

# beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



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

Issue 9: October 2016



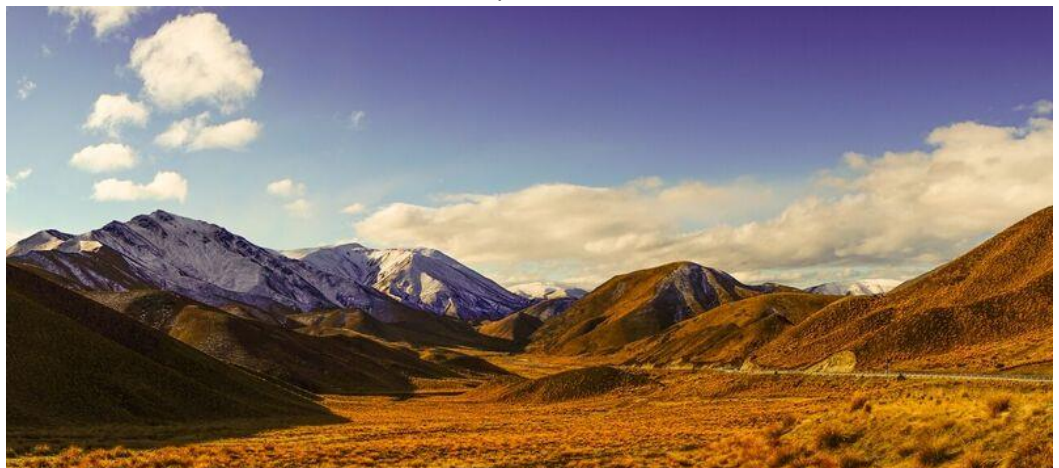
Club meetings are held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month at the Rose City Aquatic Club Rooms, 50 Park Street, Palmerston North (next to the Lido). Meetings begin at 7.30pm.

## Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October: Interclub photo competition

This year MTSC is hosting the Interclub Photo Competition where the best photographs from the MTSC, PNTMC and MUAC photo competitions go head to head to see which are the best photos overall.



1<sup>st</sup> Natural History



1<sup>st</sup> Landscape

## Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November: Exploring Coastal Fiordland

**Vince Neall**

Coastal Fiordland was first visited by Europeans during Cook's second voyage in 1773. Having searched fruitlessly for the great southern continent for months, but also having been the first to cross the Antarctic circle, Cook veered north to arrive in Dusky Sound on 26 March 1773 to resupply. He first anchored off Anchor Island, before mooring the "Resolution" in Pickersgill Harbour for a month. The last vestiges of their visit are still observable today.

Soon further British explorers arrived, together with the Spanish, leading to the beginnings of a seal and later a whaling industry. This led to construction of the first European house at Luncheon Cove, on Anchor Island, and construction of the first European ship to sail in New Zealand waters.



Pigeon Island was the home of Richard Henry, a Government conservation officer, from 1894 to 1909. Over that time period his total efforts were expended on finding rare birds, especially kiwi and kakapo, and transferring them on to pest-free Resolution Island.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Preservation Inlet became the focus of a gold rush and later prospecting for silver and copper. Two towns of Cromarty and Te Oneroa serviced the miners, but by 1904 most of the population had left.

This talk will trace this rich and diverse history together with the geology, flora and fauna of the area today.

