

# beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



MAIL: MTSC, P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North 4440 | WEB: [www.mtsc.org.nz](http://www.mtsc.org.nz) | FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>

## CLUB NIGHTS

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

**August 5<sup>th</sup>**

### Annual Club Photo Competition

The three best images from each category will go through to the interclub competition, so come along for an evening of exceptional outdoor photography.

**CATEGORIES:** **1. NZ Landscapes** - no people; **2. Above Bushline** - predominantly alpine NZ scenery (e.g. rock, snow, and tussock, etc) and may include people; **3. Below Bushline** - predominantly NZ bush (lowland to sub-alpine areas) and may include people; **4. NZ Natural History** - NZ flora and fauna or detail (geology, ice formations, etc); **5. Topical** - people or detail related to tramping, climbing, skiing etc. in **NZ**; **6. Overseas** - photos taken overseas, open category: e.g. landscape, people, natural history.

Entries need to be E-mailed by Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014 to Howard @ [photocomp@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:photocomp@mtsc.org.nz) or call 06 357 6325 for details about dropping off a CD/DVD. Unless you notify us otherwise by entering this competition you grant MTSC the right to: use submitted images for MTSC publicity purposes; submit your entries into the local Interclub competition; submit your entries into the Federated Mountain Clubs photo competition.

**September 2<sup>nd</sup>**

### Nepal: Mera Peak, Amphu labsta Pass and Island Peak

In March/April this year 5 local people took part in a World Expeditions 27 day trekking/climbing trip through this stunning part of Nepal. Hear about what it is like to be part of an organised trip, see the many photos and hear about the successes and the helicopter rescues.



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To receive your newsletter as a colour pdf (instead of by post), or if your phone, address or email change, please notify [editor@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:editor@mtsc.org.nz) and [membership@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:membership@mtsc.org.nz).

The deadline for newsletter contributions is **the 1<sup>st</sup> week of the month**. Photos are welcome and will be included where possible – remember to include an appropriate caption.



ISSUE 7, August 2014



**MTSC President: Linda Campbell**

[president@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:president@mtsc.org.nz)

Do you have happy place in the mountains? A place where you really feel at home? A place where you feel energised? Recently I had a lovely weekend in such a place with a group of wonderful Taranaki women at Kapuni Lodge on Mt Taranaki. Given that a mid-winter Christmas feast was the plan, I hoped to see some snow on the way up. There was just the smallest amount on the side of the track past Hooker Shelter and around the lodge but that was it. Visibility wasn't too great and the weather was closing in as I wandered up the well known track by myself thinking of the warm fire and mulled wine I knew would be ready. It was a great night of catching up with old friends and meeting new people.

At the last club night we had a few people who had been tramping more than 40 years talking about places they had been, how they started tramping and the changing Manawatu Lodge. We saw a great progression from the original hut to our current lodge. It made many of us think about how and when we started tramping and for some there was the realisation that we too had started tramping as youngsters more than 40 years ago!! It was a reminder for me that it was quite some years that I had tramped with the wonderful Taranaki ladies.

And, now it's cold! On Wednesday we had a good snow fall in the village where I work so I expect there will be some happy skiers! Perhaps this year it will be a great season for you.

Enjoy yourselves in the hills but take care out there, *Linda*.



**MTSC Chief Guide: Ken Mercer**

[chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz)

The Down Conundrum: Down jackets have become very popular in the last few years and a vast range is available. Indeed, Kathmandu spam mail listed 39 different styles! They compress well and are really warm when dry. Thanks to a burglar I'm now on my second but it's not something I usually carry when tramping. Unfortunately down is useless when wet. It has similar characteristics to cotton in that it is hydrophilic and readily absorbs moisture. This makes it heavier but the real problem is the filaments pull together and clump up. Consequently the tiny insulating air pockets are replaced with water which conducts heat 25 times faster than air. I usually have tramping clothes and camping clothes with the latter doing double duty for an emergency. In the New Zealand bush a down jacket is unable to fulfil both roles but is a nice luxury for a hut. In the dry alpine environment it is an essential piece of safety equipment I usually carry one when going off-piste on Mt. Ruapehu.

**Lodge Manager: John Lyttle**

[lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz)

As I write this snow is starting to fall with the prospect of both fields happening this weekend in some capacity. I'm in the process of preparing for our usual family ski week in the school holidays and looking back over the last two seasons the weather has been similar with snow coming just in time. Fingers and all other bits crossed for an abundance of snow.

We have been busy during the summer tidying up the lodge and it is now stocked and ready for us all to enjoy. Ongoing upgrading is on my agenda and I'm presently applying for grants that will allow us to install double glazing in the living and bathroom areas. Any improvements are reliant on the income from the lodge so please make good use of it and please do bring your friends. We are promoting weekends in the snow where non members can stay at the lodge for the price of a member. Check your trip card or our website for this information.

