

UPCOMING CLUB NIGHTS – DETAILS ON PAGE 3

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

5 APRIL 2011 | **3 MAY 2011**

New Members

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

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If you would 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.

The deadline for newsletter contributions is @ the 1st week 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 & an appropriate caption for the photo, including names of people.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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



Firstly: Happiness is: slipping your feet into your well fitting tramping boots at the start of a tramp.

Late last year, prompted by Tony Gates and on behalf of the MTSC, I made a short submission to the NZ Geographic Board supporting naming several tributaries of the Oroua River. All the submissions they received were supportive and accordingly the new names have been Gazetted. Proceeding upstream from the Alice Nash Memorial Hut they are on the true left side – details are shown in the table on the next page:



Cumberfield Creek	1km past the hut, flowing off Tunupo.
Tunupō Creek	A macron has been added to the 'o' giving it a longer sound. Its official location, which was wrong, will now agree with our maps!
Iron Gate Creek	Flows from Otumore to 500m above Iron Gate Hut
Howlett Creek	Flows west of Howlett's Hut to the Oroua
Oxford Creek	Joins Howlett Creek at 648779, flowing from the north

So, next time you venture up to Iron Gate Hut you can dip your toes into these newly named creeks.

Lastly: Happiness is: when you return to the road end, getting your feet out of your tramping boots and into a pair of sandals!



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

Editor: It still is not winter. Must be fairly soon though as various people have muttered about popping up to the Lodge with provisions etc & readying it for the season!

I have been past the Park several times in the last few weeks & I have to say it is looking mighty fine. Don't forget to take advantage of the membership rates & save cash & travel time on your hard-earned breaks by using the Club Lodge as your base.

Website updated:

Howard Nicholson, club webmaestro, has pointed out that he has indulged in some tweaking recently – including the addition of several new links approved by the Committee. He would like some feedback from users, so if you can spare a few moments...

CHIEF GUIDE REPORT

Well, actually, it is the editor making up a report on a flight from Wellington to Hamilton. The Chief Guide report from our usual contributor is missing this month because she is moving house, trying to juggle the next trip card into existence, has no internet access at home & works fulltime.

Hopefully Kim will soon be testing out her cool new FMC lime green retro packliner, having been the first person to correctly guess what the mystery hut was in the March edition.

It was Top Maropea in the Ruahines, a comfortable walk further in from Sunrise in good weather, but a dangerous one if not. At any rate, it is a lovely spot well worth the effort to get to over Armstrong Saddle.

If you have an itch to run a trip, I understand that there are a few slots still available, so get amongst it. You never know – that random spot on a map that has bugged you for a while may have bugged others... & being the organiser/leader is a great way of integrating a tramping “routine” into your life!



Wellington City from the viewing deck at the summit of Mt Kaukau: various tracks pass through exotic & native forest, farmland & scrub to provide a climb with great views across Wellington & as far south as both Kaikoura Ranges. Image: T. Tyler.



CLUB NIGHTS & NOTICES

CHINA AND TIGER LEAPING GORGE talk preview

Tim Swale recently spent some time in China. As part of his trip he visited the beautiful Tiger Leaping Gorge which is a canyon on the Yangtze River located 60 km north of Lijiang City, Yunnan in southwestern China. It is said to be one of the deepest gorges in the world & one of the finest treks through some of the most naturally beautiful and diverse landscapes China has to offer. The walking trail runs high on the northern side of the gorge passing through quiet villages, shady forest, blustery precipice & verdant terraced farmland. The snow covered peaks of Jade Dragon Snow Mountain (5596m) and Snow Mountain (5396m) shadow either side of the gorge. Tim has beautiful photos & great stories of that area of China to share.

JUNE CLUB NIGHT - NEPAL & EVEREST BASE CAMP - Darlene Westrupp & Ann Young

In late September last year Ann Young, owner of the company "Trekking for Women", & long time MTSC member led a trip to Nepal & Everest Base Camp. Darlene Westrupp was one of the group of five women who made the journey. Darlene is looking forward to sharing her experiences & photos of the trip with you. Ann will also be helping with the talk. Ann is off to Nepal again on 19 March to lead a group of 14 men & women up to Everest Base & will also be exploring new routes in the Gokyo Valley. She returns to NZ in May but will be off again in August leading a cycle trip from Tibet to Nepal followed by a further Everest Base Camp trip. She will be happy to talk about any of these trips.

