies on and being on Dad's back in the snow, so much so he tends to "sing" his way along the track to the lodge— no matter the weather.

After experiencing both a perfectly sunny day for walking over to the lodge and a bitter wet and windy day for walking out it brought to my attention the fact that we are at the mercy of an unpredictable alpine environment.

This means that even when the weather is "bluebird" please make sure you are prepared for the worst! There may be a drying room at the lodge but there is very little protection for yourselves and your children out there on the mountain. Take it easy and be safe. There is ample information on safety in the mountains on the mtruapehu.com website specific to our local slopes. Remember to take the time to read it and plan ahead.

This week brings more progressions on the slopes of Ruapehu. At Whakapapa the Far West T-bar and West Ridge Quad are now open. The West Ridge is mainly off-piste skiing, and access to both these lifts will be for advanced skiers only. The Knoll Ridge cafe construction is moving along swiftly with the hope to have it fully functional for the 3rd week in August. And the High Noon Express on Turoa is up and running again.

I'm yet to physically get on the slopes for a ski but all reports coming in are positive about the facilities and the conditions. The 2nd week in the school holidays proved fantastic for those that managed to get up there in the sunshine. What a great start to the 2010 season.



It was too wet to go out, so we brought the snow inside for Matt & Xander to experience.

Rob Pringle | MTSC Lodge | June 2010



MTSC PHOTO COMPETITION



The MTSC photo competition is to be held at our club night on **Tuesday 7 September**.

You may recall the fantastic range of quality pictures that we saw last year, and want a chance to win a prize or two again this year. There is still time to take a winning shot, so get snappin'!

This year we are proposing some new categories, aligning to some degree with the Federated Mountain Clubs competition categories. This should reduce confusion over what constitutes an alpine or scenic image. The categories are:

CATEGORIES:

Landscapes (NZ) - Pictorial interest in NZ, no people

Above Bushline (NZ) - Predominantly alpine scenery in NZ, above bushline, e.g. rock and snow, tussock, etc., may include people

Below Bushline (NZ) - Predominantly bush, scrub, lowland to sub-alpine areas, may include people

Natural History (NZ) - NZ flora and fauna or detail, e.g. geology, ice formations, animals, plants etc.

Topical (NZ) - People or detail related to tramping, climbing, skiing etc. in NZ

Overseas - Photos taken overseas, open category: e.g. landscape, people, natural history, etc.

Entries shall not have been entered in a previous Interclub Competition. If possible, please send your digital picture entries, along with a title and/or brief description, to Howard by 27 August, on CD (call me so that I know when to expect them – 357 6325) or email (photocomp@mtsc.org.nz) so that they can be arranged into categories and tested/judged prior to the night. I can also scan slides if you wish, provided I have them by 20 August.

The 3 winners in each category will go forward to the MTSC/MUAC/PNTMC Interclub competition, which will also be hosted by MTSC this year (date to be finalised, but possibly 5 October).



Photo: Jean Garman | Between a rock and a hard place | 1st Natural History 2009 MTSC Photo Competition

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 grading 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.

Manawatu Gorge Track

Standing Invitation

David Newstead

Easy
027 4576175

I walk the Gorge Track (W to E) most Sunday mornings. This is a reminder that the invitation to join me still stands.

Starting time is usually 8:00 to 9:00 (flexible). I walk over and meet my wife at Beyond-the-Bridge Cafe, for morning tea / lunch, as appropriate, and she drives us back to the Western car park. So if you feel like a Sunday morning walk (vigorous or ambling, your choice) give me a call. Families, young children, everyone welcome.

Wednesday Trampers

4 August

Don McDonald

Easy/Medium
06 357 0222

Please call for more details.

Thursday Trampers – Sunrise Hut

5 August

Judy Swanson

Medium
06 358 4082

Please call for more details

Island Range

7 August – Saturday

David Harrington

Fit
06 839 5766

From the Upper Mangahao dam we'll cross Baber stream, bush bash up to Island Ridge, scrub bash along the tops and down a bush spur to confluence of Dick Creek. Back out via track.

