

# beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



ISSUE 11: December 2015

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 Tuesday of the month, Rose City Aquatic Club Rooms, 50 Park Road, Palmerston North

### Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December The MTSC End of Year Function - an evening stroll followed by a convivial dinner

We will meet at the car park of the Esplanade Railway on the park entrance off Park Road adjacent to the Lido at **6pm**. We will then make our way at a conversational pace along the river bank, over the Bridge and up the road and track to ANZAC Park where, if it is not raining, magnificent views of the Manawatu and beyond will be enjoyed. We will then retrace our steps down to and across the bridge and through the bush tracks back to the car park.

By **7.15pm** we will arrive at the newly refurbished and earthquake strengthened, modestly priced, Halikarnas Restaurant, 15 Fitzherbert Avenue, where we will have a convivial dinner.

\*Please book with Bob **as soon as you decide you are attending but no later than Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November**.

[rmsbhodgson@inspire.net.nz](mailto:rmsbhodgson@inspire.net.nz)

\*\* Halikarnas Turkish Restaurant menu offers choices to suit both meat eaters and vegetarians, it is licensed and BYO.



### Tuesday Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> Red Rocks and Desert *Royce Mills*

Highlights of our visit to four National Parks in Utah, USA:

Arches NP, Canyonlands, Bryce Canyon and Monument Valley.

Huge rock arches, balanced rocks, natural bridges, giant monoliths and canyons.  
Endless sunshine too!



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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.



**MTSC President: John Beech**

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

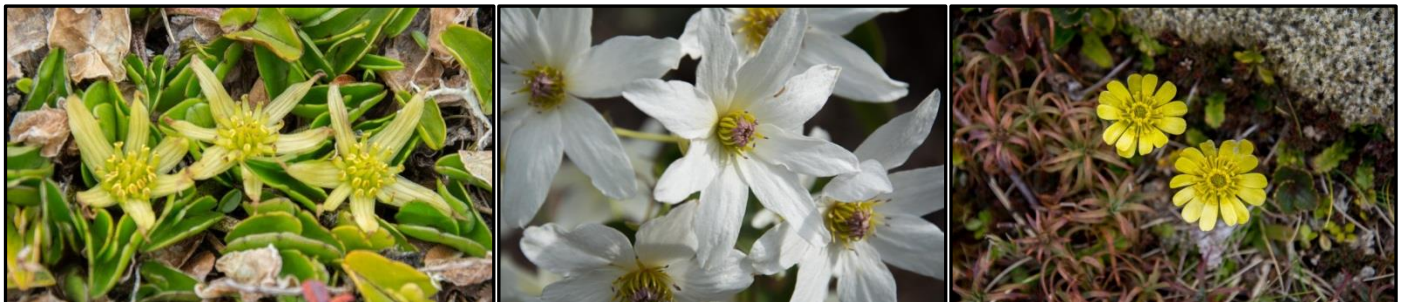
The last couple of weekends have seen some stunning weather and this bodes well for the summer. Looking at the posts on Facebook, the club has been active not just in our local area, but also in the South Island's Richmond Ranges. It's good to see us moving around the country a bit and brings back memories for me of the Christmas trips from back in the 70's. Multi day trips are always a great adventure and a chance to see parts of the country that are beyond what can be achieved in the usual weekend or day trips.

As many of you may be aware another of our precious huts burnt down a few weeks back. Casey hut was a popular 16 bunk hut in the Poulter river of Arthur's Pass National Park. It is disappointing to hear of these occurrences as it means DOC has to dig into its meagre funds to replace it at considerable cost. Huts do not burn down by themselves; it is usually carelessness on behalf of the occupants. Most likely the fire was left going or hot embers were left in the ash can. One would normally expect these fires to be in huts that have open fires but the ones I can remember including Anne, Siberia, Casey, Powell 2, all had stoves. Maybe the carelessness comes from thinking the closed in firebox will keep all the embers inside. However, it doesn't take much of a gust of wind down the chimney to blow hot embers out through gaps in the firebox and the results can be pretty disappointing for the next party hoping to get shelter. I think the best option is to leave the fire out in the morning when departing, or make doubly sure that all the embers are out.

Hope you all get a chance to get out in the hills over the Christmas period and with the holidays maybe even a few trips further afield.

*John*

**Spring Flowers**



*We welcome Paul and Sara Joice (family membership), Maurice McDonald and Karen Tutt to the Club.*

**Atiwhakatu Trailblazer Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 3.30pm – 8.30pm**

This is a mountain bike ride from the Holdsworth road end to Atiwhakatu hut and back. It is being run as part of the Huri Huri Bike Festival, 2016. The ride will be limited to 50 riders, aged 14 and over. The participants must have a high degree of skill and fitness, as well as the ability to lift and carry their own bike whilst navigating swing bridges, steps, river beds and slips.

This is a one off showcase event. It is not a profit maker; a donation of \$10 is being requested from participants which will be given to the Department of Conservation (DOC) to go towards maintenance of the track.

A Thursday afternoon/evening time slot has been identified as having the least impact on other track users. The ride is not a race; riders will move off in waves and they must give way to trampers using the track. Riders will have to wait at Atiwhakatu Hut for the tail-end riders to arrive before returning to the Holdsworth road end.

[www.hurihuri.co.nz](http://www.hurihuri.co.nz) or [www.facebook.com/hurihuribikefestival](http://www.facebook.com/hurihuribikefestival)





## Check Clean Dry

### It's still important to stop the spread of freshwater pests

Freshwater pests can be sneaky little buggers. Sometimes a waterway is affected but the pest isn't obvious yet so we're unaware we can spread the pest elsewhere.

Tramping can spread freshwater pests. If you get wet in one waterway and move to another, you could inadvertently spread a pest; - what you tread, you spread. Any tramp that involves crossing streams, rivers or any other waterways could spread these environmental nasties. Even days after you last tramped, your gear could still carry live pests.



