

beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



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 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 “



Tuesday 7th April: DOC progress report - Rod Smillie

Rod is the DOC Conservation Services Manager for the Lower North Island Region. Come along to hear what DOC has been up to, what they plan to get up to and take the opportunity to ask those DOC related questions you have always wanted to ask.



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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.



MTSC President: Linda Campbell

president@mtsc.org.nz

A club trip to the lodge was a fantastic idea for Waitangi weekend. Seventeen of us not only enjoyed staying at the lodge but also enjoyed a few of the walks on offer. The weekend was a reminder of the great asset we have as a club. Sitting out on the deck in the late afternoon/early evening it really felt as though it was the holidays again. If you haven't used the lodge in summer before I recommend it is something you consider.

The year is going quickly and the AGM is fast approaching so it is time to consider what you could offer as a member of the committee and decide whether or not to put yourself forward. It is desirable to have a mix of Wednesday, Thursday and weekend walkers and skiers on the committee so all groups are represented at the monthly meetings. As I will have completed three years as president it is time for someone new to take over the position.

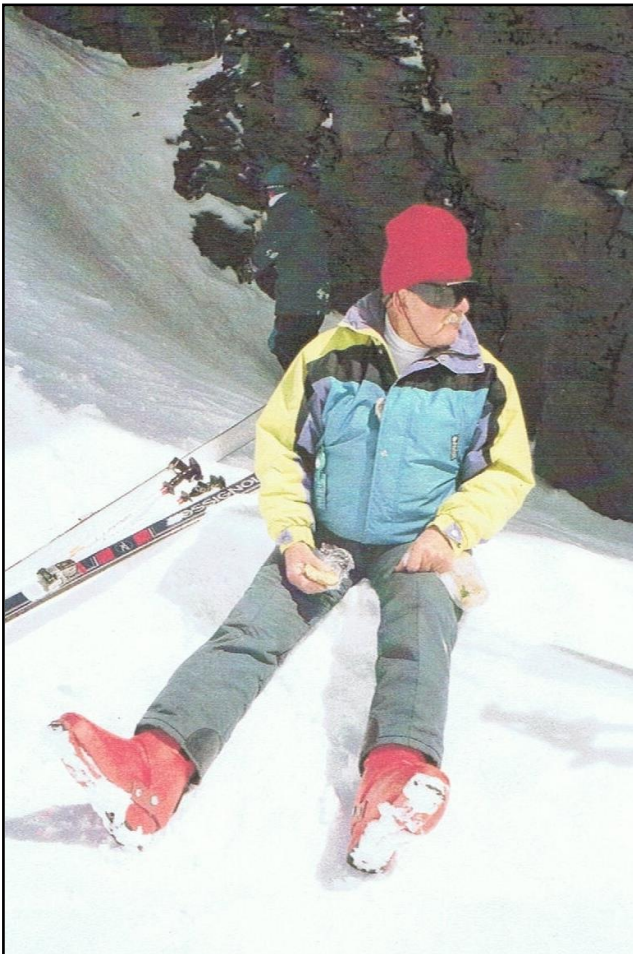
Enjoy yourselves in the hills but take care out there.

Linda

NOTICES and INFORMATION

DOUG PEACH

1919–2015



Our Club has a lot of history and with that comes the experience of good times in the outdoors with good friends. Older members of the club may remember Doug Peach who was a special friend to me and to many others. Sadly, Doug died on 26th January at the great old age of 95. Thankfully, he was never in pain.

Doug moved down from Auckland to Palmerston North in about 1975 and immediately became a regular trumper and skier. He skied until the age of 83. Doug had been the president of the Auckland Tramping club and regularly visited the Pureoras and Kaimanawas. From that moment on we visited those mountains regularly under his guidance.

Doug led several South Island Christmas trips to far off places – some (with food drops) lasting 18 days. For several years he was club president and was made a life member for his work for the club. For many winters he was lodge warden when school groups used the lodge. Doug did a lot of the cooking and also helped with ski instruction for these groups. He was a good skier and had skied extensively overseas. His expertise was much appreciated by the students.

Doug moved to Taupo not long after he retired and his first task was to cycle around the South Island on a very ordinary bike. This he did twice. In recent years he moved to a unit at

Whararangi run by the Salvation Army. After suffering a stroke Doug went into full-time care at St Johns Wood where he received very good care. He was lucid to the end although very tired..... but who wouldn't be?