Wednesday Trampers – Manawatu Gorge Track

11 August

Judy Callesen

Easy/Medium
06 357 0192

Please call for more details

Thursday Trampers

12 August

Nigel Spencer

Medium
06 329 8738

Please call for more details

Snowcraft II

14-15 August

Howard Nicholson

Technical
06 357 6325

Snowcraft II – Intermediate Alpine - follows three weeks after Basic Snowcraft, and provides an introduction to other basic mountaineering techniques. Competency to the level of Snowcraft is a pre-requisite. Depending on interest, weather and snow conditions, we may have an opportunity to sleep in a snow mound/cave for a night. We will drive to Mt Ruapehu on Friday night.

Transport and accommodation costs are approximately \$40 and \$50 (for members) respectively. Please notify me of your interest as early as possible and preferably at least a week in advance, so that we can ensure that we have the right gear available.

Wednesday Trampers

4 August

Rosemary & Ken Hall

Easy/Medium
06 356 8538

Please call for more details.

Thursday Trampers**19 August****Gordon Clark**

Please call for more details

Medium**06 359 2500****¹Mangatainoka Hot Springs****21-22 August****Tim Swale**

A long drive up to the Kawekas (about 3 ½ hours) but a wonderful winter walk with hot pools to end the day. The intention is to leave vehicles at the Mangatutu Hot Springs and walk about 2 ½ hours to TePui Lodge. We can drop off overnight gear and head on up to the Mangatainoka Hot Springs about another 45 mins. upstream for a soak.. A torch will be needed for the walk back to the hut in the dark. On Sunday if the weather is suitable for tops travel I hope to return via Makino Hut and Biv. If not we will retrace our steps back along the Mohaka to the road end and a final dip in the hot pool before leaving for home. Phone me on 06 3766556 or email theswales@xtra.co.nz if interested.

Easy**06 376 6556****Makino Hut****21-22 August****Mark Learmonth**

Please call for more details.

Medium/Fit**06 355 9143****Wednesday Trampers****25 August****Anne & Ken Rush**

Please call for more details.

Easy/Medium**06 3547 2529****Thursday Trampers****26 August****Hugh Wilde**

Please call for more details

Medium**06 356 9450****Snow Tenting****28-29 August****John Doolan**

Ever wondered what it would be like to tramp up above the snow line, find a nice spot out of the wind, dig a platform, erect a tent, cook in the fresh air, socialize and then sleep in a tent? Great views promised.

We will do all this in the Tongariro National Park: either on Ruapehu or in the South Crater. Graded technical as you will need to be confident in your ability to tramp in the snow. Gear will need to be very warm and bad weather proof.

We might even tent somewhere near our lodge if the experience of the group is limited. After all, we don't have to climb anything, just need some snow to have a tenting experience.

Contact: john.doolan@inspire.net.nz or 0274 468 740

Medium**027 4468 740**

Apologies go to Hugh Wilde for omitting the following trip report in last month's newsletter. It should have accompanied the Tarn Bivvy Photo that I have included this month too.

Trip Reports

Rosvall's Spur**20 May 2010****By Hugh Wilde**

Ten of us left Palmerston North for the Tukituki River roadend at Mill Rd, picking up three more in Ashhurst, one at Woodville and another at Dannevirke. By 09.30 we were walking upriver to Rosvall's Spur which leads from the river, rather steeply, to Black Ridge which is the ridge adjacent and east of Daphne Ridge and the Sawtooth Ridge. We intended to get to Tarn Bivvy which is about half way up Black Ridge.

At 10.45 we had arrived at the bottom of Rosvall's track, a short distance past Government Spur which also leads down to the river from Black Ridge,. It's a steep climb to the top of Rosvalls, which took us one hour 40 minutes. The track up Rosvalls had been recently cleared by DoC contractors and was in excellent condition. This track was always one of the main routes to the tops from the Tukituki River and had always been well-maintained in the 1950s and 1960s for the deer cullers, but from time to time since then had fallen into disrepair. The track up Government Spur was also well-maintained in the early days but now is mostly overgrown except for the lower 100 m or so up from the river.

After a reasonably quick lunch the party split into two groups with eight going on to Tarn Biv to find a geocache and the others heading back down to the river. The DoC sign on Black Ridge said one hour to Tarn Biv but it only took them 25 minutes. The weather was still pretty good, although Tiraha and most of the Sawtooth Ridge were in cloud, which had descended to a little above Tarn Biv.

The trip down Rosvalls took a bit over an hour, and another hour or so saw us back at the carpark.. After an hour's wait the Tarn Biv group turned up and we arrived back in Palmerston North around 7 PM.