Didymo, South Island river



Hornwort, North Island lake

The good news is it's easy to take action to stop their spread. Here's what you need to do to:

### Check, Clean, Dry

#### Only getting wet in one waterway-

If you only get wet in one waterway or it's a dry track, you're fine and there's no need to Check Clean Dry.

#### Several days between getting wet in one waterway and another:

**Check** and remove any obvious plant matter. **Dry** to the touch all gear that got wet and then **wait 48 hours** before entering another waterway. With boots pull out the insole to dry them thoroughly as these can stay wet well after the rest of the boot is dry.

#### Moving between waterways on the same day or within a couple of days:

**Check** and remove any obvious plant debris. **Clean**, soak or spray equipment till its thoroughly wet and wait for at least one minute. Make sure absorbent material is fully soaked. Use a solution of water and at least 5% detergent or 2% household bleach. Clean anything that got wet. A trip through the washing machine will work for clothing.

For tramping you can carry a small spray bottle and detergent if you are moving between waterways on one tramp. Palmerston North i-site and Hunting and Fishing Palmerston North have these to give away.

It's that simple. Always Check Clean Dry when you move from one river to another to protect our precious waterways.

For more information please see:

<http://mpi.govt.nz/funding-and-programmes/other-programmes/campaigns/check-clean-dry/>

If all goes to plan, the newsletters for 2016 will be in a simpler, more suited to being read on a screen format. This will allow for the inclusion of more photos and restrict the amount of editing required to make things fit.

## 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.

#### December Wednesday Tramps

Date	Leader	Phone
2	John Ridge	357 3744
9	Marion Beadle	323 3246

#### January Wednesday Tramps

27	Sue Pither	357 3033
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#### December Thursday Tramps

Date	Leader	Phone
3	Craig Ross	355 3445
10	Nigel & Jill Spencer	329 8738
11	Barbeque	

#### January Thursday Tramps

Contact a regular		
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### 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>	Up to 4 hours per day, pace slower than Easy/Med. Does not relate to terrain
<b>EASY/MEDIUM</b>	Up to 5 hours per day at a pace slower than Medium
<b>MEDIUM</b>	Up to 7 hours per day at a standard walking pace
<b>MEDIUM/FIT</b>	Up to 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.

"If you want to go fast, go alone.  
If you want to go far, go together." *African proverb*

#### December Weekend Trips

Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
5-6	Parks Peak	Med/Fit	Dave Mitchell	329 2803
5-6	Waiau Gorge Hut	Easy/Med	Mark Learmonth	355 9143
5-6	Lodge Workparty	All	John Lyttle	027 433 6307
12-13	Holly/Pouakai Loop	Medium	Adam Matich	022 358 8062
20	Full North Ohau	Fit	David Harrington	06 839 5766

#### January Weekend Trips

16	Ngatiawa River	Med/Fit	Adam Matich	022 358 8062
23-25	Tararua Main Range	Med/Fit	Dave Mitchell	329 2803
23-25	Walks around Wellington	Easy/Med	Alla Seleznyova	06 355 0862
30-31	Hector/Waiohine	Fit	Jean Garman	021 176 0209
31	Makairo Track	Easy	Linda Campbell	06 323 3836



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



## TRIP PREVIEWS

**5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> December: Parks Peak**    **Medium**    **Dave Mitchell**    **329 2803**

Parks Peak hut is on the eastern side of the Ruahines, in from Onga Onga. We will access it from the Wakarara road end. Initially we cross the Makaroro river, then head up the track following the ridge all the way to Parks Peak hut. If anyone wants to, we could drop down to the Upper Makaroro hut for the night. On Sunday we would walk down to Barlow hut following the river and back to where we started. Depending on what we do expect 4 - 6 hr days.

**5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> December: Waiaua Gorge Hut**    **Easy/Medium**    **Mark Learmonth**    **3559143 or 027 2004960**

Waiaua Gorge hut is located on the south/west side of Mt Taranaki. It is noted for the excellent views of the mountain and is a really good 16 bunk, 2 bunk room hut (expect other trampers to be staying at the hut). To get there we will utilize the Kahui & Oaonui tracks. As this is not a long or hard tramp it should suit anyone who would just like a nice weekend in the bush away from the city lights, without busting ones boiler. There are a number of options for those of you who may wish to make it into a longer day like a side trip to Kahui Hut or visiting Brames Falls (1 hr each way). Though not for me, I'm planning on going to the hut, putting my feet up and relaxing.

**5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> December: Lodge Work Party**    **All**    **John Lyttle**    **027 433 6307**

[john@bcsltd.co.nz](mailto:john@bcsltd.co.nz)

We will be completing the steps on the track to the lodge and installing new windows in the bedrooms. As well as this, we will be doing the usual tidy up and spring clean, so regardless of your abilities we can find you a job. These work parties are a great time to socialise and meet other club members. For the work party it is free to stay and eat at the lodge with a small charge if you want to catch a ride in the club van. The van will leave Palmerston North around 6pm on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December. Please email, text or call me if you have any questions or want to reserve a bed. All help appreciated.

**12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> December: Holly Pouakai Loop**    **Medium**    **Adam Matich**    **022 358 8062**

[adam.j.matich@gmail.com](mailto:adam.j.matich@gmail.com)

We will be starting this tramp from the North Egmont road end, from where we have a nice, steep climb up onto the Holly Hut Track (by a route that is yet to be decided) which we will follow around to Holly Hut. From there we take the Ahukawakawa track to the not so busy Pouakai Hut for the night. Next day we will take the Pouakai Track over Maude and Henry, onto the Kaiuaki Track and then the Ram Track back up to North Egmont. I expect 6-7 hr days so it should provide a reasonable amount of exercise. As per usual, be prepared to camp out if the hut has burned down or is full of obnoxious people!