Coal at Howlett Hut

MTSC were once the owners/ caretakers of the popular Howlett Hut, located in the high central Ruahines, between the Tukituki and Oroua Valleys. Like Waikamaka Hut, Howlett Hut is now under the control of the Hastings based Heretaunga Tramping Club. Some six or seven years ago, PNTMC (with MTSC assistance) funded a sizeable coal delivery to Howlett Hut. That lasted a couple of years. HTC have just completed another coal delivery there, with installation of a new firebox. The coal should last till next Christmas - or longer.

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.

2-3 Gold Creek Mark Learmonth	Medium 355 9143
2-3 Hut Work Party Jean Garman	Medium/Fit 354 3536
6 (Wed) Liz Flint	356 7654
7 (Thu) Stewart Malcolm	358 3409
9 (Sat) Howard Nicholson	357 6325
9-10 Makahika-Camelhead Dave Harrington	Fit 06 839 5766
10 (Sun only) Te Mara Tim Swale	Medium 06 376 6556

13 (Wed) Rosemary & Ken Hall	356 8538
14 (Thu) John McLeod	323 5785
16-17 Rangiwahia Hut & Beyond John Doolan	Easy/Medium 027 468740
20 (Wed) Patsy Inkpen	323 8030
21 (Thu) Carolyn Brodie	358 6576
27 (Wed) Bernard Cobb	328 8088
28 (Thu) Brian Evans	323 7614
1 May (Sun only) Bushy Exploration Adam Matich	Medium 359 2796



Waioatauru slip. L Darbyshire

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the trip previously listed for 16-17 April that was to go up the Atiwhakatu and Jumbo has been cancelled.

A trip to Kapiti Island planned by Howard Nicholson is currently fully booked. The 9 April trip may possibly have one or two cancellations, contact Howie to get on the wait list, you might still get there!

10 April (Sunday day trip only)(fit) -

From the No 1 dam we follow Mangahao River Track a short distance to the first bridge then up the bush spur to ridge top (spot 690) then along ridge to Makahika, Marquee, (leatherwood in this area) to Camelhead. Out via leading spur to the NE & Roaring Creek confluence.



Domestic bliss in the Tauherenikau. J.Garman

Hugh Wilde is looking for a pair of size 12 boots to loan out to a worthy cause – please call if you can help.

TRIP REPORTS

Howletts Hut & Sawtooth Ridge – 12/13th

February By Tim Swale

I have been meaning to do this iconic Ruahine trip for the last few years since buying Shaun Barnett's "North Island Weekend Tramps". It is billed as a "2 - 3 day, hard tramp" but with a good group of MTSC members lined up to do it & a reasonable weather forecast for the weekend it seemed too good an opportunity to miss.

Seven of us: Ken Mercer, Adam Matich, Murray Hildred, Greg Dobson, Lynda Hunt, Peter Rawlins & myself set off from the road end at Mill Road & headed down to the Tukituki River a little after 10am on Saturday morning. We splashed our way up this beautiful river crossing from side to side many times, past the Rosvals track to the stream junction where the Longview Hut Track joins the river.

The image below by T.Swale illustrates this.

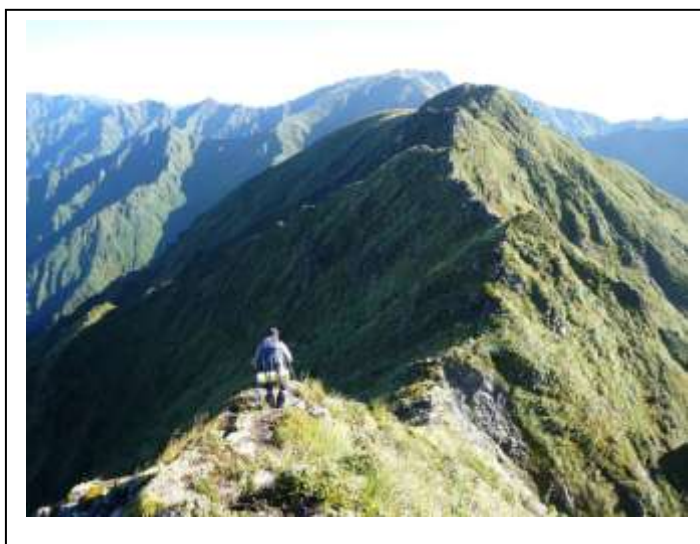


It was @12:30pm & a good time to have a leisurely lunch stop. Shortly after setting off again we passed through a narrow gorge which could well be a problem in times of high water before arriving at the foot of Daphne Spur. A hundred metres upstream is Daphne Hut, a large A frame hut that we diverted to have a look at & write in the logbook.