Happy memories, good friend.

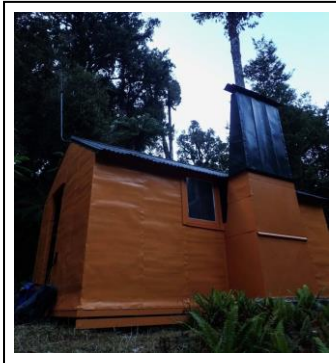
Trevor Reynolds



SUBS DUE SOON (but not quite yet)

Towards the end of March the invoices for your annual subscription to be an MTSC member will be sent out with the next (April) newsletter. Due to the rise in cost of printing & postage, regrettably, we need to increase the subs for those who receive a hard copy of the newsletter. The increase is \$5, which brings the single sub to \$45 and the family sub to \$60. If you only receive the newsletter by email the subs stay the same (\$35 and \$50 respectively).

PLEASE NOTE: we have changed our Bank account, the new account number will be on your invoice.



Mid-Waiohine Hut gets a freshen up

Mid-Waiohine hut in one of the least modified ex-forest service huts left in the Tararuas (i.e. it has an open fireplace). The ex-NZFS deer cullers group have recently painted the hut inside and out and there is a very good supply of split and stacked firewood - so a very pleasant destination.

Tararua Map: "Map of the Tararua Mountain System" - 1972 edition

A scan of this map can be located here

<https://tararuafkt.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/map-of-the-tararua-mountain-system-1972.pdf>

It is very interesting to see what has and hasn't changed over the years.



Admiring the central North Island Volcanoes from Pinnacle Ridge at Waitangi Weekend

Alla Selenznyova

There is only one way to achieve happiness on this terrestrial ball, and that is to have either a clear conscience or none at all.

OGDEN NASH



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.

March Wednesday Tramps		
Date	Leader	Phone
4	Leonie Lowndes	359 5005
11	Jill Faulkner	323 6094
18	Pam Dransfield	357 0008
25	Dennis Jensen	329 3229



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.

March Thursday Tramps		
Date	Leader	Phone
5	John Brock	329 4834
12	Gordon Clark	359 2500
19	Hugh Wilde	356 9450
26	David Grant	328 7788

February Weekend Trips				
Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
28-1	McKinnon Hut	Fit	Jean Garman	021 176 0209
28-1	Ruapehu & Tongariro	Med	Peter Rawlins	356 7443
7-8	Tutuwai Hut – Mt Reeves loop	Easy/Med	Alla Selenznyova	355 0862
7-8	Tarn Ridge	Med/Fit	Dave Mitchell	329 2803
14-15	Ngatiawa River, Kakanui	Med/Fit	David Harrington	06 839 5766
21-22	Bushcraft, Holdsworth	All	Tim Swale	06 376 6556
28-29	Waitewaewae Hut	Med	Linda Campbell	027 333 4493
28-29	West Waitewaewae River	Fit	David Harrington	06 8395766

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



28th February – 1st March: McKinnon Hut

Jean Garman

Fit

021 176 0209

jean.garman@fonterra.com

Due to there being no access to the Kawhatau base any more this is yet another trip looking at alternative routes to McKinnon Hut from the west. The plan (as always subject to change) is to head up the Hikurangi stream, up the spur that joins the main range north of pt1713 (apparently an old cullers' route) and around the tops to McKinnon for the night. Coming back I would like to try the spur to the west side of the range from the hut as far as pt1468 then try to pick a route down/around the big slip and downstream back into the Hikurangi stream.