**20<sup>th</sup> December: Full North Ohau**    **Fit**    **David Harrington**    **06 839 5766**

Starting from Poads Road car park, we'll follow the track up the Ohau River then up river to the North Ohau confluence. It's then all the way up the North Ohau River as far as possible before clambering up onto the track near Tawirikohukohu. We may get a bit wet in the river, followed by possible leatherwood encounters climbing out. We'll head out over Square Knob and cut back across to Poads Road somehow. It may be a long day!

**16<sup>th</sup> January: Ngatiawa River**    **Medium/Fit**    **Adam Matich**    **022 358 8062**

[adam.j.matich@gmail.com](mailto:adam.j.matich@gmail.com)

This trip starts from the Kapakapanui road end, from where we head off on the track for the short distance before it drops into the river. Then we will follow the river all the way up to the logging track a few hundred metres west of point 822, near Maymorn Junction. Most of the river is really easy going, especially during the summer low-flows. From there we will take the track up to Kapakapanui peak, and return to the road end on the southern track. On our way down we may also visit the Possumer's hut, if people are interested in bagging it.





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**23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> January: Tararua Main Range      Medium/Fit      Dave Mitchell      329 2803**

The plan for this long weekend is a round trip through Mangahuka and Andersons. We will probably walk into Field hut on Friday night, then head along to Mangahuka hut for Saturday night. On Sunday we'll continue around to Waitewaewae hut and then walk out to Otaki Forks on Monday. This tramp is a medium fit trip but pace should be fairly leisurely. As long as the weather is fine it will be a good opportunity to do this circuit.

**23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> January: Walks around Wellington      Easy/Medium      Alla Seleznyova      06 355 0862**

<http://wellington.govt.nz/recreation/enjoy-the-outdoors/walks-and-walkways>

There are a variety of walks in Wellington and its surroundings. Which walks we'll do would depend on the weather and group's preferences. Please let me know ASAP if you want to come on this trip as we will need to book accommodation early. I suggest bunk/family room(s) in one of the central backpackers (\$30-40 per person per night). Alternative suggestions are welcome. Please let me know ASAP if you are interested. Wellington is a very popular destination especially on this weekend. Call me or, preferably, send an email to [alla.seleznyova@icloud.com](mailto:alla.seleznyova@icloud.com)

**30<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> January: Hector Waiohine      Fit      Jean Garman      021 176 0209**

[jean.garman@fonterra.com](mailto:jean.garman@fonterra.com)

From the Waiohine Road end, we will follow tracks to Neill Forks hut then take to the Hector River and head for the Waiohine River. The main aim of this trip is to do the last few hundred meters of the Hector River which we wimped out of doing on the Full Hector trip several years ago. We were afraid that while we could get down this last section we wouldn't be able to get back up it to the start of the climb to Mangahuka. This time we are carrying on down river so it won't be an issue. We will be camping on Saturday night. I'm not expecting exceptionally long days but this trip is rated as fit due to the river travel including the necessity to pack float/swim.

**31<sup>st</sup> January: Makairo Track      Easy      Linda Campbell      06 3233836 or 027 333 4493**

The Makairo Track is in the Waewaepa Range out the back of Mangatainoka (near Pahiatua). Until the 1960s it was a public road but the rugged terrain and frequent slips made it difficult to maintain and it eventually fell into disrepair. Nowadays it is a popular track for hunters, mountain bikers and trampers. The walk climbs gently for about 6km to the summit, with some excellent views along the way. Most of the track is through a DOC reserve with attractive vegetation.

## TRIP REPORTS

**3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> October: Triangle Loop**

*Jean Garman*

Jenny, Adam and Jean set off up the Deadman's track in light rain which became progressively lighter until a few hours later it wasn't raining at all and the sun was making a good job of coming out. We checked the stoat traps



One stoat down....



Enjoying the sunshine at Triangle hut



Climbing to the Whanahuia Range

*Jean*

along the way and were rewarded with 2 early on but no more after that. Luckily the “up to thigh deep snow near Mangahuia” reported from the previous weekend had all melted and/or washed away so we were on top of Mangahuia in time for lunch. We decided to be brave and take the untracked ridge which ends a few hundred meters downstream of Triangle hut. Having been this way before, we knew we were in for a bit of unpleasantness through the leatherwood; unfortunately it carried on for considerably longer than we remembered. Once through this, the bush wasn’t too hard (although still not pleasant) and we landed at the end of the spur a few hours later. A quick hop upstream past some blue ducks and we were at the hut early enough to bask in the sun for the rest of the afternoon. With a bit of time on our hands, a good amount of firewood was cut and the hut/toilet was given a bit of a clean. The next morning, we headed up the track and out past Rangi hut in brilliant sunshine with a stiff cold breeze to keep us from overheating. Lunch was had near the arched bridge and we were home by early afternoon.

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October: Waitahinga Trails**

***Linda Campbell***

Five of us met in Whanganui and then travelled past Bushy Park to the start of the tracks on Junction Road. The gravel road was in good condition but as it had been dry for several days, rather dusty. Once we got going it didn’t take long to get to Croppers Clearing where we had a leisurely morning tea. From there we went along Tom’s Ridge to the dam which was once Whanganui’s water source. Here we had an extremely leisurely lunch discussing all manner of things including ideas for future club trips.

We met three young goats along the way to the dam and were then surprised to come across a young kid a few metres down the bank just before the dam. We stood and watched it for ages discussing the possibility of catching it and taking it home in the car. We decided to make the decision on the way back if it was still there. It was! Helen dropped her walking poles, slipped out of her pack and started down the bank. The kid wasn’t so sure of us then and got up. At that stage we decided it wasn’t hurt and obviously wasn’t hungry so we should leave well enough alone.