Photo: Royce Mills | Tarn Bivvy | 20 May 2010

"Do your work here, ye Mighty, and relieve. Nothing beside remains. Around the decay of that naked dunny, boundless and bare, the lonely tussocks stretch far away." P.B. Shelley

Trip Reports

Cattle Ridge Hut

29-30 May

By Adam Matich

The weather forecast wasn't good, so we packed our warmest clothes and winter sleeping bags. But despite the MetService's dire warnings, it wasn't raining at the road end, it wasn't cold enough to stop us getting all hot and sweaty on the climbs (women included), and we missed out on the heavy down-pours of high, chaffing-index rain. We made Roaring Stag Hut in a little under 3-hours for lunch. Much heartened by the almost clement weather we managed to resist the charms of Roaring Stag, crossed the swing-bridge and started our steep climb up towards Cattle Ridge hut.

After an hour or so we needed our raincoats as skiffs of drizzle and hail passed through, but it wasn't until we were up in the open for the last 100 m of the climb that it got properly cold, wet, and windy. Up above the bush line there were one or two patches of old snow, but we decided that this didn't really constitute the snow Jean had promised us. The hut was reached in under two hours and we quickly fired up the cooker for a nice hot afternoon tea in bed. Some heavy showers of rain finally put in an appearance, so that the track down from the tops became a stream that rapidly filled Cow Lake, under the hut, to overflowing. We didn't have to go out to the water tank because the billy could be dipped into the water below the hut, through the hole in the floor of the wood-box in the porch.

Cattle Ridge hut is above the bush line and consequently is not heated, so inside it was around the same temperature as outside (9 °C), and overnight the inside temperature dipped to around 4 degrees. Without the heating it is not possible to dry out wet clothing and so taking plenty is a necessity this time of the year. Also the hut has a dampness problem, in part because the window on the down-hill side lets in more than light. In general, the hut looks to be on the slow downward spiral towards demolition. So if anyone wants it to survive, you had better cough up some time and money! Once we were in dry clothes in bed for an afternoon of sloth, none of this mattered. Enforced idleness on tramping trips is one of their great charms.

Jean had decided that we would be eating healthy for dinner, so a vegetable curry and stewed fruit and custard were on the menu. The fruit was a bad idea, because as the night progressed an unpleasant miasma accumulated in the hut. Next morning after our 13-hour sleep we finally got the snow Jean had promised us, as small flurries that didn't settle. She had fulfilled her promise, but barely; very barely. We decided not to drop off the end of Cattle Ridge into the Ruamahanga River, and instead retraced our steps from the day before. We rugged up for the trip down to the bush line, but the lower we got in the forest, the warmer it got. The river was too deep to be forded, but didn't look much higher than the previous day. For our climb back out from Roaring Stag hut we were almost in summer wear. Again there was very little rain and so our first bad-weather trip wasn't really all that bad and we made it home in time for a nice nap after afternoon tea.

We were Kim Fraser, Jean Garman, Adam Matich, and Jenny McCarthy



Photo: Adam Matich | Cattle Ridge Hut | 29-30 May 2010

Bedded down in Cattle Ridge Hut for a long hard night of sleeping

Makairo Road/Waewaera Reserve

2 June 2010

by Bernard Cobb

Ten of us left Terrace End in the minibus to be joined at the Ashhurst/Gorge car park by five more from Feilding, before proceeding to Mangatainoka and the scenic trip up to the Makairo Road End. After a drizzly start the weather fined up for most of our tramp. The four front runners went as far as the quarry, whilst the main party decided to break for lunch and return from the track junction.

Ken Rush kindly stayed with John Hunt as the back marker and returned to the minibus early on. John had his hernia operation three weeks later, from which we all wish him a speedy recovery and a return to his old form.

On completion of our tramp we all proceeded to the Lavender Farm Cafe in Mangatainoka for a very convivial coffee stop before our trip home. Yet another very sociable day out with good company, good scenery and some good exercise thrown in for good measure. What a good day out! Our thanks to Dave Pollard for driving the minibus so ably, once again.