# REPORTS AND NOTICES

## Results of the Annual Photo competition

|                 |           |                                      |
|-----------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| Landscape       | 1st       | Owen Mills - Lindis Pass             |
|                 | 2nd       | Jean Garman - Great Southern Lake    |
|                 | 3rd equal | Helen Peek - Lake                    |
|                 | 3rd equal | Helen Peek - Sunset                  |
| Above bushline  | 1st       | Royce Mills - Snake Ridge            |
|                 | 2nd       | Tim Swale - Ruahine Tramp            |
|                 | 3rd       | Jean Garman - Westland Ranges        |
| Below bushline  | 1st       | Jean Garman - The Hector Gorge       |
|                 | 2nd       | David Harrington - No.1 Line         |
|                 | 3rd       | Jean Garman - Negotiating a Log Jam  |
| Natural history | 1st       | David Harrington - Kiwi              |
|                 | 2nd       | Royce Mills - Fiordland Creek        |
|                 | 3rd       | Royce Mills - South Island Robin     |
| Topical         | 1st       | Owen Mills - Leaf Bug                |
|                 | 2nd       | Jean Garman - Thirsty Work           |
|                 | 3rd       | Howard Nicholson - Sliding Away      |
| Overseas        | 1st       | Alla Seleznyova - Letter Box, France |
|                 | 2nd       | Alla Seleznyova - Gentian, Pyrenees  |
|                 | 3rd       | (none)                               |

### MTSC President Report: John Beech

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



Hi all, Spring is upon us but certainly doesn't feel like it this week with the cold southerly and plenty of snow around. I am sure that will please the skiers amongst us who will no doubt be trying to find any spare time to head up the mountain to enjoy the slopes.

Two topics I want to talk about include the Appeal Court decision for the Ruataniwha Land Swap (RLS), and the impending closure of the DOC Ongagonga base.

Starting with the former, this land swap has come about due to the presence of Ruahine Forest Park land where the Ruataniwha dam is proposed. The problem being that the land (22ha) needed its status revoked in order for it to be downgraded to land that could then be swapped for 146ha of Smedley land. This has been a contentious issue and Forest & Bird and other NGO's have worked hard to get to this stage, going through a number of Environment Court hearings and appeals. Rather than boring you with too many details, the recent overturning of DOC's decision to revoke the status of the Ruahine Forest Park land is a significant one. The fact that land could be swapped to allow commercial interests access to our forest parks, however small the area swapped, sets a dangerous precedent. After all our conservation land is protected for a reason, and that is to provide for future generations. Any ability to water this down must be resisted as conservation land should not be reduced to a trade-off exercise. It will be interesting to see what happens next.

The second topic I wish to comment on is the proposed Ongaonga base closure. The continued running down of the facilities and staff in the department must surely worry any of us that have a love of the outdoors. Over the last few years we have seen continued cuts in staffing, the closure of facilities and the centralising of operations to larger centres. One has to wonder at the mentality behind these decisions. Whilst we know the government has continued to underfund the department for decades, it is questionable whether the savings made are worth it. How can service in the Ruahine ranges North Eastern corner be adequately performed from Palmerston North. Surely the time travelling alone will reduce the time the staff member is in the bush doing the job that needs to be done. Eventually, there has to be a line where to cut more staff and facilities seriously degrades the quality of the service provided. I think we are well past that line. In this time where the community is doing more and more work on huts and tracks for DOC, surely it would have been common courtesy to let the community know well before decisions were made. Although, at the time of writing, DOC have said the decision has not been made, they have said that their assessment shows efficiencies can be made by relocating staff to Palmerston North and closing the base. This seems to me to suggest the decision has been made. DOC has told us that they know they need to communicate

more closely with the community. Where was the consultation? The key point is that we (all NZers) trust DOC to manage our conservation lands, therefore they have an accountability to the public. Most corporations are accountable to their shareholders and we are the shareholders in the conservation estate.

Our club will be looking at writing a letter to local politicians or the Minister for Conservation outlining our concerns. Unfortunately, if the local community fails to voice their concerns, then the government will just continue with more of the same. FMC will also be looking closely at this decision and asking for the evidence behind it.

Till next month.

*John*

## **First Tracks – MTSC Ski Captain: Howard Nicholson**

**027 294 1941**



The huge dumps of snow received in August built up a snow base that looks set to last well into October. Spring skiing is at its best about now as the warmer temperatures turn the snow in lovely soft "corn".

Several members, including myself, spent up to a week at the MTSC Lodge recently, enjoying 7 out of 9 days of stunning weather and good skiing. At times, the weather forecast was not so good yet we were still in sunshine and had very short queues at the lifts. There was a great atmosphere at the lodge, with a wide range of users spanning all age groups. