

beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



ISSUE 1: February 2015

MAIL: MTSC, P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North 4440 | WEB: 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

Tuesday 3rd February: Talk + BYO BBQ Volunteer track work - Ian Ritchie

Ian Ritchie can be described as a practical trumper who is passionate about preserving and enhancing our access to the bush. He has a long record of cutting and clearing tracks and concern for the lack of maintenance of some of the huts in the hills, such as, the much-used A Frame. In this talk Ian will share some of his experiences and aspirations.



Tuesday 3rd March: Tararua Northern Crossing from East to West - Jens Dietrich

Jens moved to NZ in 2003 from Namibia, and loves tramping. In his former life when he grew up in East Germany, he explored the beautiful mountain ranges of Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria on foot with equipment as seen in Intrepid NZ (and worse).

"We did the Tararua Northern Crossing East to West in January 2011. This was our annual "father and son trip", my son Max was 17 at the time.

It took us four days, which can be summarized as follows:

- Day 1: EASY, then CONFUSING from the Holdsworth road end to Mitre Flats via Atiwhakatu
- Day 2: EXHAUSTING - from Mitre Flats up to Mitre Peak, then via Girdlestone to Tarn Ridge Hut
- Day 3: SCARY - over the Waiohine Pinnacles via Arete down to Te Matawai Hut
- Day 4: WET - walking and swimming out the Ohau River back to Levin "



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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 and membership@mtsc.org.nz.

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



ISSUE 1: February 2015



MTSC President: Linda Campbell

president@mtsc.org.nz

We recently spent some time in my home town, Wellington, doing more than visiting friends and family. Wellington must be the best capital city in the world. Not only is it vibrant and attractive, it really is a city for those who love the outdoors. As teenagers my sisters and I spent a lot of time walking the hills around and near Newtown, with Mt Victoria being a favourite. Now there are so many places to walk and for mountain bikers to ride a very short distance from the CBD. Probably thanks to Zealandia the bird life is really taking off. While walking on the hills around Karori we saw kaka, kakariki, tui and Tim even saw and photographed a saddle back. Zealandia itself has approx. 34 km of walking tracks and is a great place to spend the day. We really enjoyed our time there but the high light of our holiday has to be sitting on top of Mt Hector admiring the views in perfect conditions. Whether you are walking the hills or travelling the tops take care out there.

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

NOTICES and INFORMATION

New Members

MTSC welcomes Carole Kennerley (Palmerston North), Helen Peek (Palmerston North), Lois Meyes (Whakatane), and Margaret and Ian August (Shannon) to the club.

Your PLB is Useless if You Are Not Carrying It

New Zealand Search and Rescue has a website on Personal Locator Beacons which has an article describing several real-life beacon activation scenarios. These are a useful reminder about carrying using PLBs correctly. The article can be found at [Real Life Scenarios](#)



Booking Huts on the Mt Holdsworth – Jumbo Circuit (Tararua FP)

This summer DOC is trialling changes to the booking of Powell, Jumbo and Atiwhakatu Huts. The idea is to ensure these huts are attractive destinations for families and entry level trampers as well as traditional users.

From 18th Nov. 2014 to 30th April 2015 Powell and Atiwhakatu huts can be booked, while Jumbo hut is first come first served. There will be an opportunity for key user groups to meet with us both half way through, and at the end of the trial in order to assess the outcomes and to discuss ongoing arrangements.

Booking in these huts is an option for people wanting to be guaranteed a bunk. Visitors who don't book may have to utilise floor or deck space if no spare bunks are available. Annual Hut Pass holders need to consult [frequently asked questions](#) to find out how to make a booking.



The booking system is also a tool for the public to assess expected numbers of visitors due to stay overnight at either hut. If you have any further questions [E-mail](#) the Masterton Office or you can phone me: 0272 217166.

Chris Lester

Conservation Partnerships Manager (Manawatu Wairarapa District)



Manawatu WALKING FESTIVAL

ages and fitness levels, with plenty of options to choose from including the Manawatu Gorge Track, a twilight beach walk where you can get sand between your toes and an urban art and sculpture walk to soak up the City culture. There is even a vineyard tour with tasting and a farm walk thrown in for good measure.

Hosting this festival is a wide range of experts ranging from tramping guides and historians through to storytellers, nature experts, experienced walkers and photographers. What sets this festival apart from other walking festivals is we will be connecting walkers with hosts (guides) of similar interests – all of whom want to share their knowledge to help enhance your walking experience in Manawatu.

BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL – Details are on the [Website](#) and [Bob Hodgson](#) is our club contact person.



"The [Manawatu Walking Festival](#) will be on the 20-22nd February 2015. The event is focused on bringing together walkers from around New Zealand to experience the variety of great walks in the Manawatu.

There are walks for all

Books on Tramping in New Zealand

Tony Walsh, from Waimana (Eastern Bay of Plenty) has published "Boots n' All" as a follow up to his book "The Black Singlet Brigade". Boots 'n' All contains stories about real and unusual people from remote New Zealand locations and Australia's desert lands. The Black Singlet Brigade is a memoir centred on Te Urewera and the characters Tony encountered therein. Tony's books are being marketed under the Local Books scheme for self-published authors in an effort to help them gain a wider audience for their work. [More info and an order form are available here](#). The books can be ordered direct from BMS Books or you can order them through your local booksellers.

Kind regards: Michael R. Smith (BMS Books), Email: ms@bms.co.nz, URL: www.bms.co.nz

If you are lucky enough to see any Whio, we would love to hear from you. We need to know where and how many you saw.

Other valuable info you could give us:

- Whether you saw a male (he whistles) or a female (she growls/croaks).
- If you saw ducklings we would love to know their approximate size and how many you saw.

Record the information in the DoC Hut Book and/or send information to: Palmerston North DoC office; Ph - 06 350 9700 Email - manawatu@doc.govt.nz or text Janet 027 341 8945.



RWP
RUAHINE WHIO PROTECTORS

In association with the



UPCOMING TRIPS

Trip Intentions

The email address for leaving trip intentions is 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.



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.

FAMILY	All welcome, casual pace, any age
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 Med/Fit
TECHNICAL	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.

February Wednesday Tramps		
Date	Leader	Phone
4	Bob Hodgson	356 2915
11	Robert Bruce	329 7858
18	Suzanne Clark	356 8322
25	Sue Pither	357 3033

February Thursday Tramps		
Date	Leader	Phone
5	Richard Ellis	357 6410
12	Nigel & Jill Spencer	329 8738
19	Christine Scott	354 0510
26	Royce Mills	355 8556

February Weekend Trips				
Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
1	Makairo Track	Easy	Jenny McCarthy	06 376 8838
1-2	Lodge Work Party	All	John Lyttle	027 433 6307
6-8	Northern Ruahines	Medium	Mark Learmonth	355 9143
6-8	Partners at the Lodge	Family	Ken Mercer	356 7497
14-15	Mangahao Flats Work Party	Med./Fit	Jean Garman	021 176 0209
20-22	Manawatu Walking Festival Guiding	Easy	Bob Hodgson	356 2915
22	Atene Skyline	Easy	Linda Campbell	323 3836
28-1	McKinnon Hut	Fit	Jean Garman	021 176 0209

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



6-8th February Waitangi Day Weekend: Partners at the Lodge

Ken Mercer

Family

06 356 7497

During the ski season we enjoy the company of many people from the length and breadth of NZ and get to know each other quite well. There are many couples who don't both ski and this is an opportunity to bring your non-skiing partner up the mountain. Nothing is planned so if sitting on the deck reading appeals then go for it! We could stroll behind the lodge, take a tourist trip up the chair lifts, or do one of the local walks.