From Daphne hut the track up Daphne Spur climbs steeply at first before easing off a little, eventually reaching Howletts Hut after a height gain of almost 800 metres. It was a warm humid day & the air was condensing to cloud as we came out of the bush but from time to time the cloud would clear to reveal amazing

views into the valleys below. It was too early for diner so we lazed around, drank tea & tried to dry damp boots & socks.

We rose a little before 6am on Sunday morning ready for our big day. Though it was only just coming light we could not believe our luck as there was not a cloud in the sky & virtually no wind – perfect conditions for Sawtooth Ridge. We were away by 7am, saying our goodbyes to Lynda & Peter who were going to return via the river, before heading along the ridge from Howletts. On the way up Tiraha, Sawtooth Ridge came into view. From this angle & with the morning light casting sharp shadows into its gullies it looked fearsome.



However, once on top of Tiraha at 1668m & looking down it looked much more do-able. For the next couple of hours we scrambled over little peaks & saddles as we worked our way along Sawtooth Ridge. Although there are significant drop offs either side, with only a gentle breeze & almost unlimited visibility it was one of those days when tops travel is absolutely sublime.

The views across the Ruahines & out to Mount Ruapehu were breathtaking. Soon were at Ohuinga, the northernmost point of the walk & ready to drop down to the saddle that links across to Black Ridge. In places this is quite eroded with roots & tussock overhanging steep scree slopes. Once on Black Ridge itself the going was much easier with its broad, bare tops leading to our lunch-stop at Tarn Biv about 5 hours after leaving Howletts Hut.



The final leg of the journey was southwards along Black Ridge until we intersected Rosvalls Track & then down to the Tukituki River. It was a very hot, humid day so we were glad to be able to cool off in the clear waters of this beautiful mountain stream. By the time we got back to the van we had been going for nearly 9 hours & covered a significant distance on the tops. It would undoubtedly be one of the best tramps I have done & although I would have to confess to a few twinges in the leg muscles over the next couple of days, I would not have missed it for the world.

Wednesday trampers: 16 February by TW Knight

On 16 February, 21 of the Wednesday trampers set off from the assembly area at the end of the West Tamiki road and headed up Holmes Ridge towards Stanfield Hut. The weather was warm but overcast. We had an early morning tea on the lookout at the top of Holmes Ridge. The group then split with the more energetic group heading up passed Stanfield Hut and onto the track to Cattle Creek Hut. This group had lunch near the ridge overlooking the hut and then turned back to return down the river. The rest of us had a leisurely stroll to Stanfield Hut where we had lunch. We then returned down the river which was not as easy as anticipated because of the damage to the river banks presumably from floods the previous winter. Progress was slow because of the slips, fallen trees, and scouring of the river. The exit near the toilet block was difficult to see from the river and climb up to. It was hard to believe it used to be a 4-wheel drive track!

Tauherenikau, Hells Gate to Cone Hut, 19 – 20 Feb

By Jean Garman

A good forecast was needed & a good forecast we had as we set off on a Friday evening from the Walls Whare road end heading for Cone hut. Luckily it was the cool of the evening & beautifully scented with (early) Easter orchids as it was still pretty hot & sticky & we were all dripping sweat as we climbed the hill. By the time we got to the hut it was dark, although Adam & Brian stumbled the last little bit sans torches. A comfortable night was had in the historic hut & we

arose with the daylight the next morning heading off about 7.30am to climb up onto Bull Mound. As there was no need to hurry we spent some time taking photos & stopped for morning tea before heading back into the bush & down to Hells Gate. We were almost thrown by a premature dip but on checking the map realised we had a little further to go. Very quickly after leaving the saddle the creek bed became quite open but with copious amounts of bid-bidi to stick in the clothing. After a while there was also some onga-onga which combined with slippery rocks & reasonably frequent windfalls made progress a little slow but not too awkward. In a nice sunny spot we stopped for lunch then carried on down to join the Tauherenikau river. With the bigger water flow the river bed was more open & the rocks cleaner so it was a pleasant stroll down to the next big stream that came in from the true left. Immediately below this was the 1st gorge. We were glad it was a warm day as swim followed chest deep wade followed swim, etc, etc with very little space clambering over big rocks in between. Very pretty but the cameras got safely tucked away inside packs so not too many photos. After a while the river opened out a bit & the 2nd gorge was mostly waist deep wades, infinitely more pleasant. An afternoon tea break saw some of us trying to photograph a rather shy red admiral before we carried on down the now easily travelled river to the campsite at the ex Joe's hut site. Plenty of time to pick a nice spot to pitch the tent flies, dry out wet things & to eat, drink & talk.