Part way around Ruapehu

5-7 June

By Adam Matich

The weather forecast was looking dire for day two of this trip so our camping-out trip around Ngauruhoe was adjusted to staying in the nice warm huts on Ruapehu. We started from the Turoa Mountain Road and headed off along the track past Blythe Hut. Despite the ice on the track and the tarns, it was a bright sunny day and we made our way to Mangahuehu Hut (2 ½ hr), for lunch, where there were a few other people out enjoying the day as well. After lunch we continued on around the mountain towards Rangipo Hut. In a couple of places we spotted hoof prints but couldn't identify what they were from. They were cloven so perhaps Satan had been out and about. The wind was getting up a bit by the time we had done our steep climb into across and out of the Wahianoa River, and for the last half hour before Rangipo Hut the cloud came in, and it got colder and windier; a prelude of what we were to enjoy the following day.

There was snow around Rangipo Hut; quite a bit more than we had been promised at Cattle Ridge Hut the previous week. Rangipo was occupied, so the fire was well alight and Jenny escaped her fire-lighting responsibility. Too much before-dinner-port meant that cook was in fairy-land and the billy got burned, but dinner wasn't ruined and so we enjoyed our smoked chicken Thai green chicken curry and more dessert than we could manage. It rained and blew all night and our side around the mountain to the top of the Bruce Road looked as though it was going to be wet. The Whangaehu River crossing was an interesting area. Since we had been through last, debris has covered most of the bare rock that used to be visible, and over which the route travels. DoC have also rerouted the track as it approaches from the SW so less time is spent in the valley.

While the terrain is actually quite friendly, the weather was not. During the earlier part of the day we had rain driving into our faces, especially in the area round the Tukino Road. After following the track down to and across the bridge across the Mangatoetoenui Stm we climbed over a little bump to the next water coarse, which was where we abandoned the track to head across country towards the top of the Bruce Road. We never stopped for lunch, but survived on short snack breaks in order to avoid getting too cold. We certainly didn't stay dry as all raincoats have a number of large holes in them in addition to the multiple general failures that all raincoats suffer. Our navigation also faltered, and so perhaps our route wasn't as tidy or as short as it might otherwise have been. On our last major climb, which was up onto the ridge overlooking Happy Valley, some of us were really slowing down. Jean didn't accept an offer to leave the slow ones behind to die, even though she thought she knew where the key to the van was hidden. Eventually we inched our way up onto the ridge and headed along it before dropping down to the ski field just above Happy Valley.

This had been a 9 ½ hour day and some of us were feeling slightly tired. We were certainly not going to make it to Whakapapaiti Hut before dark, and it was probably at least 90 minutes away. So Ivan phoned Hugh to get the code for the lodge and we headed there for a comfortable night. This was fortunate, because some pack liners had failed, there were some rather wet sleeping bags, and a whole lot of other wet gear that we filled up the drying room with. Next morning the weather outside was miserable, which agreed with the forecast. After some discussion, we decided that we would take the responsible course of action by pussying out and take advantage of a lift back around to the van on the Turoa Road. The lift was kindly offered to us by the people who had been staying at the lodge but, were making their way back to PN that morning. Curse it, not only are we a bunch of pussies, which Rene didn't like the sound of at all, but we also feel morally obliged to help out the next transport-challenged tramper we are unfortunate enough to encounter. O well, at least we got home early enough to clean up the mess and get in the all important afternoon nap.

We were Rene van Oosten, Ivan Rienks, Jenny McCarthy, Jean Garman, and Adam Matich.



Photo: Jean Garman | near Blythe Hut | 5-7 June 2010
Crossing the boardwalks



Photo: Jean Garman | Ruapehu | 5-7 June 2010
Crossing the wide open spaces

Tunipo Track

9 June 2010

Patsy Inkpen

On a very cool Wednesday, 12 people enjoyed the magical calm, quietness and scenery created by the snow on Tabletop Road carpark and tramp in to the Heritage Lodge and on the Tunipo track, with snow becoming thicker the higher they tramped. Snow was melting on the way back creating slush in places.

Several trampers explored the work being done on the track to the Oroua river – much improved with new drainage and culverts, bog areas cleared.. Work is still in progress. Thank goodness for a small digger/tractor.