14-15th February: Mangahao Flats Work Party

Jean Garman

Med/Fit

021 176 0209

Hopefully a quick walk in up the track to the hut, although clearance of any small to moderate windfalls along the way may slow things down a bit. Then it is the annual, cleaning-firewood-vegetation clearance WORK to be followed by the excessive amounts of good food PARTY. Sunday there will be the options of coming out down none, part or all of the river (swimming guaranteed) - so people can chose if they want to get wet or not. If anyone wants to take a more leisurely tramp in/out to join in the socialising at the hut you are very welcome.

1st February: Makairo Track

Jenny McCarthy

Easy

06 376 8838

This will be a gentle walk along the Makairo track which is on the edge of the Waewaepa Reserve. We will be going from west to east it is a very gentle climb along the old road. It will be suitable for all trampers and if time allows we can have coffee at the Tui Brewery on the way home.

TRIP REPORTS

5th November: Mokai Station up onto Mokai Patea Range

Bob Hodgson (photos: Maureen and Rita)

On a day with a mixed forecast 23 trampers made an early start to meet at Gravity Canyon and make a brief fore into the Makino Reserve track before motoring on to the Mokai Station to start the main tramp. At 10:15 a.m. we launched ourselves up the steep initial climb then followed the meandering poled track through rough pasture for about 3km with a morning tea stop included. There then followed a very steep climb on an open hillside with a rise of 342 m in 905 m to the first pole in the alpine vegetation at 1194 m. This was the lunch and



turning point for about half of the party who enjoyed the superb view as they ate and crouched low out of the chilly wind. The remainder of the party tramped on for about 20 minutes to the peak and junction adding a further 60 m. At these heights the wind chill was challenging. Two trampers showed discretion and halted below the final climb. All were safely down and out {!} by 3:20 p.m. We then drove to Gravity Canyon to view the facilities and to be served coffee. The weather was



kind to us although the wind was cutting. Thanks to Rita for a challenging tramp and to our drivers, including Chris, who drove the van.



A Sunny view from Mokai Patea Range

12th November: The Sledge Track

The forecast was poor and the sky was troubled, but undaunted the Wednesday trampers assembled at the head of the Kahuterawa Valley to "meet face to face with the New Zealand nature environment....a journey into the essence of Aotearoa". The quotation here is from the excellent Palmerston North City Council leaflet on the Sledge Track. It was muddy: very slippery in places and we experienced several hail showers that pelted us with rice shaped hail. In spite of the weather, it was an enjoyable tramp. Most tramped the Toi Toi loop and three tramped to the feature known as the "Nipple." All were safely out well in advance of the nominated deadline and it was a weathered group that enjoyed a well earned coffee at Rendezvous. Thanks to Ann W for leading the tramp and to our drivers including Chris who drove the van.

Bob Hodgson (photos: Linda and Evan)



15-16th November: Te Matawai Work Party

The forecast was pretty awful but we were committed - or was that we should have been committed. When we reached the Ohau River it was looking a bit dodgy so we chose the safe option and headed up Gable End Spur. It rained on and off not quite all the way to the hut..... Not too surprisingly, there was no one else at the hut and as the weather was still pretty damp we started with inside jobs - cleaning walls, windows, mattresses, etc until the weather improved sufficiently for some outside tidying and firewood cutting to be done. With the fire going the hut was nice and

Jean Garman



The group doing some track clearing

cosy and we had (for once) a controlled selection of pre-dinner nibbles and so still had room for dinner and dessert. Once we were well fed it was time to slink off to bed. On Sunday morning the weather was much the same – not great but a lot better than what had been forecast. A bit more work then we packed up and headed off.



Little green-hooded orchid

Figuring the river would still be pretty dodgy we decided to go out via Waiopehu Hut as we hadn't been that way for a long time and it would be nice to have somewhere dry for lunch. We slogged our way along the muddy track, doing a little track work along the way, admired some little green hooded orchids and even saw some brief glimpses of views.