I have been working with schools assisting them with applying for grants that will make a school trip to the lodge at any time of the year affordable. If you have any people at schools that can contact over coming to stay at the lodge please let me know.

We are presently looking for board games and good quality (stainless steel) pot and pans. These need to be commercial size but small also needed for those times when there are only a few at the lodge. Just let me know if you have something that you wish to donate so that I can manage this and ensure we don't get 20 games of monopoly.

Have a great winter season and hope to see you, your family and friends at the lodge.

## NOTICES and INFORMATION



Hello, my name is Kylie Lang and I am walking the length of the North Island starting in October. I am doing this under the theme "I'm Not Alone" and getting others to sign up to walk a day with me so I am not alone. Collectively we will raise money and awareness for the Mental Health Foundation. I am doing this because my family has been affected by mental illness and not talked about it and I wonder how many others are doing the same. I will start on the 13<sup>th</sup> October 2014, each day being joined by

another walker so I am not alone. This walk symbolises doing things together, talking things out and how important support is for our mental health. I need 58 people to join me for a day's walk, check out <http://walknz.org/> for a breakdown of the days. If you don't wish to or can't join me for the walk but wish to support donations are appreciated. <http://www.fundraiseonline.co.nz/KylieLang/>

### Notes from the Ruahine User Group Meeting

- **Maropea Forks Hut**- is now open; the DOC website has been updated. The veranda will go up soon. DOC commended the work the Army did in building the hut; it was a good exercise and good experience in working in remote locations for them. DOC looks forward to working with the Army again, and also with the Air Force who could not be involved this time due to scheduling conflicts.
- **Huts to go on a booking system - Sunrise Hut and Rangiwahia Hut** will both be put on the DOC booking system soon due to high use. Advice re dates, process and whether all the beds will be bookable, and whether there will be a 'season' will be distributed via the RUG site beforehand. The booking system does not stop people from going up to the hut and pitching their tents/ sleeping on the floor should they find out that the bunks have all been booked.

Some concerns were raised about whether or not the bookings could be enforced eg. people not booking taking beds that had been booked. DOC noted Wardens may need to be used. A suggestion was made for signs to be put at the start of both tracks to inform people that the hut is a 'booked hut' and if people have not booked they may not be able to use a bunk and may need to sleep on the floor or tent outside. Concerns were also raised about people taking dogs across the farmland into Sunrise and a suggestion was made that a reminder to discourage this could be included on the website also.

### 1080 Aorangi Forest Park

TBfree New Zealand planned a pre-feed bait drop in the Aorangi Forest Park (approx 30 000 hectares) around the 23<sup>rd</sup> June followed by a 1080 drop after the 30<sup>th</sup> June. If you are planning to visit the area please do not take your dogs (for about 6 months after the drop - until carcasses have rotted out) and carefully supervise children. Do not handle the baits and do not hunt or take game within 4 months of the 1080 drop. For further information please visit the following websites. [www.tbfree.org.nz](http://www.tbfree.org.nz) [www.1080facts.co.nz](http://www.1080facts.co.nz)

### SNOW BOARD FOR SALE - Lib Technologies



This Lib Technologies snow board has been left by our son. It is around 10 years old and has been used a bit but is still in reasonable condition. All offers to buy will be considered. email [brodie.family@internet.co.nz](mailto:brodie.family@internet.co.nz) or phone (06) 358 6576 for more information or if you wish to view.



## UPCOMING TRIPS

### Trip Intentions

The email address for leaving trip intentions is [intentions@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:intentions@mtsc.org.nz)

Intentions sent to this address will not be acted upon UNLESS a party is reported overdue (e.g. by a family member, flatmate, friend, etc.). The email is sent to several MTSC members. This information will be provided to LandSAR only if the party is reported overdue.

The email should include: a list of participants and their contact details; a brief description of the intended route and possible alternative routes; starting point; start date; date/time due out; vehicle registration; and any other relevant details.

August Wednesday Tramps		
Date	Leader	Phone
6	Evan and Coralie Davies	357 6288
13	Marion Beadle	323 3246
20	John Ridge	357 3744
27	Terry Knight	354 1530



### Trip Grading

The times listed below include tramping, meal and rest stops. In assessing the trip grading, terrain, weather and party fitness (which is as fast as the slowest member) are considered. Consult the trip leader if you are unsure about your suitability for a particular trip.

<b>FAMILY</b>	All welcome, casual pace, any age
<b>EASY</b>	4 hours per day, pace slower than Easy/Med. Does not relate to terrain
<b>EASY/MEDIUM</b>	5 hours per day at a pace slower than Medium
<b>MEDIUM</b>	7 hours per day at a standard walking pace
<b>MEDIUM/FIT</b>	8 hours per day at a pace faster than Medium
<b>FIT</b>	Over 8 hours per day at a pace faster than Med/Fit
<b>TECHNICAL</b>	Qualifying requirements to be announced by the trip organiser

Weekday trips generally range between Easy and Medium/ Fit. Call the leader for details on the destination and trip grade.