7-8th March: Tutuwai Hut Mt Reeves loop

Alla Seleznyova

Easy/Medium

355 0862

I have done only a part of this loop up to the Cone Hut. This preview is mostly based on the reports I found on internet (see for example, <http://tramping-ruth.blogspot.co.nz/2014/01/waiohine-gorge-tutuwai-hut-loop.html>). We will start from the Waiohine Gorge road end car park. After crossing the swing-bridge we will follow the Cone Hut track, which climbs steeply to about 570m along the ridge. After an easy section on the top of the ridge the track descends to the Cone Hut. From the hut we will follow the track down the Tauherenikau River to Tutuwai Hut (about 300m), our accommodation for the night. This serviced 20-bunk hut is supplied with firewood but has no gas cooking facilities (you will need three hut tickets). Next day we will return via the track, which climbs to Mount Reeves, 899m. An old fire has opened up the bush on the summit and there are good views over the farmland in the Wairarapa plains and west into the hills. We will follow Mount Reeves track up to a point where an "unofficial Coal Stream track" branches to the left and follows down along the ridge back to the Waiohine swing-bridge completing the loop. The track is marked and although it is not shown on some maps, I've got a map where this track is shown. Just before the Waiohine swing-bridge we will have to cross the Coal Stream which should not be a problem unless it's flooded after a heavy rain.

7-8th March: Tarn Ridge

Dave Mitchell

Medium/Fit

3292803

Tarn Ridge Hut is more on the eastern side of the Tararuas on Tarn ridge, which forms part of the main range. I plan to take the most direct route, so leaving P.N. on Friday night I plan to go into Mitre flats Hut initially. This will take about 3-4 hours tramping above the Waingawa River. Saturday we have about a 1000 m climb up to Peggys peak (1545m) and from there to Mitre (1571m). There is a drop of 100m before climbing up to Brocket then SW to Girdlestone. From Girdlestone we descend onto Tarn ridge, the hut is located slightly below the ridge at 1393m, Saturday could be 4 to 6 hours. Tarn Ridge Hut has been repainted so it will be interesting to see how it looks. As usual trip leader organises Saturday nights meal. With a bit of luck we will get some fine weather and get some great views. Sunday we will retrace our steps and be out to the car park by late afternoon. This trip has been rated as M/F as it includes a steep climb onto exposed tops and up to 8 hours tramping a day.

14-15th March: Ngatiawa River, Kakanui

David Harrington

Medium/Fit

06 839 5766



Starting from end of Ngatiawa Road, behind Waikanae, we'll head up the Ngatiawa River to camp in the headwaters somewhere. Travel up the first half of the river is good but no idea on the top half. Sunday we climb up onto the Waitauru Road then west along road to visit Kakanui high point. From here its north along the road and down a spur back into the Ngatiawa River then back to the start.

Men carry out the body of Peter Langer, who drowned in the Ngatiawa River in 1964. Photographer: Barry Durrant



21st-22nd March: Bushcraft Course

Tim Swale

All Welcome

06 3766556

The Bushcraft course is to be run from the Holdsworth Road end. We will cover navigation, route finding, campsite selection, stoves, water safety, environmental care code, leadership, loss of route procedure, etc. on Saturday. There will be a night walk and possibly a campfire before camping for the night at Donnelly Flats. On the Sunday we will have a day walk to Rocky Lookout using some of the old tracks in the area. We will finish off with river crossing practise if it is safe to do so. There are likely to be some youngsters training for their Duke of Edinburgh's Award, so whether you want to learn or are willing to pass on some of your own skills, you are most welcome to join us.

28-29th March: Waitewaewae Hut

Linda Campbell

Medium

323 3836

Leaving from Otaki Forks we will follow the track to Waitewaewae Hut. A new track built to avoid the slip has added an additional hour to the trip so it is now a 5-7 hour walk from the car park to the hut. This walk is partly of interest as it is part of the Te Araroa Trail.

28-29th March: West Waitewaewae river

David Harrington

Fit

06 839 5766

Starting from end of North Manakau Road it's up the big climb to Waitewaewae high point then drop west down small spur to the top fork of the West Waitewaewae River. It's then all the way down the West Waitewaewae River to Island Forks and if time allows then down the Waitewaewae River as well. Sunday we'll return via ridge system past Mick and Thompson.

TRIP REPORTS

Wednesday 10th December: Wednesday Xmas Tramp - Te Mata Peak

Pauline Hall (Leader)

The weather didn't look promising with rain threatening but as we travelled towards Hawkes Bay it improved. After using the Superloos in the village we headed to the car park.

We had two groups of trampers, the uppers and the downers. The uppers took off with great gusto to climb the Giant Circuit of the park, the summit being at 399m. By then the weather was favourable for the climb. The downers of which I was one, meandered on lower tracks. As we got higher there were fantastic views of the Tukituki River and out to sea.