Not long before dawn a bit of drizzle passed through & a bit more dampened things down while we were packing up although it was not long after our 8am start back into the river that the weather cleared up & it was another nice day. This section of the river was full of big boulders & several wet knicker wades were had before Cone Hut was spotted on the bank above us. We took the very direct track up to it surprising the people who had spent the night & were still in the process of packing up. A bite to eat & it was off up the track back over the hill to the car park, reaching the road end at midday. All in all a very pleasant circuit but does require warm dry weather. We have planned the next mission for the Tauherenikau headwaters which will take (hopefully) only 3 days & require extreme mental fortitude as from what we could see parts of it don't look at all pleasant. We were Brian Webster, David Harrington, Adam Matich & Jean Garman

Wednesday Trampers March 2nd

As a relatively new tramping member to the Club, this was my first experience organizing a Wednesday tramp. I sought the knowledge & help of the more experienced members of the club to get ideas on where to go, & how? The original plan was to travel to Otaki Forks & tramp up to Sheridan Creek past the old boiler then up to Field Hut & down the Fields track. However the weather wasn't too kind on the day & with a group of 21 it was decided we steer clear of creeks & rivers. Onto plan B, we tramped firstly the Arcus Loop & then after morning tea at Parawai Lodge (out of the rain) we headed back toward the car park & up along the track which leads to Waiotauru Hut. This meant we had to navigate carefully around a slip, which formed a few years back. The rain certainly didn't ease much during the day. We followed the track for about 1.25 hours & after a short pit stop for lunch heading back to the vehicles. The thought of a hot coffee & comfort food was well received on the way home. Thanks you to the group for their co-operation and patience. A special thanks to John Hunt for helping me lead the group, doing the appropriate research of the area & available options & other members for suggestions and support.

I enjoyed the learning experience & opportunity to contribute. Linda Darbyshire

Mitre Flats-Waingawa Loop 5-6th March

Despite the weather forecast, it was only drizzling at the Holdsworth road end, & not far up the Atiwhakatu Valley we were able to take our rain coats off for the rest of the day. We still got wet though, but because it was a warm day. In just under two hours we stopped at Atiwhakatu Hut for early lunch before heading an hour further up the valley on the now lower-quality track to the bridge at the top end of the valley. Around there we encountered a couple of fast-&-light trampers who were heading down the valley. Later on at Mitre Flats Hut the log book suggested to us that they were VUWTC members doing an SK (Schormann-Kaitoke). Part-way up to what we choose to call the Atiwhakatu Saddle we met a party of three who were making their way out from Mitre Flats hut.

The first half of the descent from the Atiwhakatu Saddle, into the first stream (shown on the map) was on good track in friendly forest, but the lower section was untidy. On this lower section the track dropped into & criss-crossed a little stream (not shown on the map) in the gully that descends from the Atiwhakatu Saddle. This latter, main stream crossing could well be a problem in torrential rain.

The climb out of the stream was steep & the 150m gain in height seemed unjustified given that we were going to have to descend 250m back down to the bridge across the South Mitre Stm. The climbing sidle became tedious & tiring - the track didn't become friendly again until we started the descent to the South Mitre Stm. From the bridge at the head of the Atiwhakatu valley to Mitre Flats Hut (5½ hour day) took 2½ hours which is quite slow given the comparatively short distance. We arrived at the empty hut for a late afternoon tea followed by magazines & an extended nap on the veranda until well after dinner time. The rain did turn up, but there was no wind & so we were able to enjoy it with impunity.

Next day we weren't quite so lucky with the weather. Elevated river levels meant that we were unable to do head down-river as intended, & we were forced, in part, to retrace our route of the day before. The cold southerly had arrived & the drizzle became a bit more persistent, but we survived without raincoats for most of the way to the Atiwhakatu Saddle. Although we weren't any faster, in this direction the travel seemed easier and the forest more attractive. Instead of heading back down the Atiwhakatu Valley, we followed the trail along Pinnacle Ridge. The markers were almost frequent enough for us to not pay attention to what we were doing, but not quite. We had to rug up a bit because of the southerly flow and we decided that a late lunch back at the car (6-hour day) would be more comfortable. The Pinnacle Ridge route is probably an hour longer than the Atiwhakatu Valley, and with more climbing, but there is some nice forest up there, the footing is better than in the upper end of the valley below, and route finding added some interest to the day.