August Thursday Tramps		
Date	Leader	Phone
7	Richard Ellis	357 6410
14	Nigel and Jill Spencer	329 8738
21	Keith Fisher	357 1724
28	Royce Mills	355 8556

August Weekend Trips				
Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
2-3	A Weekend in the Snow	Ski	John Lyttle	04 473 5300
9-10	Rangi and beyond	Medium	Linda Campbell	323 3836
16-17	Snow caving Whakapapa	Technical	Ken Mercer	356 7497
18-22	Men's Ski Training Week	Ski	John Lyttle	027 433 6307
23-24	A Weekend in the Snow	Ski	Robin Lane	021 1105 8580
23-24	Cow Creek	Medium	Jenny McCarthy	06 376 7498
24-31	Wanaka Skiing	Technical	Ken Mercer	356 7497

For weekend trips, unless otherwise specified, contact the trip leader by Wednesday night for overnights or Friday night for day trips.



**2 – 3<sup>rd</sup> August      Spend a Weekend in the Snow      Snow      John Lyttle      027 433 6307**

These weekends are run by club members and are about giving non members or members not familiar with the lodge the opportunity to use the lodge at members rates. People can experience staying in the snow and are free to just go out and play in it or if they wish partake in skiing or snowboarding. The leader (club member) will introduce them to the lodge and it's facilities. They will also show them the ski fields facilities and where they need to go if they want to have a slide down the slopes. The club van will run from Palmerston North and there is often vehicles running from other parts of the country if transport is needed.

**9<sup>th</sup> August      Rangi and Beyond      Medium      Linda Campbell      323 3836**

The plan is to walk on up to Rangiwahia Hut and hopefully complete Deadmans Track. It is an easy walk to Rangiwahia Hut and then across the tops before coming back into the bush to the car park. Depending on the weather, ice axe and crampons may be required. This will be a combined trip with Mt Egmont Alpine Club.

**16 – 17<sup>th</sup> August      Snow caving Whakapapa      Technical      Ken Mercer      3567497**

A snow cave makes excellent emergency accommodation and will usually be warmer than a tent, and quiet inside. It does take a couple of hours to dig with the bonus being its warm work! Give me a call if you'd like to have a go!

**18 – 22<sup>nd</sup> August      Men's Ski Training Week      Ski      John Lyttle      027 433 6307**

Yes this week is for men but don't worry there are also similar weeks for women. This week is for those who want to hone their boarding and skiing abilities and is more suited for intermediate ability and upwards. It is run by Whakapapa Ski School who will be providing the skills of top instructors for 4 hours a day for 4 days. As well as on the mountain training there will also be video analysis to help you with your technique. You need to be on the mountain from Monday to the Friday with the extra day in case on inclement weather. We will be staying at the lodge and transport can be shared dependent on where you are coming from. Cost for the ski school component is \$465 and this includes free breakfast on the Monday morning and dinner at the Château on Tuesday night at well as 16 hours training. With training only taking up half the day you get to spend the rest of the day skiing with the rest of us or sitting back reading a book at the lodge. Lodge, travel and incidentals will be additional costs. If you want to know more call/text me or check the ski fields Web site. You will also need to book a bed at the lodge.

**23 – 24<sup>th</sup> August      Spend a Weekend in the Snow      Snow      Robin Lane      021 1105 8580**

[office@robinlane.co.nz](mailto:office@robinlane.co.nz)

Come and join the bunnies and bucks gambolling around in the few cms we might have by then. It will be a great weekend away from the office and lawns, even if there is little snow, but who knows what Hughie might do! Book now with Hugh and Liz at [lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz).

**23 – 24<sup>th</sup> August      Cow Creek      Medium      Jenny McCarthy      06 376 7498**

The destination is Cow Creek Hut. How we get there will depend on the people who want to go. My original intention was to travel the track from Mitre Flats to Cow Creek, as I have never walked this section of track. However, laziness could easily set in and we could just go from the Kirwhakapapa road end towards Blue Range Hut and then turn off towards Cow Creek hut at the Junction. If you want to go for a weekend wander to Cow Creek hut please ring me and let me know your preferred option.

**24 – 31<sup>st</sup> August      Wanaka Skiing      Technical      Ken Mercer      3567497**

## TRIP REPORTS

**7-8<sup>th</sup> June: Lodge Food Carry**

**Howard Nicholson**

How many people does it take to get a few hundred kilos of food from the Top o' the Bruce Road to the MTSC lodge? We had 19 people on the recent food carry work party and it was all done in very short order. The goods were carried in packs and hands from the delivery truck to the lodge, where the goods were ticked off the lists and stored in preparation for the winter season.

After a brief morning tea of fresh scones it was time for making a few repairs, minor alterations and a general tidy up. A delicious dinner followed, and the world's problems were discussed and pretty much sorted out.