A handy table on the Waitahinga Trail *Linda*

On the way back we took Harry’s Ridge which is more undulating and longer than Tom’s Ridge. The Whanganui Tramping Club has done a great job of creating the tracks and marking each one with different coloured triangles. The tracks are extremely well marked and easy to follow. They are very suitable for families and a great place for grandparents to introduce their grandchildren to the joys of walking.

It was a really relaxed pleasant walk. The weather was good, the company was great and the bush and views were lovely. Thanks to Mark, Helen, Alla and Jinny for a great day.

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October: Destination Waitohu Lodge and beyond**

***Andrew Brodie***

33 Wednesday Wilderness Walkers assembled in a paddock in front of an old barn near the quarry just off the Waitohu Valley Road. The local farmer (David Moore, phone 06 364 8937) had told me the usual place to park (opposite the quarry) was not suitable as there were lots of trucks carting material out for the Kapiti Expressway and helpfully recommended an alternative. The weather forecast promised a clearing day. The trip was organised with the help of Royce Mills - the carrot of four new geocaches was a temptation she just had to accept! The plan was that everyone would head towards the Lodge with a deviation to Rangawhati (404m), which was said to be a good view point a bit off





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the track, for morning tea and cache number one. Then it would on to the Lodge for some with others doing an extension to the high point of Tangata Maunga (912m). We set off just before 9.30am along the road and across the paddock to an old logging track. Apart from 3 of us who missed the turn off through the bush from the main track, the rest of the group followed Royce and got to a paddock just out of the bush. Here they stopped for morning tea while Royce went on climbing uphill to Rangawhata to be rewarded with superb views and a quick find of the cache. When the main group caught up with the back 3 they reported we had missed a very muddy scramble.



Can you see the boiler?

Lunch at Waitohu Lodge

Maureen

We all headed on to the Lodge passing an old boiler (where cache number 2 was hidden) on the way. At the junction where the track drops down to the Lodge the party split up with some heading on towards Tangata Maunga and others going down to the Lodge. All in the latter group reached the Lodge for lunch and views of Kapiti and the Otaki River when the cloud lifted. Cache number 3 was found here by trip leader and later by Royce. The Lodge was built by deerstalkers on what they thought was private land but actually is DOC land. Some tidying up around the site has recently been done making it a good lunch stop. Eight had carried on, being keen to reach the trig. From the junction they reported that they enjoyed the best bush of the day as they climbed the ridge up to the trig which they reached around 1pm and were rewarded with a good view. They had no problems finding their way, thanks to the waypoints provided on the geocache web site and regular tapes. The track to the trig through leatherwood, scrub and tussock was fairly obvious. Royce said it was a real bonus to have a cache place there (cache number 4) and it made it a satisfying tramp. The group came back down from the trig for a quick lunch and then headed out with a brief stop at the Lodge. Others that got back early to the transport had a good wait in the sun but all were back around 4pm. The return trip to/from the trig was 21.5km and to/from the Lodge 18km, so sore feet for some. A quick stop at BP in Otaki for coffee/ice creams etc finished the day off nicely. If you plan to take a trip in this area it pays to call the farmer as he is most obliging and will tell you of any hazards in the area e.g. hunters etc. Thanks to Royce for her help with leading, Evan for driving the van, and Charles, Russell, John R. and Marion for driving their cars.

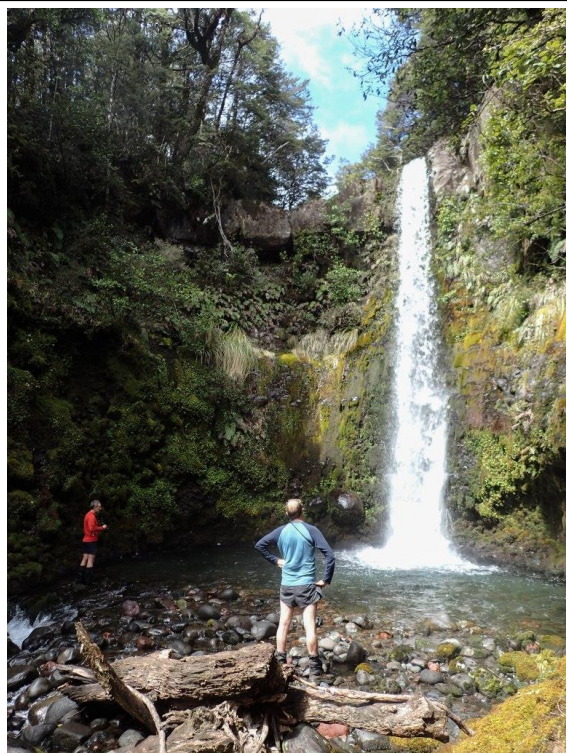
### 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> October: Coche Falls

*Jean Garman*

Waterfalls within National/Forest Parks generally only get names if they are something special and near where they're easily seen. While studying a Ruapehu map, David noticed a waterfall, Coche Falls (19m), which was not close to any track or viewing point. Figuring there must be something special about this waterfall, he put a trip on the trip card to go check it out. Jenny, Adam and Jean thought this sounded interesting so tagged along.