By strange coincidence the two groups met and had morning tea together. Continuing on to the Big Redwoods area for our Xmas feast. All food was laid on the picnic table and most of it devoured. Thank you all contributors. Yes we managed coffee on the way home at the Wild Bean.

16-19th January: Omarukokere Biv, Kaweka Forest Park

Adam Matich

On Friday afternoon East Kaweka Helicopters flew us into Omar Biv (Ngaruroro River) from The Lakes road end. Fortunately, it is not just a biv. but has a large vestibule attached which can be used for storage, cooking and overflow sleeping accommodation. After a warm night we headed up the hunters' track behind the long drop. It was more like a slightly unkempt DOC track and was both easy and no nonsense, so we had a steady 700m climb to the bush-line on Spion Kop; some of it



Omarukokere Biv

Adam Matich



through very open forest. As per usual in the Kawekas, travel across the shingly, tussocky tops was easy, and the morning climb and tops travel by the northern track through Otutu Bush saw us reach Otutu Hut after a relaxed five hour day. Shortly after our arrival a hunter, his daughter and their dog flew in so we had company during our long afternoon of sloth. There was free beer in the hut so Dave was happy. Otutu Hut is a very renovated forest service hut with a big veranda, a very useful addition that seems to be favoured in the Kaweka FP.



Dave studies one of the Kaweka signs Adam Matich

Sunday was another sunny one; we started early as the short-cut to Manson Hut required a 450m climb out of Manson Creek up onto the open Manson peak. A relaxed 3 hours saw us at the also veranda-sporting Manson Hut where we spent a couple of hours chatting to the two hunters, who were hurriedly cutting up all their meat in preparation for their pickup, and visiting Old Manson Hunt in the gully down below. Of course the delay meant that our 2¼ hr descent to Kiwi Mouth Hut was in the heat of the afternoon, but we didn't want to get there too early as we feared sand-flies. Fortunately, it was too hot for them and there was a good breeze blowing through the hut, which we had to ourselves. Kiwi Mouth Hut, while in very tidy condition, does

not yet have a veranda and is still in the old forest service six-bunk style.

On our last day we made our way up the steep, no nonsense Kiwi Creek track to the recently re-clad and painted Kiwi Saddle Hut, before dropping down to The Lakes; another sunny 5 hour day. Over the whole three days we encountered few people, and those were hunters who seem to be just about the only ones around who remember that this forest park exists. It mustn't have an entry into the Lonely Planet yet. We were David Mitchell, Mark Learmonth, and Adam Matich.

Wednesday 28th January: Toka

mostly written by Bob Hodgson

A 7.30am start saw a good turnout of Wednesday trampers traveling in a convoy of the van and four cars. As we left the sealed road an impressive dust cloud was generated as we made our way to what was expected to be a 28°C and sunny tramp. Within a kilometre of the car park we experienced a sharp shower and, much to our surprise, we were in light rain for the remainder of the trip. The faster group went up Shorts track, along the ridge to the signpost and



down Knights ridge in rain (rather than light rain) and a view limited to alpine flowers, a couple of waratahs and a misty ridge rising ahead. Most of the remainder followed the Deerford Loop, groups going left and right, to meet on



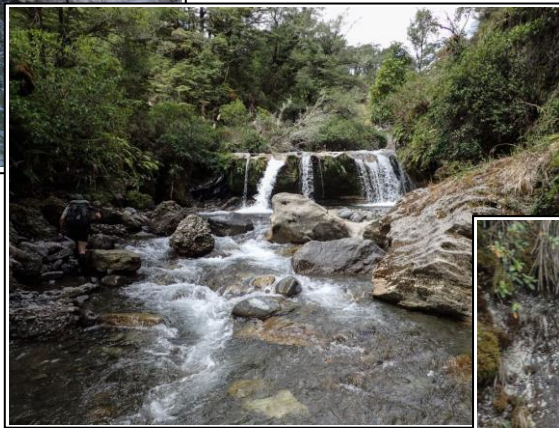
the Shorts track which was followed upwards to gain views of Toka. A small, select group confined themselves to the Deerford Loop. All were safely out by 3.30pm. We then converged on Ian's home in Cheltenham for coffee and a selection of cakes. It was a great but damp start to the tramping year! Thanks to our drivers including Evan and to Ian for his welcome hospitality.