We were Jenny McCarthy and Adam Matich.



Zeke's Hut, Thursday 10 February

18 of us left in good weather for Taihape & the roadend off SH1 just short of Waiouru. A bit of low cloud was promised but didn't materialise on our route. It took us about 1.5 hours to get to Hihitahi Trig & slightly less than an hour or so on to the hut. Temperatures weren't too hot either. It's a nice walk into Zekes Hut (a relatively new hut for those who haven't been there) through the bush with the Kaikawaka trees which are a feature of the area.

It was a bit quicker returning – by 15 minutes or so & after a coffee stop in Taihape arrived back in Palmerston North before 6 PM. Hugh Wilde

Snowy River trip 12-13 March 2011 T.Knight

I've never done this trip before but after reading Adams trip report from 2006 our trip started very much the same with Wayne the DOC guy giving us (well Brian anyway) a lift to the road end in his DOC vehicle, unlike last time Wayne didn't decline our request to be choppered into our campsite 6hrs up the Snowy River. I wish!!! There was actually no chopper in sight & we had to walk/wade/swim our way there, which wasn't

so bad with all that lovely weather, I also got to witness first hand this tramping in bikini's & speedos that I'd heard rumours about, & I can assure you it is no rumour as 2 of our party demonstrated the pro's & cons of this. We made the campsite by 4pm on Saturday & had to hunt around for a bigger site as the river had swallowed most of it up, we found cozy accommodation 100m up river. On Sunday our Bikini trampers had recruited another 1.5 members into their club leaving 1 fully clothed party member the odd one out. Sunday was the fun day with waterfalls to climb round & our river got steeper & steeper until it was near vertical the last 100m or so. We made the ridge top in time for lunch, our bikini, speedo & knickers trampers opting to lunch just away from the very top of the ridge to delay the need to get dressed a little longer & while enjoying a hard earned lunch we marvelled at how far we had followed the river up, how steep it was & at the number of people tramping between Mt Hector & Kime. The rest of our tramp was enjoyed with more fine weather on the tops & a long trek down to Otaki forks. We were Kim Fraser (trip leader), Maren Domke, Jean Garman, David Harrington, & Brian Webster.

Six Disks Track, Wednesday 9th March by Andrew Brodie

As there had not been much rain for a while, I anticipated this would be a good trip for the Wednesday trampers, especially since we had not done it for a long time. However, the night before there had been a reasonable amount of rain in the Tararuas making the paddocks at the start a bit muddy although not as bad as in winter. Twenty-one of us set out in cloudy conditions but with a promise of clearing weather. Once into the bush you take the right h& track, which was described as a gentle climb by the DoC person I spoke to, heading up to the Waiopehu Hut. Most of us thought it was a bit steeper than gentle! Morning tea was a pleasant stop in the bush & soon after at the well sign posted junction we started the downward track to the Ohau River. As the last time I did this track it was a bit of a mission to follow it, the group had instructions not to race off & get lost. However, the track is now well marked with new orange triangles & we all arrived at the bottom safely & together. The last part of the descent was very steep, & being wet was slippery, making progress slow. After a few minutes we went through the grass clearing, where the South Ohau Shelter used to be, & out onto the riverbed for lunch. We all enjoyed sitting in the sun having an unhurried lunch but no one was tempted to swim, although Arthur Flint got close to it accidentally. After lunch the speedsters shot off along the reasonably level track back to the cars while others went at a gentler pace enjoying the bush & views of the river. This is very pleasant round trip & everyone enjoyed themselves – recommended if you don't want a long day out. A stop in Sanson for the coffee addicts to satisfy their craving; others chose ice cream now the temperature was up. Thanks to Mike Oliver our van driver & the car drivers.

CLUB INFORMATION

ANNUAL HUT PASSES

Buy your Annual Hut Pass through DoC. The full price of an Annual Hut Pass is now \$122.60 but is reduced to \$85.60 with your Federated Mountain Club (FMC) card discount. For further information or for the forms to complete 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.

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

Packliners are available for 50c to members who wish to keep the items dry. Contact Tim Tyler if you wish to take advantage of this limited offer on 356 6008 or email editor@mtsc.org.nz

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.

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

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Mini-Bus Custodian	Adam Match	06 359 2796
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