How the falls got their name is quite a fascinating story about Madeleine Coche, a lady ahead of her time. Born in Paris before the turn of the century, she travelled the world to many places not normally visited by single young ladies. On reaching New Zealand, she was so impressed she stayed. On a fateful Easter in 1913 with some friends and a number of other parties she tramped from Ohakune to the bushline where they all camped together, making an attempt on the Summit on Sunday. Unfortunately the weather murked out, while one party did reach the





Adam and David admiring Coche Falls *Jean*

summit and returned safely, the others aborted their attempt and turned back. With reduced visibility, the retreat did not go well and they were unable to relocate the campsite. Two lads separated from this group and followed the Manganuioteo Stream down, getting out on Monday. The remaining group of four had a night out near the bush line with a fire to warm them. The next day 2 of the party climbed above the cloud to get their bearings but were unable to relocate the other 2 (it had started to snow by then) so made their own way out to the railway line. Miss Coche and her companion were unable to light a fire for a second night out so they started to make their own way down (also down the Manganuioteo Stream). At a particularly difficult spot where it looked like her companion was going to leap across a gulch she took another route. Her companion could not be located again although his hat and stick were seen floating in the river. She judged a fall from the point last seen would not be survivable. She carried on alone, her boots gave out so her feet took a beating. She eventually made it to a railway viaduct where she was found on Tuesday afternoon. Her companion's body was later recovered.

After a rendezvous and breakfast at the Angkor Wat bakery in Waiouru we set off to the Upper Blyth car park. We started by crossing the road, finding the entrance to a track which is not particularly obvious but is easy enough to follow that leads to the very red, very cute private and locked Mangaiti hut. From there it was cross country through a mixture of clearings and bush to intersect the Horopito track, then continuing through bush (aided by various animal trails) to the Manganuioteo stream where we located, admired and photographed the Coche Falls. With the objective of the trip achieved the next step was to check out Lake Surprise and find a nice campsite for the night. We headed back the way we had come a little to gain the ridge which we followed up to Lake Surprise. On reaching the Lake we weren't sure whether to follow the shoreline to the left or the right. We chose the left and walked almost all around the lake before meeting up with the track. That was the end of the off-track section of the trip. With the ease (and mud) of being on a track we quickly dropped into the Mangaturuturu valley and found a nice campsite tucked in the trees near the river for the night. We were very close to the Mangaturuturu hut but figured it was spring now so we should get back into camping. Sunday dawned misty and windy out in the open while we were well protected under the trees. It was not so pleasant once we left their shelter but with a track to follow, it was quick work to get back to the Turoa Mountain road (the wind and rain were bad enough that Turoa was completely closed) and an unpleasant plod down to the car before we headed back to the Waiouru bakery for morning tea.



Heading cross country

*Jean*



**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October: Colenso Trig Sunrise Hut**

*Alla Seleznyova*

Because the access to the start of the easy walk to Colenso Trig has been stopped, we went to Sunrise Hut instead. There was a warning of gales for the area, but we decided to go anyway because most of this track is in the forest. The track was in very good condition, the upper part of it has been much improved since my previous visits. We could feel the strong wind on some sections closer to the top and the track was littered with broken branches. It was a challenge to keep an upright position when we came out of the bush near the hut.

The wind has ripped off part of the toilet door cover and when I tried to open the door it was swung violently into my face and nearly knocked me off my feet! Coming down, we met a procession of red-faced high school kids heading for the hut in small groups and with every group approaching we had to answer the same question "How long is it to the hut?" It was nice to see them introduced to tramping. We were Helen Peek and Alla Seleznyova.



Wind damaged Sunrise toilet *Alla*

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October: Visit and Repair Mission to A Frame (Travers Hut)**

*Bob Hodgson*

On a day that promised (and delivered) gale force winds and a few showers, 23 Wednesday Wilderness Walkers assembled at the car park reached via Top Grass and Tamaki Roads. The track is steep and demanding to the extent that DOC rate it as "an advanced tramping track; 2-3 hours duration one way." The rise to the hut is 690m and the track length, one way a mere 3.5km! The DOC track description reads as follows. "The track starts 100m past the toilets, turns uphill and climbs steeply through podocarp then leatherwood forest to Takapari Road. Turn right at the top and follow an old bulldozed road for 100m to reach the A Frame Hut. Due to constant vandalism, A-Frame Hut is not maintained and all facilities have been removed."

In spite of this stark description, the consensus was that it made for a rewarding, if demanding tramp, with some great views. This was a "visit and repair expedition" with Ian, Dennis and Evan fixing a polycarbonate sheet across almost all of the



Inside A-frame hut *Maureen*

holes in the window above the bench and making it possible for the door to be secured from the outside. Thanks to them for this public spirited act. The hut was found to be in an otherwise watertight state but with a cold concrete floor an unappealing lunch spot so we tramped back down into the bush to find a suitable sheltered section. Apart from some drizzle on our departure the tramp was mainly dry. The wind was extreme in the area of the car park but not a problem until we reached the top and Takapari road. All were safely out by soon after 2pm after a start at about



The not so functional road end toilets *Maureen*





9.15am. Thanks to trip leader Arthur who also drove the van, to the repair team and to the other drivers. P.S. Sadly the picnic area toilets were found to be in a poor state with an apparent flushing water supply failure; DOC have been notified.

On an alternative tramp 8 members of the WWW tramped Branch Road and in doing so called on the farming skills of Lynn to assert their right of passage over four young cattle beasts!

**23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> October: Lake Chalice Loop**

**Adam Matich**

Three MTSC and one PNTMC member caught the ferry on Friday morning and drove to the Lake Chalice road end (1200m) which is accessed via the Wairau Valley near Renwick. Less than an hour from the road end and 450m lower saw us at Lake Chalice Hut for the night. There was a family of goats grazing down by the lake. We also saw goats on Old Man peak, at Old Man Hut and in the Upper Goulter River; take a rifle and some curry powder if you go tramping in that region. There was plenty of firewood at Lake Chalice Hut and so after collecting and chopping up more we had a warm night in a nice tidy hut.