31st January -1st February: Colenso River routes

Jean Garman

After weeks of blistering hot weather it was a relief to have a forecast for clouds with a few potential showers, however, as we were venturing into big rivers we opted to reverse the trip so the biggest river would be dealt with first before any potential showers came. It was a hot sweaty slog up onto the Mokai Patea Range, luckily the descent to Iron Bark Hut was a little cooler and we stopped there for lunch. After lunch it was river time; first heading down the Maropea River which was very low so no difficulties, then up the Mangatera River which started with a gorgy section that was quite slow, requiring waist deep immersions and lots of rock scrambling. After this the river travel got easier/faster but there were several more gorgy sections to wade/scramble through. Then there was a dramatic change in the river, it cascaded off a limestone edge and above this there were multiple sections where

huge limestone blocks had tumbled into the river. At first this was fascinating but the novelty rapidly wore off as it was quite awkward to get under/over/around them and we were quite pleased when we hit the branch of the river which Colenso hut is on. This limestone section is easy to avoid as the track between Iron Bark and Colenso comes down very close to the river just downstream of it and can be accessed via a limestone flow that the track

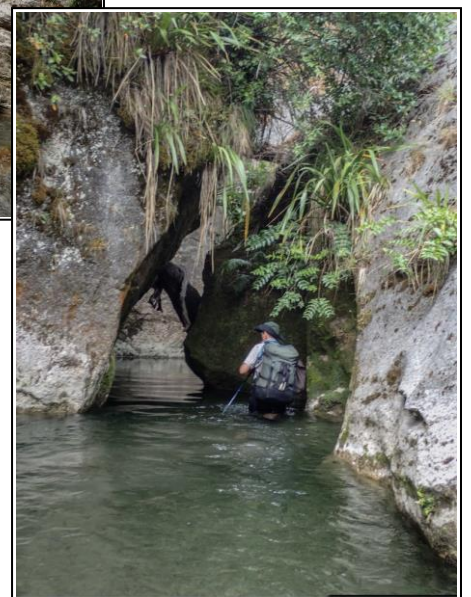


crosses and which is marked by a cairn in the river. All up it took us 4 hours (and we weren't rushing) although this

route would only ever be an option in low flows and with people who don't mind getting wet and a bit of rock climbing. We had a pre-dinner snack then chilled out catching up on some reading for the rest of the afternoon.

Just as dinner was being served we heard voices and 3 WTMC bods arrived. This was fortuitous as Adam was not that enthralled with the hut supplied bodice ripper he was reading and they provided evening conversation until bedtime.

We were all up bright and early and Adam and I headed off just before 7am, following the track into the Unknown stream – the humidity was very high and we hadn't gone far before the sweat was dripping. In the Iron Bark hut log book someone had written about not being able to find the waterfall detour in the stream and having to backtrack so we were extra cautious about keeping an eye on where we were and where the track should be. The stream was very easy open flat travel for quite a while, then it got a little