Photo: Wei-Hang Chua | Whakapapiti | 19-20 June 2010

Whakapapaiti Hut

19-20 June

by Wei-Hang Chua

We were afforded the luxury of a sleep in by our trip leader so left Palmerston North at 9am. We enjoyed blue skies and a great view of Mt Ruapehu on our way up to Waiouru. We stopped in Ohakune for coffee at the Utopia Cafe, highly recommended. Things were still looking good weatherwise as we pulled into Whakapapa Village where we got beautiful views of Mt Tongariro and Ngauruhoe. As we donned our tramping gear, John adorned his head with a certain piece of apparel, so I promptly called him "Karate Kid" in reference to the name "Ninja" which he was given when he took this same trip in September '09. You can imagine what John looked like (if not check out the Nov '09 newsletter).

The weather couldn't have been better for the easy walk to Whakapapaiti Hut, sunshine and not a breath of wind graced us through the forest and open valley stages of the track. The river was low making for an easy river crossing, and we soon came across snow as we weaved our way up the valley towards the hut. Conveniently for us, the fire was going and the hut nice and toasty courtesy of the one other trampers who stayed in the hut with us that evening.

The forecast for Sunday was for rain and strong winds, of which only the former was making itself known on Sunday morning. The familiar sound of lashing rain on the hut roof made for a slow start by myself and the trip leader. Not quite sure where the others got their enthusiasm for getting up so early (it was the weekend after all). The virtues of shortjohns polypro and leather boots were discussed with a few of our party before John suited up and headed north up the track to check out the river level for a crossing. Seeing as the side stream beside the hut had risen and resembled the river we had crossed the day before, we weren't surprised to see him return and pointing towards the Plan B exit.

We headed up the valley and zig zagged along the upper track out to the Bruce Road. Five wet and bedraggled looking trampers walking down the Bruce Road don't make the most exciting proposition for a pick up by passing vehicles, so we made our way back to the car park unassisted. Dry clothes were followed by warm food at the cafe at the village.

Great tramp and great company. We were John Doolan (Leader aka Karate Kid), Reganne Matheson, Matthew Denton-Giles, Kate and Wei-Hang Chua.

Roaring Stag

26-27 June

By David Newstead

Did not go. There would have been only two of us, and with the weather as it was there was a high chance we'd not have been able to cross the stream at the hut, particularly on the Sunday - we'd have been trapped.



Photo: Wei-Hang Chua | Whakapapiti | 19-20 June 2010

Not Island Ridge

27 June

By Wei-Hang Chua

It rained all Saturday. It rained all Saturday night. There was still the odd shower Sunday morning. As we drove towards the Mangahao road end we discussed the day ahead..... it rapidly became apparent that most of us didn't think the Baber Stream would be crossable so we wouldn't be able to access Island Ridge.

Rather than drive all the way to the No 1 dam then walk for 20 odd minutes to confirm this we switched to plan B - a stroll along the Te Araroa walkway from the Managahao Road toward Makahika. This appealed as none of us had set foot on this section of the walkway before and it didn't involve hours of thrashing around in wet scrub. We wanted to get to a point almost at the other end that some of us had reached on the camelbacks trip last year so we could say we had walked all of this section of the walkway. Unfortunately the sign said it was 6-7 hours to the other end and as daylight is strictly rationed at this time of year we figured we probably wouldn't make it unless we wanted to finish in the dark.

A little after 8.30am we set off, it was only raining very lightly and there was very little wind. We were a tad over dressed in longjohns and PVC type parkas (to armour ourselves against the Island Ridge scrub that we were no longer going anywhere near) but better over dressed than under dressed. We rapidly covered the undulating section and reached some pretty little streams then headed up and over a high point taking in the impressive view of pearly grey nothingness from the various lookouts. The track then took a rapid descent into the valley below and followed along it at a gentler gradient. At about lunch time we reached a nice clearing with a toilet and a stone cairn marking the opening of the track so we had lunch.

A quick wander a little bit further along brought us to where we had been before so with a sense of completion we turned around and headed back. The weather had cleared somewhat so it was off with coats for the return journey although as we climbed back up onto the high point we were shrouded in mist and the littlest of winds caused large drops of water to ambush us from above. The views remained non-existent but the bush was very pleasant and there were a variety of fungi ranging from white to yellow to orange to blue and even green to look at along the way.

Back at the ute just after 4pm we felt like we had managed a good dollop of exercise even if Island Ridge has to wait for a drier day. We were David Harrington (leader), Brian Webster, Jenny McCarthy, Adam Matich and Jean Garman.