Sunday ended up being a cracker day, yet most people spent their time getting the last of the jobs completed before heading home. A big thank you to all who helped with the planning, preparations, shopping, transport and work before and during the work party - a grand effort that will be very much appreciated by lodge users in the weeks to come. Bring on the snow...



Lining up for their loads

*Howard Nicholson*



Everyone did their bit to help

*Howard Nicholson*

You may be interested to know that we are trying to be smarter with our food purchases. With the aid of regular stocktake information, we are buying food based on our expected usage over the year and our expected stocking levels at the start and end of the winter ski season. Please let me know when the lodge is running low on an item - working out our optimum stocking levels will be an iterative process.

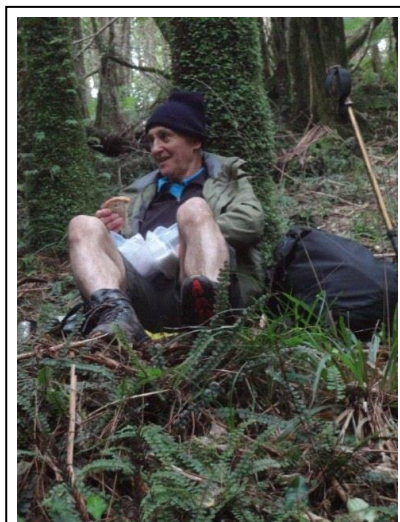
From time to time we will require food to be carried into the lodge. This will usually be perishable items such as veggies and eggs. If you are able to assist with carting a few items over to the lodge then please let me know; the Lodge Booking Officers may also request this of you when stocks are low.

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> June: The Pukeatua track**

*Bob Hodgson*

On a day in which stormy weather was experienced to the north, the Wednesday trampers enjoyed a dry but

exceptionally windy day. A group of eight tramped the Mangaone Walkway from the northern end and had a good timey. The main party tramped the Pukeatua track from the southern end.



Happily lunching out of the wind



Pukeatua Conquerors

Three groups developed including a small group that tramped at speed through to Otaki Forks. One member of this group was heard to exclaim on the descent "slow down so that my brain can catch up with my body!" A second group



tramped in and out to the trig and the final group, arriving late in the van due to a missed turn, made good progress towards the trig. It was an exhilarating day and all groups emerged safely even though the wind was strong enough to threaten to blow a beanie off! Thanks to trip leader Margaret, Van driver Evan. Photographers Chris and Maureen.

**15<sup>th</sup> June: Not quite Wharite.**

*Tim Swale*

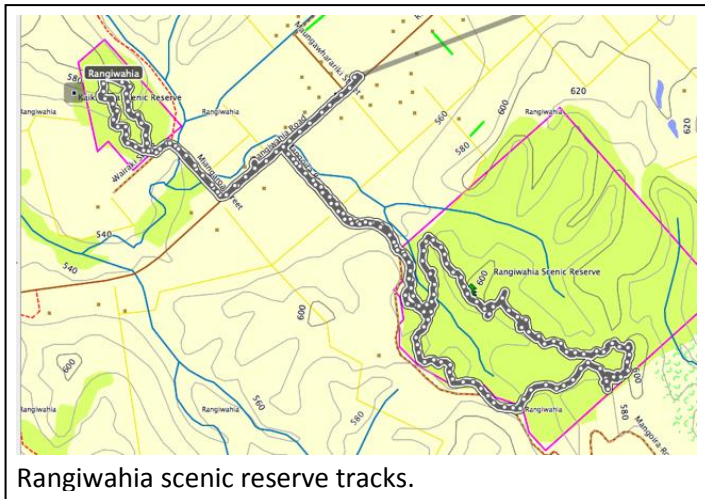
The walk to Wharite was changed to the Coppermine Loop as Linda's knee was in need of something easier after an injury on the recent Cone Hut trip and also the cloud covering the summit would have meant no views.



Ken, Linda and Mary with 'Wharite'

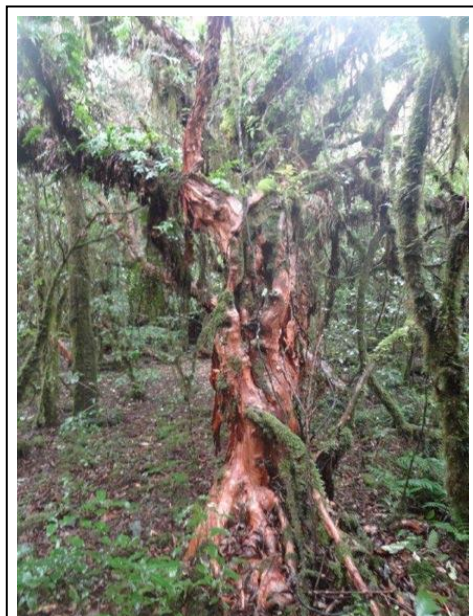
**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> June: The Rangiwahia Reserves**

*Bob Hodgson*



Rangiwahia scenic reserve tracks.