Ivan splitting fire wood

After lunch it was just endless mud down the ridgeline back to the car. Luckily the weather had improved somewhat during the day so it wasn't too dismal. Many thanks to Ivan, Brian, Dave and Adam for all their dedication, enthusiasm and hard work.

16th November: Bush Blue-Light Tramp to Stanfield Hut

Tim Swale

Despite a week of high winds and persistent spring showers our group of seven young trampers along with adult helpers from the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club were keen to get out and do our planned tramp to Stanfield Hut in the Eastern Ruahines near Dannevirke. An encouraging weather forecast looked decidedly wrong as we approached the mountains which were totally obscured by rain clouds and the minibus shuddered in the strong gusts. However, as we arrived at Tamaki Road end the rain stopped and we all piled out ready for the steep climb to Holmes Ridge. Along the ridge track, way above



The group heading up the West Tamaki River



Teenagers being Teenagers!

the Tamaki Stream, there are great views of the Ruahine main range. We even surprised a couple of red deer on the track before dropping down to the stream again about 20 minutes short of Stanfield Hut.

As time was getting short, our main group had lunch before heading downstream back towards the road end while a faster group pushed on up to the hut. The water was slightly higher than normal and required a bit of care with the young people. It was fabulous to see how well the older boys looked after the younger members of the party and worked as a team sticking close together for the two and a half hours that it took us to work our way down the stream. Throughout the descent

of the stream negotiating rapids, fallen trees and thick buddleia infestations there were never any complaints, just an excited chatter and lots of laughter. Back at the road end car park and out of the protection of the bush, the wind

was still raging. A trail of wet footprints led to the minibus. Judging by the noise levels on the bus going home there was still some energy left!

22nd November: Whangamomona Railway-Line and Awahou Track Tramp

Adam Matich

An early start and the damp thought of staying in the Whangamomona camp-ground on a rainy night meant we were able to turn this overnighiter into a pretty easy day-trip. On the Whangamomona side of Whangamomona Saddle we walked 2 km along Mangare Rd to where the railway line started to veer sharply away. We passed through the stock-yards and climbed the short distance up onto the railway and walked 1 km along the tracks, then through the tunnel to the other side of the saddle. There we met a group of people



The Light at the End of the Tunnel



A steep section of the Awahou track

travelling the Stratford-Taumaranui railway line in golf carts. We all expressed our disappointment at the lack of rain, it being a hot day. One km from the tunnel got us onto a farm track (which is a legal road according to the WAMS website) that we followed through the locked gate to highway 43. An easy half hour walk up the main road saw us at the Whangamomona Saddle picnic table for lunch (2 hours).

After lunch we headed south from the saddle on the Awahou Track, which is shown on the WAMS web site but not the LINZ topomaps. This track looped around to the east and then back north on some quite sharp ridges in some pleasant, open Tawa, Black Beech, and a little bit of Kamahi and Rewarewa, to eventually drop onto highway 43 where it crosses Awahou Stm. We then had a 1.3 km walk back to the car (4½ hr day) and only just had to put our raincoats on for the last 10 minutes, so didn't really experience the proper rain until back near Stratford. We were Mark Learmonth and Adam Matich

26th November: The Wednesday Trampers meet the Challenge of Pukeatua and its Mud

Bob Hodgson

On a day in which the early weather promised little, 20 plus trampers enjoyed the challenge of Pukeatua. Starting from the Fence-line car park, Otaki Forks we followed the Fence-line loop track to the junction of the Pukeatua Track and the steepest part of the tramp (1 in 3.4). We then climbed up into the grassy meadows and on into the forest in a near continuous climb through ever changing vegetation including some lovely goblin forest to a rocky outcrop where lunch was enjoyed a mere 70 m from the Pukeatua high point and trig marked by an unimpressive rusty pipe. (A total height gain of 655 m) Almost all of the party made it to the trig and, all returned safely to the car park by around 4:15 pm. A feature of the tramp was the



Lunch just before Pukeatua Peak

Maureen

very many muddy sections of the track for which last week's tramp had provided suitable training for most of the party. Mud, Glorious Mud, Again! Thanks to trip leader Lynn, our drivers including Van driver Evan.