Scenes from the Mangatera River
Jean Garman

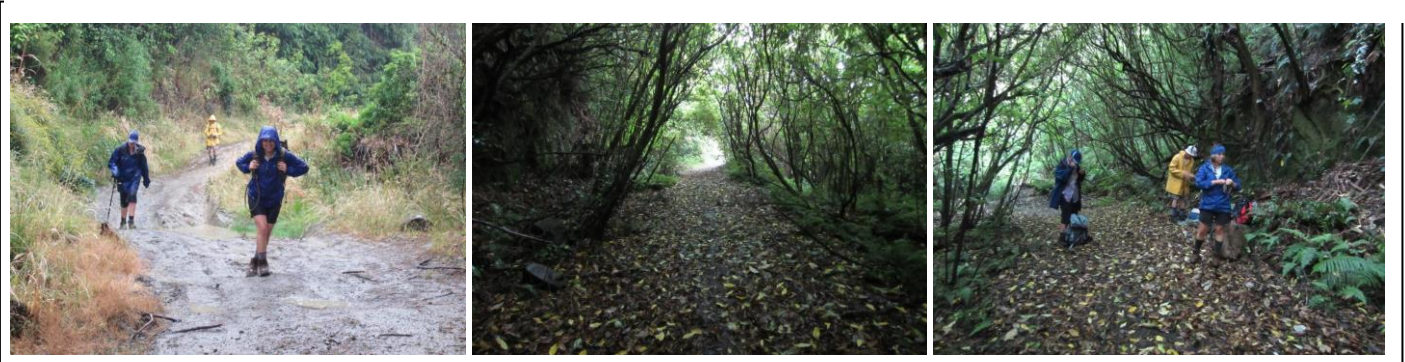


lumpy and went into a gorge where we had to climb down/around a few pools. We figured this was what had confused the other person as he was looking for a track before this and in fact it was just after it. Marked with a large orange triangle and sign it heads straight up a near vertical grassy slip face, going considerably higher than is marked on the map, all the way to the spur-line in fact, before plummeting back down to the river. From what we could see of the section being avoided it looks very not negotiable with vertical rock walls and a few drops. From there it wasn't far back to the Maropea river and Iron Bark Hut. Thanks to our early start it was too early for lunch so we climbed up to the park boundary and had lunch just under the trees as there was some very light drizzle. Out in the open we got a few spots of rain but nothing significant. The most frightening part of the trip came when crossing the farmland where there is a gate you are supposed to go through. When we got there on the other side of the gate was a heavily muscled black dude who was serenading the ladies on our side of the fence and pawing the ground. No way was I opening a gate to that so we had to follow the fence line till out of sight then navigate the electric fence. On the way home the rain finally came and it rained hard, we were most thankful to have had near perfect weather for our trip. We were Adam and Jean.

1st February Makairo Track

Jenny McCarthy

This is an easy walk, east of Palmerston North, along an old road through regenerating forest on the edge of the Waewaepa Reserve. On a nice day there are wonderful views down the valley but these were not on show today. We left the car at 9am in low, dampening cloud, although I ask the weather Gods nicely to lift the cloud they did not listen. It turned to drizzle and then to rain - everyone except us was probably happy that it was finally raining. The track slowly winds its way up the hill though the bush which almost making a tunnel of the track at times. We walked for 2 hours and then turned around, after a quick lunch stop we were back at the car at 1pm.



We were Helen Davidson, Alan Rae, Brittany Rhoten and Jenny McCarthy

Wednesday 4th February: No 1 Line to and towards Kiritaki Hut

Bob Hodgson

A good turnout of Wednesday Trampers (see group photo below) enjoyed a challenging tramp starting from the No.1 line road end, Ruahine Forest Park Entrance. We tramped up into coolish mist above about 750m with poor visibility. The track is steep and of a modest standard up to the Seat viewpoint at about 820m and then becomes a well-defined undulating track with some recent track work evident. Of the party of 25 about a third made it all the way to the hut and back. It was described by them as "a good hard tramp". The slow group made it to the Seat for morning tea then tramped on for about an hour and a half before returning to the Seat for lunch. The other groups made intermediate progress towards the hut. Although several cuts and bruises were evident, not to mention many muddy bums, all were safely out by 4pm. Thanks to DOC for the track extension to the hut. Thanks also to Trip Leader Chris T, our drivers, including van driver Chris.



The Kiritaki group sans the photographer

Maureen



The photographer sans the group

Pam

Thursday 5th February: Thursday Trampers make it to The Ruapae Falls

Richard Ellis

For the first tramp of the year I had a great turnout of 23. Four decided to walk other tracks in the area, so the rest headed up the hill from the Herepai track, stopping for morning tea at the high point at 655m. As the track is poorly marked in parts, Hugh tied marker tape as required. We progressed on and down to the Ruapae Stream arriving around 11am.

Progress was reasonably good up the river as the water level was much lower than our previous trip in October 2014. When we reached the gorge proper we realised the same log jam was still there so we were able to scramble up the tree to the top of the small waterfall. Various styles of climbing were used to achieve this, making somewhat amusing viewing. Once at the top of this obstacle it was only a few more minutes until we reached the main waterfall which is about 25m in height and quite spectacular with the water from the rain we had had a couple of days before.



Getting to the falls



The very beautiful Ruapae Falls

John Brock & Dave Grant

Some of the group decided not to tackle the waterfall and returned downstream to the flats, where we all



congregated later for a leisurely lunch, before retracing our steps back to the car park, arriving about 3pm. We headed to Eketahuna for coffee and ice-cream, everybody commenting at the great day and how lucky we were with the weather.