June 18<sup>th</sup> was a day in which the sky threatened, the wind blew and from time to time the rain rained but none of this dampened the good spirits of the 25 trampers who started an active day by walking around the lake that forms the Manguhua Wetlands, Bourke's Dam off West Manguhua road. The lake was well populated with black and white swans and surprisingly extensive. As we emerged, Farmer Bourke appeared driving a large double wheeled tractor. He was cheerful and friendly and told the surprising story of how the lake had been a potato field until he had excavated it and built the dam on the stream to form the lake. Our next call was the Pinetum (pine tree collection) off Renfrew



The pride of the Kaikawaka scenic reserve: Tree fuschia *Maureen*

road, here we tramped around this extensive collection and ate our morning tea. We then assembled adjacent to the recently closed school in Rangiwahia and, under the leadership of Ian Richie, tramped into the Rangiwahia scenic reserve. He was a



How big asked Chris? Ian, Dennis, Bob and Sue (obscured) prove it is a four. *Maureen*

most suitable guide having six years ago cut the tracks that we were to follow. The reserve was a revelation to many of us as first time visitors because of the wide variety of plants and trees present and for the size



and variety of the numerous large specimen trees, very well worth a visit. It was also steep and muddy in places along the 'tramping tracks', no benched tracks here! We then tramped out and across the road beyond to the old dairy factory. Some of us then tramped on to make a circuit of the Kaikawaka Scenic reserve. This took us about 40 minutes extra and was notable for the numbers of native fuchsia and for the fact that these tracks had also been cut by the redoubtable Ian Richie. Tramping the two reserves took three and a half hours in total. We all converged for afternoon tea at the Rangiwahia Environment Arts Centre (the old dairy factory). Bridgette Murphy hosted us and told us about their work - amazing willow creations like the giant paper tiger currently in residence <http://www.rangienviroartscentre.org/> A great day out on real 'trampers' tracks'. Thanks to Mona and Ian for their organization.

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June: No.1 Line.**

*Andrew Brodie*

On a day that looked as if it was going to rain, 31 keen trampers plus one dog set off up the No. 1 Line Track. It was quite muddy and slippery in places. Some stopped at the view point while the rest carried on to the high point at 1011 m. A few intrepid members carried on bashing through the leather wood until they could see the roof of Kiritaki Hut but as time was running out they decided to return another day with a few cutting tools to improve the route. On the way down one of our party had a nasty fall on the steepest, most slippery part of the track. She rolled down the hill several metres much to my horror but no bones were obviously broken and she managed to bravely continue on. Broken ribs were diagnosed a few days later. Another member fell several times, getting rather bruised, and almost everyone else arrived back at the vehicles with dirty shorts indicating they had not stayed vertical all the way down. The rain set in just as the last of the group arrived back at the vehicles. Thanks to Suzanne for leading the trip, to Chris for driving the van and to the other car drivers.

**28-29<sup>th</sup> July: Waterfall Hut**

*Jean Garman*

A weekend of a random people, huts and weather. On Friday night Brian, Dave, Jenny, Ivan and Jean headed off to the Sunrise car park, arriving just as a largish group of scouts were setting off for TripleX hut – bugger. Our plan was also to go to TripleX hut to give us an early start the next day as daylight hours are kind of short at this time of year. All alternative options were quickly discounted as it was raining lightly and blowing hard - we all fitted into and around the hut. It rained all night with the occasional big wind gust but as we got ready in the morning there was only intermittent light drizzle. We set off around 8 am heading up the track towards Sunrise, the uphill didn't last long and soon we were heading downhill towards Waipawa Forks. The river was up a little but not too much and those with leather boots and gaiters managed to keep their feet reasonably dry as they rock hopped up the Waipawa river. When we hit the saddle it was wet with a vigorous frigid wind that quickly removed feeling from both fingers and toes as well as the hat from my head. Descending the other side brought little relief from the weather, it stayed miserably cold and we were very grateful for Waikamaka hut to have lunch in. Jenny couldn't face the thought of numb feet again so decided to stay put and light the fire. The rest of us warmed up a bit once moving again but the feeling did leave my toes again once they were dipped in the water (everyone else was still rock hoping so only had damp feet to contend with). The breaks between showers grew longer but the showers where somewhere between sleet and hail and snow. Even so once heading down to Rangi creek it seemed warmer and travel down the creek and up the Kawhatau river (where everyone got wet feet) was



Inevitable wet feet crossing the Kawhatau

*Jean Garman*





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not as chilly. Once at the hut the fire was lit and warm drinks were consumed. After a bit of careful nursing by Brian the fire eventually managed to maintain itself and if we pulled the seats right up in front we got pleasantly warm shins. The hut remained pretty cold as the windows had to be a little open to stop us being overcome with smoke. Waterfall hut is a 'historic' example of a NZFS 6 bunk hut as it has undergone little modification so while we may long for an efficient non-smoky wood burner the open fireplace will stay for a truly 'authentic' experience. The socks were all well smoked and although they didn't dry as such they moved from wet to damp, a substantial improvement when you are looking at getting into snow the next day. Just before we went to bed the boots were brought inside which was just as well as the raincoats and gaiters left hanging outside were frozen in the morning. This could only mean one thing – the clouds had gone away and we were in for a lovely day.