6-7th December: Waterfall Hut

Adam Matich

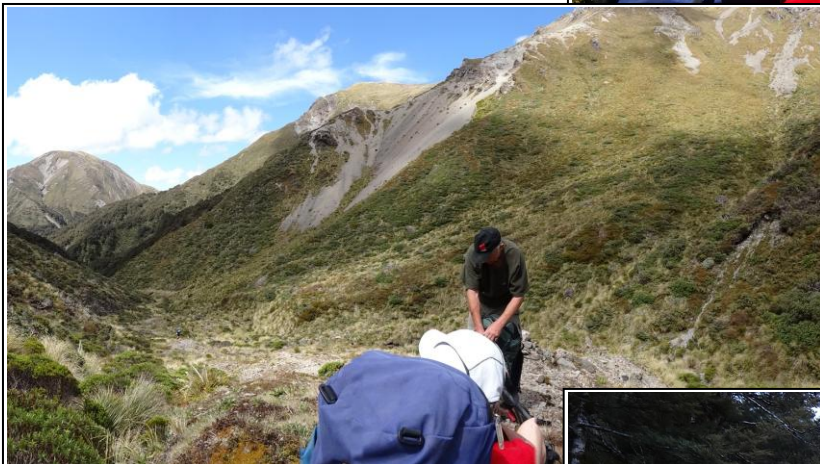
We made our way up the Waipawa River on what was the first sun-burn over-nighter for the season. It took 2¾ sunny hours to reach Waipawa Saddle, the steep section in the bush just 15 minutes before seemed steeper than it once was. The Waipawa River, however, was pretty good travel; especially with the marked routes cut through the scrub on the flats up-river of Waipawa Forks Hut. Even the lower, gorgy section was pleasant.

The descent into the Waikamaka River is getting dicey in one section as the track is



Looking up to Waipawa Saddle

still eroding away. It was necessary to hold grimly onto the leather wood for a very short section as the footing is about as stable as a politician's promise. Once into the river it was again pleasant, easy travel. Malcolm spotted a deer on a slip not long before we



On the way up to Rangi Saddle

reached Waikamaka Hut (4 hr) and we were thankful no one was toting a fire-arm. We had other places to go and other things to do! Waikamaka Hut (Heretaunga TC) has had a recent repaint and is looking very tidy.

Most of the travel up the side stream to Rangi Saddle was pretty good. There were a couple of wind-falls to wind through, but nothing nasty. The final 80 m climb up through the Spaniard-infested tussock to the



Getting ready to leave Waterfall Hut

saddle was difficult, however, and some party members had a sit down to think about why they were doing this. Next day, on the way out, Malcolm found a much better line of attack: from the Waikamaka side it is best to climb right, out of the gully up a shingle slope and then sidle across to the saddle. All of this totally avoids the Spaniard and the poor footing on the approved route. The Rangi Creek side of the saddle is steep in places, but the track is well

defined and footing is much easier. Rangi Creek and Kawhatau River travel was straight-forward and rapid, the group arriving at the also tidy and repainted Waterfall Hut after a 7¼ hour day. It was a warm night and even Jenny seemed uninterested in lighting the fire.

The next day we retraced our steps and were 75 min quicker as we had 450 m less climbing to do and it was down hill on the difficult section of Rangi Saddle. The day was overcast, but the sun-burn was replaced by wind-burn in the lower Waipawa River which was just as blowy as Waipawa Saddle. We were Mark Learmonth, Malcolm Thomas, Jenny McCarthy and Adam Matich