Photo: Jean Garman | Rene on a Swing Bridge, Ruapehu | 5-7 June

Waikanae Walkway

30th June

By Marie Inkpen

The 20 Wednesday trampers were very lucky with the weather, we started our walk at the beach end and headed along the Waikanae river, alot of the trampers were pleasantly surprised that this walkway existed at Waikanae. We made it to the motorway and then had a lovely lunch stop at the Otaihanga Domain at the picnic tables. We then had a brief walk around the estuary/Lagoons and were lucky to see the swan sitting on Henrietta eggs and read about the lovely love story of three swans. <http://www.kapitibirdtours.co.nz/Newsletters/Mar10.pdf>.

Powell Hut

1 July

By John Thornley

A total of sixteen trampers made it to Powell Hut in south-westerly conditions – calm on the lower slopes, but unpleasantly cold below the hut. As the tops were covered in cloud and windblown, we went no higher. While there was no snow around, icicles hung from the bushes around the hut. There was no significant rainfall, and we relished the sunlight patterns breaking through the bush. We got down in good time to buy icecreams at our favoured shop in the SW corner of Masterton, noting that prices for cone servings have more than doubled over the last 4 years!

Moerangi & Roger's Huts 3-4th July Mark Learmonth

This trip was in the Whirinaki Forest Park, a solid 4.5 hr drive; so we left town nice and early (6 a.m.) as we weren't really sure how long our day would be, the tramp being 22 km long. However, the early start enabled a solid breakfast in Taupo on the way. Because the Minginui road end is not considered a safe place to leave a vehicle, we were dropped at the road end by Garry, from "Whirinaki Forest Holidays".

We started walking at 11 a.m. and after 2 hours of steady tramping we had climbed from 390 to around 840 m ASL, to our lunch spot, with only another 110 m to climb to get to the highest point of the trip. Had we started an hour earlier, we might have made it to the picnic table in the sunny clearing on the southern side of Moerangi Peak. There is a clearing on the northern side as well. All the way, the track is safe and relatively easy, and is sheltered in the lush forest. For all that the track is gentle, the terrain is not. Even though the Whirinaki Forest Park is not very high, some of the terrain is very steep.

Our descent from the highest point of the weekend (950 m) down to Moerangi Hut probably only took an hour (4 hr in total). Like all of the huts in this park, it was clean and tidy and is in a grassy clearing overlooking the stream. The signpost said 3 hours to Rogers Hut, which would get us there in the dark (6 p.m.), so we increased our pace as we headed along the new mountain bike track that sidles, sometimes quite high, above Moerangi Stream. Occasionally, down in the stream we could see track markers belonging to the original tramping route, which criss-crosses the stream.

We were glad to avoid the old, seriously-wet tramping track. In our haste we managed to reach Roger's Hut in only two hours, so we had a bit of day light to spare (6-hour day). Roger's has a wood burner and a modest amount of fire wood; given that this is a leaky (poorly insulated) old hut we were glad of the fire. Next day we were a bit more relaxed about our times and so took a bit longer to get back to the road end (6.5 hr), which made it easier for us to enjoy the forest. Also the route seemed easier in the reverse direction. We were Adam Matich, Gary Bevins, and Mark Learmonth



Photo: Bev Akers | Wednesday Walkers on Deadman's Track | 16 June

Trip Photos June/July

BEECHLEAVES AUGUST 2010



Photo: Adam Matich | Lunch Spot Mangahao - Makahika



Photo: Howard Nicholson | Peter Bowker brings his own bedding to the lodge



Photo: Adam Matich | Jean Garman – too much chocolate?? | Cattle Ridge



Photo: Howard Nicholson | Ryan removing anything that was surplus to requirements ie. Rob's arm



Photo: Adam Matich | Admiring the particularly cloudy clouds above | Mangahao - Makahika



Photo: Howard Nicholson | The Yellow Room | MTSC Lodge



Photo: Adam Matich | Crossing a tributary of the Blackwood Stream | Mangahao - Makahika



Photo: Adam Matich | Minginui Road End | Moerangi-Rogers Hut

Anne River Hut - StJames Walkway (www.doc.govt.nz)

The Anne River Hut, a 14-bunk hut on the popular St James Walkway, was razed to the ground by fire around 1-2 July 2010 says the Department of Conservation (DOC). DOC staff visited the scene on 7 July with NZ Fire Service and NZ Police, after trampers reported the fire on 4 July. "A fire investigation report is being prepared by NZ Fire Service, but we believe that it's human error rather than a deliberate act that caused the fire," said Ronan Grew, programme manager visitor assets. "Our scene examination indicates the possible cause may have been hot ashes left in the ash bucket on front veranda - within five metres of the front door of the hut. It does reinforce the message that ashes should be disposed of properly - it's a simple thing to do but a costly result." The Department will be seeking funding for a replacement and expect it take at least 12 months to fund, design and build a new hut. People intending to walk the walkway can stay in Anne Cullers Hut nearby but, as this is only a four-bunk hut, are advised to carry a tent.