Sunday was a stunning day

*Jean Garman*

We got away slightly after 8 am and rock hopped across the stream behind the hut before heading up Broken ridge. While steep to start with it is very open forest so pretty easy going with only a few scrubby bits around the bush line. Above the bush it was a stunning day with views in every direction and only a gentle breath of frigid wind. As we carried on up the ridge there was a little snow and increasing amounts of ice. As we neared Paemutu, while there was no depth to the snow/ice, it was getting dangerously hard and slippery so Dave with delicate and precise footsteps lead us on a precarious side on the sunny side of the ridge where things were a bit softer. No worries just as long as no one slipped. Before long we were back on the ridge line and heading north. Those familiar with the ridge will remember an almost vertical rocky cleft that is down-climbed. This was very obviously not in the sun so threatened to be extremely icy, we chose to drop down a nice scree to the west and sidle under the rocky bit



Water boy

*Jean Garman*

instead. This worked well and soon we were heading up towards the second highest peak in the Ruahines. Towards the top the rocky scree was almost completely locked in ice. Back to careful and precise foot work aiming for anything that gave a bit of traction on an otherwise hard and slick surface. While this slowed the pace considerably no one went for a slide and once on top and back in the sun all was soft enough to cause no issues. By this stage we knew we were too late to meet up with Adam. He had spent Saturday night at Waipawa Forks (relaxing, eating and playing cards with a random family group) planning to meet up with us on Sunday



and possibly go out over the Three Johns. We assumed he would have met Jenny on her way out and they would have gone out together. As we headed round the ridge line the wind picked up a little and although still sunny it was bitterly cold. Back at Waipawa saddle we spotted Jenny's foot prints heading out. Further down the Waipawa river we were reasonably sure there were two sets of footprints. At Waipawa Forks Brian opted to carry on down the river while the rest of us did the up and over to stay out of the cold water. Brian's route was quicker and the note on the wind screen confirmed that Jenny had indeed met up with Adam and he had taken her home. We too headed for home reflecting on our adventurous weekend which I am sure Ivan thought I had designed specifically to inflict maximum misery on him on his return from 3½ months in the Phillipines (temperatures mostly in the mid 30's). We were (at various stages) Brian Webster, Dave Mitchell, Ivan Rienks, Jenny McCarthy, Adam Matich and Jean Garman.

### 29<sup>th</sup> June: Holdsworth Old Tracks

Tim Swale

This easy excursion into the bush was planned with young trampers in mind. Our walk started on a brilliantly sunny morning from the Holdsworth Lodge road end. With a bunch of geo-caches downloaded to the GPS we soon had everyone scrambling around in the undergrowth looking for hidden treasure before we had even crossed the bridge. With a successful first find, it was off to locate the next one, not too far up the track to Donnelly Flats. We took the new Gentle Annie track for a while before cutting off on a compass bearing on an old track which eventually brought us out at the original Rocky Lookout which is a couple of hundred metres further up the hill from the new Rocky Lookout viewing platform. We basked in the sun in almost windless conditions for lunch. The air is so clear on good winter days like this, making *the views superb*. After heading down to the new Rocky Lookout the kids were on a



Rocky Lookout

Tim Swale

*roll and found another geo-cache* that is hidden in the bush nearby. Our return down the old Donnelly Flats track connected with the loop track and our final cache of the day. It's surprising how hidden treasure motivates kids and takes their minds off the hard work of climbing a hill.

It was great to have Carla Rodriguez accompany us on this trip. Sadly we will be losing her from the club when she returns to the USA to take up a new vet posting in September. Those of us who have had the pleasure of her company on various tramps over the last year will have appreciated her enthusiasm and easy going manner. Good luck Carla.

### Personal Locator Beacon Activation

Bev Akers

While out tramping in the foot hills of the Tararua Ranges behind Waikanae (Hemi Matenga), we had to activate my Personal Locator Beacon (PLB). We were on a steep section, heading up, when the accident happened. A lady slipped, landing on her left shoulder. Immediately she said "it's my upper arm, I heard the crack." Once we made her warm and comfortable, wrapped in a Fly, we used a Cell Phone, to call 111 for assistance. They asked for our co-



ordinates, my reply was, “I’ve got a PLB, would that help?” It seemed as though we were struggling to provide them with all the correct info, of our whereabouts. The silly thing was, we were just above all the houses behind Waikanae but in dense bush, on a steep, slippery slope.