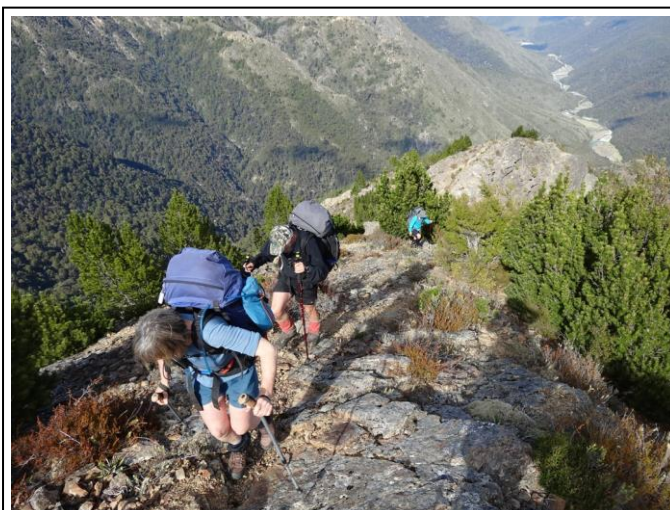
Dave looking across to Rintoul and Old Man



Relaxing in Mid Goulter Hut

Adam

Day two involved circling around the head of the lake and then 1150 m of climbing, most of it up to Old Man peak in the cool of the morning (4½ hr). There was some nice open forest in this section and it was a continuous climb up to the open-topped 1522 where we had good views back to the car park, Old Man and Rintoul Peaks, and the clearing with Old Man Hut in it. 90 mins from 1522 saw us up on Old Man for a leisurely, sunny lunch. We couldn't stay there forever as we weren't made of sun-block, so we galloped across the tops and down to Old Man Hut for the night (6½ hr day). After shooing the goats away from the big manicured grass clearing we had an extended afternoon tea followed by splitting and stacking firewood. DOC workers had recently painted the hut and cut lots of



Climbing up from Mid-Goulter



Lunch on Old Man

Adam





trees into rings ready for us to split; we didn't have the time or energy to chop it all though. It was a warm night so we only had a small fire, to make sure the wood really was fire-grade. Old Man Hut is on the Te Araroa Trail, and most of the entries in its log book reflected that.

Next morning we dropped down into the Goulter River to Mid Goulter hut (4 hr). This was through more nice forest and the river was clean and clear with inviting wallowing holes seen in the distance from the high sidle track. There was a river crossing and some stream crossings, so this section could be a problem in heavy rain. Having said that, it didn't look like there had been much rain there in recent times. After lunch at Mid Goulter Hut, we paid an afternoon visit to Lower Goulter Hut (4 hr) as Jenny felt that a mere four hour day was just too girly an effort for her liking. The forest in this section of the river was mostly regenerating bush; there were lots of nice places to camp...if you can stand the sand flies. The river looked very clean and inviting and easily travelable in low flows but it really wasn't hot enough for us to try the swimming holes, no matter how tempting. It was too warm to have a fire that night, but Woody did do some firewood splitting anyway. We shared this hut with two other people; the only hut we had to share.



Old Man to Old Man Hut

Adam

On our final day we had a no nonsense, and sometimes on steep rock (but safe enough), 860m climb up onto Chalice Road (2½ hr) in the cool of the morning and mostly in the shade. It wasn't until our 2 hr romp along Chalice Road (8-9 km) that we started to fear sunburn again. The 4WD end of Chalice Road takes one to within 2½ km of Mt Patriarch but is not recommended for 4WD vehicles. What we saw of the 4WD section was actually suitable to drive a 2WD vehicle along. To recover from our dehydration, we stopped at the Spring Creek Hotel on our way back to Picton. We were very lucky to strike "golden weather" for this trip and had two out of the three huts all to ourselves. The huts are very tidy, some of them having been just repainted, and the tracks were all well-marked and pretty safe, with some solid climbs in there so it is a great place to go if you are a fatty wanting to burn off some calories. In retrospect, I would do it in the opposite direction as it would require less climbing and allow one to catch the earlier ferry on the last day.

### **28<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> October: Powell and Atiwhakatu**

**Linda Darbyshire**

There are several options from the Mt Holdsworth car park for Wednesday trampers. We had one group of 9 heading to Atiwhakatu for the day, another of 12 to Powell Hut for the day, and a group of 11 staying at Powell Hut overnight and planning to complete the Jumbo Circuit the following day. A grand total of 32 trampers.

The day was cool and at the tops very windy. All trampers going to Powell Hut did so in the 4 hours even those carrying overnight packs. The steps were quite a challenge as some of them are very steep. Thanks to Denis Jensen for lighting the fire at Powell Hut.....the wood was damp, however following DOC instructions on the use of coal the hut finally warmed up and we all had a toasty night with the wind howling outside and heavy rain, not at all encouraging for our plans for the next day. There was plenty of gas at the hut. However a bit of hut keeping was a little overdue. It was disappointing to find the roof and windows leaked in the hut. Beware if you are sleeping upstairs on the left!!





Our group of 10 females and 1 male (no snorers!!) had no trouble keeping ourselves entertained in the hut. It was suggested we do a pack show and tell. This was a great way for sharing favourite items, alternative equipment, devices etc, check what gear everyone had or didn't have. We also took time to share our medical history and fill the group in about any medications.

Margaret lead a session of Tai Chi, and there was plenty of discussion about life, and how good it was doing an overnighter....why don't we do more!!

We woke on Thursday to find it was very windy and still wet. The path down to the toilets now resembled a small stream. The sunrise was trying to burst its way through the dense cloud to no avail! So after checking out the weather forecast for the day we resigned ourselves to the fact we were heading back down to the car park. Thanks to Pam who ensured we stopped frequently to make the most of photo opportunities, we were in Masterton for coffee and lunch. Thanks to each of the group for a very enjoyable time.

Thanks to the leadership of Andrew Brodie overseeing the group to Atiwahakatu and John Ridge making sure all trampers returned from Powell Hut. And of course thanks to Evan who drove the van and others who provided transport.