14th December: Horopito Stream

Jean Garman

The top of the ranges was covered in a blanket of cloud that was spilling over from the east but it looked hopeful that we would get no more than gusty wind and some light rain. The wind was pretty chilly at the car park as we put on our boots before heading off to Shorts Track. After climbing to around 800 m we left the track and sidled round to the bush/farm edge which we followed to the Horopito stream. Aerial photos had shown that a side stream on the true left further up the valley had slipped out in a major way resulting in the first section of the stream bed being blanketed in rocks. This made for relatively easy travel, although the wind was quite strong in the open stream bed and the precipitation was somewhere between mist and drizzle, eventually we put on coats to avoid the slow but relentless saturation. After we passed the damaged side stream the stream bed remained rocky but was no



Adam and David climbing around some big boulders



In the fuchsia forest

longer raw, with plant growth and time making the rocks more stable. As the stream gradient steepened scrambling/climbing skills came into play. After squirming up through a large tree fuchsia beside a small waterfall a lunch stop was called just in case it got even harder further upstream and no decent place could be found for lunch. The sun was valiantly trying to shine through at this stage although there was still some moisture in the air.

After lunch it actually got easier as the rocks were significantly smaller and easier to climb up/around. During lunch we had made the decision that from 1070 m onwards we would look for the easiest way to regain the



Shorts Track (approx. 200 m above the stream) rather than slavishly following what remained of the stream into what would most likely be horrific leatherwood. At exactly this height there was another change in the stream character. We were now well and truly in the leatherwood zone and what had been a relatively open stream bed suddenly became very tight. It looked to be extremely difficult to carry on as it wouldn't always be possible to climb up in the water and the only alternative was bashing through thick leatherwood – all highly undesirable. Luckily for us there was a small side trickle that had slipped out badly giving a narrow finger of steep gravel heading in the direction of the track. Every meter covered on steep open gravel is significantly more pleasant than a meter in leatherwood so we headed up the gravel gut. Our luck held - it kept on going and going and going, although it did get pretty steep and we had to be careful not to knock rocks down onto the person below.

All in all it took us up 150 vertical meters before finishing in a wall of leatherwood. That only left 50 vertical meters of leatherwood to crawl/bash/slide/stumble/curse through. On regaining the track Adam produced some lovely chocolates from Munchkins to celebrate surviving the leatherwood and our last club trip before the Christmas break. The wind was still roaring above us but the sun was getting stronger and not too far down the track the very grubby (thanks to the leatherwood) rain coats were put away. Despite the less than summery weather it was still summer so we stopped for ice creams in Cheltenham on the way home. It wasn't a long tramp (5½ hr day) but it was good fun venturing into the unknown and finding a surprisingly good route through it all. We were David Harrington, Adam Matich and Jean Garman



The 150 m climb up the steep gut



2014 MTSC photo Competition

2nd place: Above the Bush-line

A South Island Summer: Tim Swale



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

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. 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

President	Linda Campbell	president@mtsc.org.nz	06 323 3836
Secretary	Tim Swale	secretary@mtsc.org.nz	06 376 6556
Treasurer	Arthur Flint	treasurer@mtsc.org.nz	06 356 7654
Chief Guide	Ken Mercer	chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz	06 356 7497
Membership	Judy Swainson	membership@mtsc.org.nz	06 358 4082
Newsletter Editor	Jean Garman	editor@mtsc.org.nz	021 1760209
Lodge Manager	John Lyttle	lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz	027 4336307
Mini-Bus Manager	Ken Mercer		06 356 7497

General Committee

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

Appointees

Lodge Bookings	Hugh & Liz Wilde	lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz	06 356 9450
Gear Custodian	Peter Rawlins	gear@mtsc.org.nz	06 356 7443
Ski Captain	Howard Nicholson	ski@mtsc.org.nz	06 357 6325
Social Convenor	Bob Hodgson	social@mtsc.org.nz	06 356 2915
Wednesday Trip Convenor	Bev Akers	bevakers@xtra.co.nz	06 325 8879
Thursday Trip Convenor	Merv Matthews	merv6817@gmail.com	06 357 2858
Facebook	Ivan Rienks	facebook@mtsc.org.nz	