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

Ken Mercer

An earlier forecast for poor weather was replaced by an “improving” prediction and 14 people arrived at the lodge on Friday in time for lunch. John, Jeanette and Sebastian Lyttle took a bit longer to drive from Wellington. For an afternoon stroll we walked to Mead's wall which was quite exposed to the cold wind. Some returned to the cars and drove down to the Silica Rapids walk while the remainder headed north up the ridge for great views before looping around below RAL's storage dam.



En route to Tama Lakes

Ken

Saturday dawned clear and calm and the tentative plan to walk to the Tama Lakes became reality. The Lyttles, with 6 year old Sebastian, and Julie Kueh went as far as Taranaki Falls, but the rest continued to the upper lake where we enjoyed lunch in the sun. Back at the lodge the now easily accessible deck was enjoyed.



Enjoying the now easily accessible deck

Ken

Sunday again had perfect weather and, after cleaning and packing up, everyone except the Lyttle family took a chair ride to the cafe at 2020m. Marieke, her mother visiting from Germany and Julie stayed for coffees while Alla led eight others up the valley to Pinnacle Ridge. Tim and Ken climbed to one of the peaks, Glacier Knob, and discovered while descending that even late summer snow can be treacherous, particularly if one ice axe is still in the car!

It was a great weekend.

6-8th February Waitangi Weekend: Northern Ruahines

Nicola Wallace

The five of us, including Fred the dog, left Adam's at 9.55am, and headed for Taihape, where we had lunch. Come time to leave, the road was chokka-block with traffic heading South in an endless stream, which made it hard for us to leave SH1. Travelling on the long Gentle Annie road, the weather alternated between murky light showers, and brightening weather, leading me to say “ooh I think it's getting better”, only to come across more cloud and light rain a few kms down the road. Today this road didn't seem so long, and after 1pm we were heading up the quite civilised Comet Road, and after a brief inspection of Comet Hut, we started walking at about 1.30pm. As road ends always seem to be, it was cold, and a little damp, so I'd put my raincoat on.

After an easy climb of approx. 200m, the track headed through beech, followed by *pinus contorta*. This part of the track was very enjoyable, soft and easy on the feet, and basically flat. Soon we came to the 'big one', the 700+m descent to the Taruarau River. This really is a hill and a half, pretty steep, and the lack of tree roots on the track



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makes it like walking down a steep ramp, rather than a steep staircase. But the track was in excellent condition, and there were just a few small windfalls to negotiate on the bottom half. Just before we got to the river, Adam, who was just ahead of me, announced that there was a man at the river, sans clothing. By the time I got a look, he'd wrapped himself in a towel. The river was low, not even up to my knees, and at the other side we learned that three blokes from Wellington were staying at Shutes Hut. They had come in by helicopter a few days before, for a catch & release fishing holiday. At this point I admit that I felt a stab of disappointment that I wouldn't be sleeping in the historic hut.

After the river, the track zig-zagged steeply up a grassy hill, before following close to a side stream. This section was going on-and-on a bit for me, so I stopped and got the map out for a look. Couldn't be far away..... Then just around the corner was a boggy bit, the Ruahine Hut turnoff, and then Shutes Hut.



Shutes Hut



Diane's Hut

Nicola Wallace

Many times I'd looked at photos of this hut in books, sitting amongst pine trees. It was clear that the trees had been felled, as the hut was sitting in the open, and the felled pines were lying everywhere. Since Mark wasn't feeling the best, and didn't have any alternative shelter with him, it was an easy decision to let him have the last remaining bunk in the 4 bunk hut. Adam and Dave pitched their fly and tent respectively on the only flat bit of ground – next to the hut, which also happened to be the place where the helicopter lands. The rest of the ground was lumpy, bumpy and riddled with tree stumps. I found a fair place to pitch my tarp, but shared the space under the tarp with a stump.

After a time, the three musketeers returned from the river. They were having a proper holiday all right....and had brought everything but the kitchen sink with them, so much stuff that two helicopter trips had been needed to bring everything. They had drinks of all kinds aplenty, as well as a gas powered fridge to keep them cold. They were a very friendly bunch, and willingly shared their whisky with me after tea, with the promise of Bombay Sapphire gin the next night. The weather was still a little showery when I went to bed at about 9.30pm.