After activating the PLB, we should have stayed put. Between the 5 of us, we gave them 3 cell phone numbers in case of battery failure, to keep in touch. The Helicopter arrived but because of the dense canopy, they could not see us – but had a good PLB signal. We then received a call to all head up the ridge to find a clearing – patient included. Because of the noise of the Helicopter hovering directly above us, the call was misunderstood. So off we went very carefully, looking after our patient so as not to slip. After 40 minutes a Paramedic arrived behind us - “great we were in safe hands”. The down side was that we had to return back down to our original spot. Our poor patient was over this by now, but continued with no complaints (model patient). So as you can imagine, this took time. She should not have had to go through this ordeal.

The Helicopter had winched the Paramedic down through a tinny gap just below where my PLB was activated. About 2 hours later, she was winched into the Helicopter, heading to Wellington Hospital with 2 broken bones in her upper arm, just below her shoulder.

In future I would activate the PLB and sit tight. Cell phones confused us and wasted a lot of Helicopter time and fuel plus the Paramedic had to go looking for us. Out of our regular Wednesday tramping group of 30 odd people, 4 of us carry our own Personal Locator Beacons plus our club (Manawatu Tramping & Skiing Club) own a couple. Since this accident, I know we will have more owning their own. The Paramedic said they focused totally on the PLB signal but finding an opening in the dense bush, for recovery was the issue.

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July: ‘SNOW AT SUNRISE’**

*Guido Roberto and Bob Hodgson*

Nineteen Wednesday trampers were all geared up for Longview Hutte but on the day, the prospect of being blown off the ridge had us change tack (track) and head to Sunrise Hutte instead. With extreme weather elsewhere, the track to Sunrise Hutte (1280 m) is a predictably sheltered and enjoyable option, existing in a climate of its own.



Morning tea on a WET track



Cold outside but warm inside

From the Triple X car park at 10:00 am, the long-legged laddies (the “accelerati”) loped up the hill and within two hours had the wood burner warming up the hutte. Meanwhile, the “ploderati” enjoyed their scan stops and “chewed the fat” amidst the magnificent podocarp and beech forest. Two trampers in the rear had overshot the acute right hand turn into the Sunrise Track proper but were gathered in OK. All reached the hutte by 12:40 pm – a



700 m plus climb. It was WET and the snow on the upper reaches of the track and in the tussock basin around the hutte added to the chill. After tucker, drinkies and a warm up, we headed downhill. By 3:30 pm we were heading for Dannevirke and more drinkies + buns before returning to the mighty Manawatu and long soaks in the hot tubs.

Closer to home, five indefatigable Wednesday trampers had sniffed their way along the Gorge Track pausing to observe the recently – erected “Whatonga”, a 6.2 m high steel monument commemorating Whatonga the chief from whom the Rangitane people trace their descent.

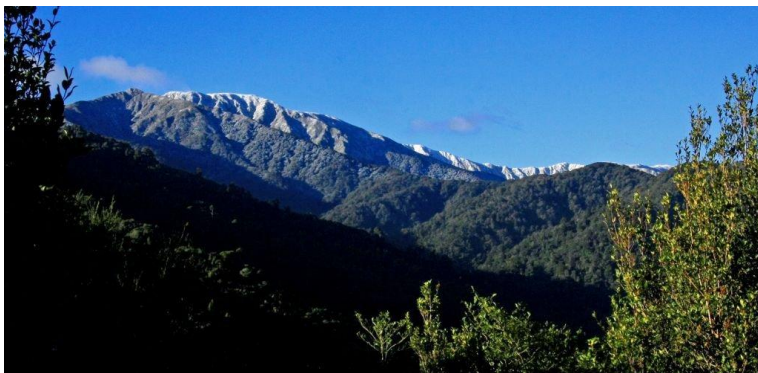
**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July: Pukeatua**

*John Thornley*

The Thursday group, with fifteen on this trip, walked to the high point (Pukeatua, ‘peak of the gods’, 812 m), a 25 km section of Te Araroa Trail from Otaki Forks, our starting point, to the Waikanae River Bridge. It was the first day we met winter snow, in shady spots along the higher track, but more spectacular on the distant high peaks of the Tararua Ranges. Despite a gloomy weather forecast several days before the trip, as it does so often, it cleared up for our day in the hills. Thanks to Gordon Clark and John McLeod for sharing the van driving and thanks to John Brock for his usual gallery of photographs of the trip. One of these days, we should organise transport at both ends of the track and walk the full 25 km length.



Morning tea in the sun *John Thornley*



Stunning views of the Tararua ranges *John Thornley*

**12-13<sup>th</sup> July: All you can eat at Waihohonu Hut**

*Adam Matich*

In line with the minimalist approach of this trip, we took the shortest route in; from the Desert Road. We were fortunate as the weather hadn't turned nasty yet. It was merely slightly damp and breezy and we made it to the hut in 70 minutes minus the expected misery. While some unpacked and got the fire alight, the new people to the area went for a walk to the historic hut. There was plenty of firewood, so the hut soon warmed up, but unfortunately, the weather outside never got properly inclement and so while we were warm and dry, we could never really achieve a serious level of smugness about not being out in it. Three other groups of people turned up as



The pikelet master

*Nicola Wallace*



the afternoon progressed, the numbers eventually totalling 24; still a comfortable number for this palace.