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November: Ross Peak**

*Howard Nicholson*

The Beechleaves newsletter noted that Jenny was returning to Ross Peak in the Southern Ruahine Ranges, despite the hardships of her previous trip there; that trip was written up in dire terms by Adam in September 2011. Talking with Jenny, I learned that Adam was also on the next trip, along with Jean and Chris. A severe case of "battered trumper syndrome" perhaps? Somehow she talked me into going as well.

After meeting at Ashhurst, we had a short drive to the top of No. 2 Line, where those in the know took "before" photos of our unblemished skin, and ascended a grassy spur to the bush edge at 700m elevation. We easily followed a permolat-marked route through the regrowth forest until it ran out and the sub-alpine scrub began; in 90 mins we had already covered more than two-thirds of the route to the peak.

Millions of years of evolution was no help to us now, as we clambered, crawled and clawed our way through the leatherwood on all-fours. In one part, a branch flicked up from below me and smacked me in my open eye – I didn't see it coming but I sure felt its bite. Part way up a broad part of the ridge we used a saw to ease our progress in parts, then Adam remembered he had brought some flagging tape, which we used to mark the route from then on. The ridge flattened out and we sensed we were approaching the peak; climbing up a giant leatherwood bush gave us a view that confirmed



At last, the Trig

*Jean*



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we were maybe 180m away from the trig. It took another 30 mins to reach our goal.

Lunch was scoffed on the trig's helipad and soon we were back into the leatherwood, our legs and arms stinging as they scraped through the shrubbery once more. With the benefit of flagging tape, cut branches and some rigorous tracking skills, the route-finding on the return trip was easier, but moving through the scrub seemed no easier. We consoled ourselves with the knowledge we were travelling through the ecologically significant, largest continuous tract of leatherwood in the world, but that thought got old pretty quick. Two hours later we were back in the taller bush, carefully navigating our way back to the top of the grassy spur once more. We finished the 7km tramp 7½ hours after starting it, looking a little worse for wear and pleased that we would not have to do it again, for a few years at least... This memorable trip was enjoyed by Jenny McCarthy (lead masochist), Chris Teo-Sherrell, Adam Match, Jean Garman and Howie Nicholson (reporter).

P.S. Upon closer inspection at home, I found the branch had removed a small chunk from the sclera ("white" part of the eye). A couple of hours at the emergency doctors confirmed that it had already become infected, and I was pleased to have some antibiotics to reduce the chance of further complications. I carry a vial of sterile saline in my first aid kit, and in retrospect I should've used it to wash my eye at the time of the injury. Eye injuries can become serious very quickly, but in this case I was lucky that the cornea was not damaged and that I was on a short tramp. What do you carry in your first aid kit?

### **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November: Sledge Track**

*Linda Campbell*

Sometimes plans change and this was one such occasion. A planned trip to Zeke's Hut became a walk of the Sledge Track. The decision was made due to the distance to the start of the track to Zeke's and the time available due to other commitments. Still it is a good walk and close to home. The weather was great although there was a bit of a cold wind while we sat on the hill top enjoying our lunch. We noted that most of the people we met along the way were runners until we were not far from the car park mid-afternoon. We had some lovely views along the way and Helen and I enjoyed a short walk from our lunch spot to check out the vertical mines. As they looked uninviting we decided not to go on down this time. Zeke's hut remains on the list to do another day! Thanks to Alla and Helen for their company.



Alla near the mines track

*Linda*

### **4<sup>th</sup> November: Wednesday Wilderness Wanderers Tramp Waitahinga Dam and Damp Trails**

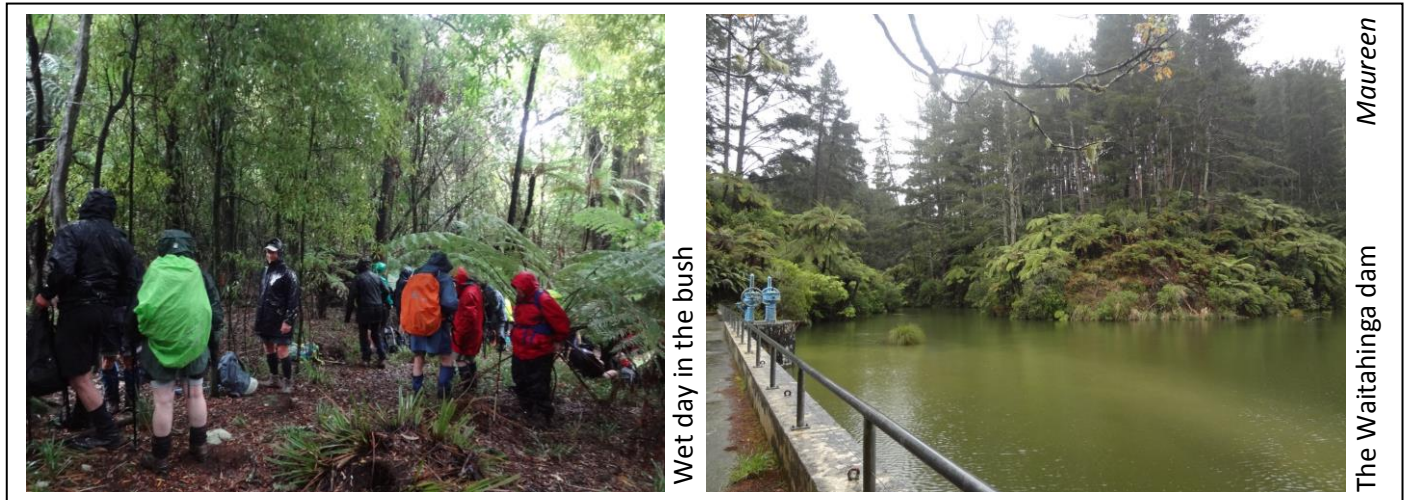
*Bob Hodgson*

Over the last year or so the WWWs have smugly celebrated the positive correlation between Wednesdays and fine weather; sadly in recent weeks the correlation has turned negative!