Photo: DOC | The Remains of Anne River Hut | July 2010

CAUTION REQUIRED

Although this incident hasn't occurred in our neck of the woods it does highlight the necessity to exercise extreme caution when using huts and other facilities that are available to us. As I am sure most of you are aware of the time and effort it takes to reassemble such valuable assets.

Expression of interest in Te Potae O Awarua Volunteer Stoat Lines

The invaluable help given to us by our keen volunteers has helped buoy the project along. We've had increased reports of whio (blue duck) sightings in the Ruahine Ranges lately, which is an indicator that our predator trapping is having a positive impact! On top of that, two kiwi chicks were recently released back into our project site under Operation Nest Egg (ONE), giving the Ruahine kiwi population a further little boost in their numbers.

Stoat numbers were unusually high all around the country this year, so hopefully our traps were able to keep them at bay. To date, 31 weasels and 521 stoats have been caught since the inception of the project in 2007, along with 687 rodents as by-kill. 61 new DOC 200 traps were installed around Colenso Lake and down to Iron Bark hut this year, and already we've picked up 18 stoats and 8 rats within the last two checks. We've laid out some self-setting Henry traps in the more inaccessible areas too, but have not had the chance to check these yet.

We're currently in the process of writing funding applications for the project, and if funding is successfully obtained the trips will re-commence from October 2010. The trips are always planned for the last weekend of the month, but this may change depending on the weather and flying conditions at that point in time.

We need four volunteers to do the main Te Potae loop (Waiokotore - Ruahine Corner - Colenso); this trip takes place over a full weekend (Saturday & Sunday) and volunteers get flown in on Saturday morning and out on Sunday afternoon. We also require two more volunteers who can do the stoat line from Colenso Hut to Iron Bark Hut, and this trip takes place over a Sunday through to Monday. Volunteers on this trip get flown in on a Sunday afternoon, and walk out via Iron Bark Hut to Mokai Station on a Monday (or, alternatively, staying overnight in Iron Bark Hut and walking out on Tuesday).

Please indicate your interest and availability to participate in these monthly trips; preference will be given to those who have been on standby, or who haven't been able to make a trip yet (so please indicate). Otherwise, first in first served. And don't forget, a good level of physical fitness is required. CONTACT: Chau-Phing Email: cong@doc.govt.nz



Photo: DOC | Aorangi-Awarua Trust members Tama Wipaki (l) and Richard Steedman(r), with Digby Werthmuller (centre) at the recent kiwi chick release



Photo: DOC | Baby Whio

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 emailed to Liz and Hugh Wilde lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz. If for some reason you cannot email, please phone 06 356 9450. To confirm your booking, payment must be made in advance by cheque, or cash (in person) to 179 Cook St, Palmerston North 4410. Internet payment is not available for lodge fees.

	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 Thursday, 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 Kate Pringle 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 2010-11 Committee

President	Ken Mercer	06 356 7497 president@mtsc.org.nz
Secretary	Tim Swale	06 376 6556
Treasurer	Christine Scott	06 354 0510 treasurer@mtsc.org.nz
Chief Guide	Kim Fraser	06 355 5496
Day Trip Convenor	Bev Akers	06 325 8879
Membership Sec.	Jenny McCarthy	06 376 8838 membership@mtsc.org.nz
Newsletter Editor	Kate Pringle	06 354 0218 editor@mtsc.org.nz
Social Convenor	Lynda Campbell	06 323 3836
Ski Captain	Rob Pringle	06 354 0218
Lodge Manager	Ryan Badger	027445 997
Lodge Bookings	Hugh & Liz Wilde	06 356 9450
Mini-Bus Custodian	Adam Matich	06 359 2796
General Committee	David Newstead	0274576175
	Hillary Hurst	021343451
	Howard Nicholson	06 357 6325