It was a chilly night, but the next day dawned clear. We all headed off up the hill behind the hut, going to Dianes Hut and maybe Taruarau Biv, but Mark still wasn't feeling the best, so he would go only as far as he felt like. The initial climb from the hut was up a very grassy track, climbing through manuka. The abundant grass made it clear that the track was seldom used. At the top, we left Mark, and carried on along the tops. It was a poled route, although sometimes there was a definite track, sometimes there wasn't, and the brown Waratahs blended in with the landscape, leading me to exclaim on several occasions "Oh there's the next pole.....over there" looking in some different direction. Fred had an off-track excursion, so Dave stayed to wait for him for a while, but we all met up at the Dianes Hut turnoff.



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I was happy to go to Dianes Hut and not the biv, and Adam was similarly happy. So the three of us headed down the very steep hill, like the hill of the previous day, very ramp like, but in excellent condition. The descent was only about 500m, and we arrived at Dianes Hut at 11am. A look in the hut book revealed that this hut has only been visited a couple of times in the past year. This hut was named after Diane Tresidder, a young hunter of some repute, who aspired to own her own farm. According to one of our Shutes hut-mates, Diane had committed suicide at the age of 21 after being diagnosed with terminal cancer. In Dianes hut is a newspaper article about Diane, and a photo of her looking very healthy at 20 years old.

After a quick bottle fill in the Koau stream, it was off uphill, until Adam called "lunch" about halfway up. I had to position my pack carefully, and hold on to all the lunch ingredients, to prevent the whole lot rolling downhill. Once up the top, Dave took off to Taruaauau Biv, just in case Mark had gone that far, and Adam & I ambled back over the pleasantly breezy tops. The weather was perfect – an ideal temperature with a gentle breeze. Towards the top of the hill before the descent to Shutes Hut, careful route finding was needed, as the track kept petering out at sections of bare brown earth. The route was, however, marked by cairns, and Adam soon had us at the top of the hill. A steep descent through the manuka and grass, and we were back at Shutes Hut at 2.50pm. Well in time for afternoon tea, this pleased Adam no end. Mark was at the hut, and hadn't gone to the biv. Soon after we got back, Dave & Fred returned. Only one person had been to the biv in the past year!

It was hot now, and the rest of the afternoon was spent lazing around in the deck chairs, checking out the Shutes Hut book, which is a huge hard-covered tome. Lots of interesting entries, and very creative poetry. Sleep came much easier this night, helped by a little gin & tonic, complete with lemon (as promised), but mainly because I was decently tired. An early start was needed the next day. The three boys were leaving tomorrow too, and the helicopter was due at 9am to pick them up.



Adam admiring the dryness

Nicola Wallace

Sunday dawned as another perfect day, and it was basically get up, eat, pull down tarp, and pack up. Mark left early, before 7.30am, so he didn't have to hurry, and I was the last to leave at 7.55am. I'm sure we were all thinking of that huge climb in front of us. By the time I was on the climb, the day was heating up, and I was suddenly glad of the early start. Partway up, I heard the helicopter arrive on its first run, I didn't see it, but Dave, who was a little further up the hill, did. I forgot about the copter after that, and soon I was in to the pine trees, and at the top of the hill surprisingly quickly. It was a quick walk out, and we were all back at the van soon after 10.30am.

In spite of the gorgeous weather, the drive from Comet Road to Taihape was excruciatingly long on this day, as we were all hungry and getting hungrier by the minute. 19km to go.....9km to go..... and finally we got there. SH1 was even busier than it had been on Friday, but we had a good lunch stop, and Adam had us back in Palmy before 2.30pm. Thanks to everyone for their good company, and thanks to Adam, for all the driving.

We were: Mark Learmonth (trip leader), Adam Matich, Nicola Wallace (scribe), Dave Mitchell & Fred.



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 stocked with food. Members and their guests are welcome. For Lodge bookings email Liz and Hugh Wilde lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz alternatively phone (06) 356 9450. To confirm your booking, payment must be made in advance by cheque to 179 Cook St Palmerston North 4410, by cash in person or internet payment Westpac account number 03 1521 022035300 (please email to confirm).

	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

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