Rita led the tramp to the Waitahinga Dam and Trails on a day in which Whanganui recorded 22.8mm of southerly rain. This is an interesting and rewarding tramp with the Waitahinga Dam as a lunch destination, some fine bush and large specimen Rimu and Rata trees. Over 30 met at the Quarry car park, but after the drive in over the slippery unsealed road, fearing slips, one car's compliment revolted and its occupants retreated to find a gentler challenge. At about 9.50am, the remainder heroically tramped into the rainy bush tracks. The associated website comments "The Okehu ridge walk has two loop tracks, one to Croppers Clearing and return, and a longer four hour loop down to the Waitahinga dam, once the source of Wanganui's water, via Tom and Harry's ridges. The dam is 250m lower in altitude than the start of the Okehu track so the return walk involves uphill walking." The slippery, muddy tracks were a special challenge at the lower levels. One experienced trumper met the challenge of one particularly muddy decent section by crawling backwards on his knees, a safe but less than dignified technique! We were all out by about 3.30pm, there were many muddy bums (and knees) and a scratched forehead but no



significant injuries. A rewarding day that was a challenge to our wet weather gear and sense of humour. Thanks to Rita as trip leader and our drivers especially Evan who managed to extract the van from the mud.



Wet day in the bush

Maureen

The Waitahinga dam

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November: Apiti**

*John Doolan*

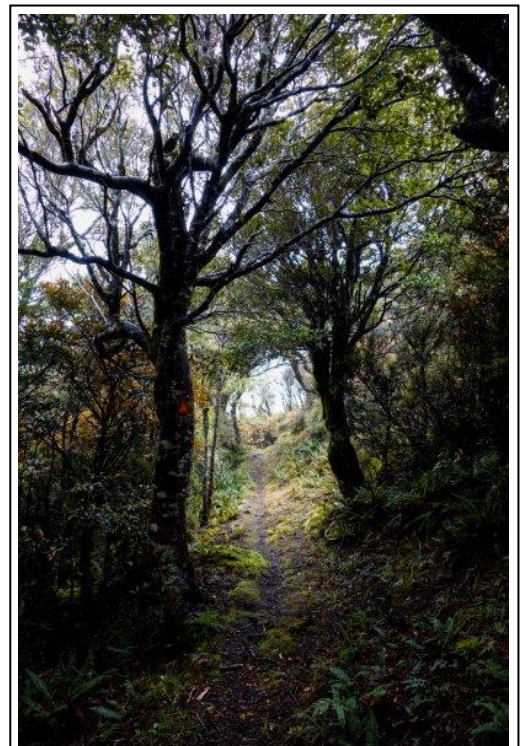
The last 7 out of 9 Thursday trips have required the use of a rain coat, from the moment one left the comfort of the van 'til one got back in the van. This trip, we needed our rain coats until our lunch spot some 3 hours later. The return to the van without the restrictions of a rain coat was very uplifting.

This was a popular trip; we numbered 20 and few had been on to Apiti as the last trip was 6 years ago. Apiti is accessed from Norsewood at the end of the Ngamoko road from a DOC car park. It was 3°C, windy and of course, raining. The Apiti track meanders along and passes high points 880 and 969 before coming to a junction leading up to high point 1232 and on again to Leon Kinvig hut. And for the real adventurous trumper, on further to Toka and down to Sixtus Lodge, an east west crossing. We went to a good lunch spot just below high point 855. High enough to walk through a dusting of fresh snow with views of the skyline covered in snow. That was about 3 hours.

The track starts off as a breeze for the first hour and a half but then gets very wet, muddy and indistinct at times. A couple of monster slips required some fancy footwork to safely cross them with some team work for the less confident of us. There are no big climbs but a zillion ups and downs and two million bog patches to avoid from being sucked into and never being seen again.

The views up to our lunch spot were non-existent, however, they were plentiful on our way back to the van. The clouds went away, the mist lifted and the sun popped its head up and gave us some eagerly awaited sun. You gotta admire a birthday boy amongst us who not only bought along his birthday cake to share but climbed up to high point 880 at the END of the day when most of us were looking at the track leading to the van. Not bad for an 80<sup>th</sup> birthday boy, well done Merv!!

We were: John Brock, Carolyn Brodie, Judy Callesen, Suzanne Clark, Norman Cooper, Richard Ellis, Ruth Evans, John McLeod, Merv Matthews, Royce Mills, Glenn Pendergrast, Malcolm Prince, Graham Pritchard, Craig Ross, Jill Spencer, Nigel Spencer, Judy Swainson, Gillian Thornley, Hugh Wilde and John Doolan.



The Apiti Track

*Richard*



## 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 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) or phone (06) 356 9450. To confirm your booking, payment must be made by cheque to 179 Cook St Palmerston North 4410, by cash in person or internet payment (please email to confirm before depositing) Westpac account number 03 1521 022035300.

	Members	Guests
Adult	\$35	\$50
Secondary School	\$28	\$43
Primary School	\$23	\$38
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

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Treasurer	Arthur Flint	<a href="mailto:treasurer@mtsc.org.nz">treasurer@mtsc.org.nz</a>	06 356 7654
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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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Thursday Trip Convenor	Merv Matthews	<a href="mailto:merv6817@gmail.com">merv6817@gmail.com</a>	06 357 2858
Facebook	Ivan Rienks	<a href="mailto:facebook@mtsc.org.nz">facebook@mtsc.org.nz</a>	