Pikelets, mulled wine, the admittedly puerile newspaper, and crosswords helped us make our way through afternoon tea with a bit of a rest before trip leader was badgered into starting on dinner and desert, as everyone was tired after a hard afternoon of doing very little. Unlike previous years we didn't over eat and so no one went to bed feeling ill. Ultimately, early-to-bed was encouraged by nanny-DOC as around 9 p.m. the lights went out. There was no hot water and the radiators in the bunk rooms weren't radiating. In the future DOC, try keeping it simple. Maintaining hot water systems in back-country huts is a bit more difficult than in suburbia!

Next morning, those who truly appreciate food had a proper cooked breakfast, while the light-weights had to make do with 'the usual'. It was down-hill on the way out and the weather had improved, so it was a pleasant hour-long ramble to the van. We had plenty of time for morning tea in Waiouru and cleaning up our mess when we got home. We were Steve Glasgow, Jenny McCarthy, Bernadette Heaphy, Dave Mitchell, Mark Learmonth, Nicola Wallace, Jean Garman, and Adam Matich.

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> July: Hihitahi Forest Sanctuary & Zeke's Hut** *Bob Hodgson*

13 hardy Wednesday trampers left the Hihitahi Forest Sanctuary roadside car park at 9:15 am under wintry conditions. The single person swing bridge formed the expected bottle-neck before we crossed the paddocks to the



Connors first swing bridge

boggy start of the track. Recent rains had enhanced the challenge of the deep mud but this group are of stern stuff and so marched on undeterred by either the mud or the brisk 4°C temperature. The next challenge, the steep climb with a 1 in 4 gradient over 700 m proved to be less of a challenge than in previous wetter years, so all the party having made it to the top, those intent on making it to the Hut were released and the tramp divided. The seven who made it to the hut included Connor, 15 year old grandson to the reporter. Connor, on his first "real" tramp, demonstrated a high level of fitness and the ability to match the speed of the most experienced trampers in the group. The tramp took place on a rough day; we experienced heavy rain, sleet and snow, thankfully all with little wind. The low cloud ceiling had the result that there were no grand views to enjoy but we all had the joyful experience of watching green fern leaves change from green to white as the snow accumulated on them. We did not see much of the bird life but enjoyed the mature mountain cedar, beech trees and abundant ferns. The wet and slippery track ensured that there were many muddy

bums in evidence, but of course, all well clad for the conditions! Thirteen trampers had emerged safely by 2:30 pm and, recharged by a visit to Le Café Telephonique on Huia Street Taihape, we were all safely home by 5 pm. Thanks to drivers Chris and Dennis and photographer Maureen.

PS. How about Wednesday and Thursday Trampers each hosting two high school students on mid-week tramps in the School holidays?



The 'Hut Party' during a dry spell



## New Members

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 confirmed at the next monthly committee meeting. 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. For further information or an application form please see the club website.

## Club Equipment

Hire equipment: we have packs, 2 and 3 person tents, tent flies (small and large), snow mats, gas cookers, size 8 and 9 boots, billies, food dehydrator and two bivvy bags. Ice axes, crampons, and helmets are also available. We have two personal locator beacons (PLB) for which there is no charge. Contact the Gear Custodian: Peter Rawlins on (06) 356 7443.

## Website | [www.mtsc.org.nz](http://www.mtsc.org.nz)

This contains club information, photos, contact details and back issues of this newsletter, Beechleaves.

The club website is maintained by Howard Nicholson (06) 357 6325 and is kindly hosted by **InSPire Net**, a locally based company.

## Facebook | <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>

## Accommodation at the MTSC lodge on Mount Ruapehu

The lodge is close to Iwikau Village, has power, heating, hot showers and is well stocked with food. Members and their guests are welcome.

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

	Members	Guests
Adult	\$30	\$45
Secondary School	\$25	\$40
Primary School	\$20	\$35
Pre-school (3-5 yo)	\$10	\$10

The Lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860.

## Booking the MTSC Van

For bookings:

- Contact Ken Mercer (06) 356 7497.
- Cancellations should be made as soon as practicable to accommodate other potential users.

A fly (in the passenger door) and a Personal Locator Beacon (in the glove box) are available for use free of charge on trips.



## Contact Details

**Postal Address:** MTSC, P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North

### Committee 2013 - 2014

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Mini-Bus Manager	Ken Mercer		06 356 7497

### General Committee

Bev Akers, Bob Hodgson, Howard Nicholson, Rob Pringle, John Beech

### Appointees

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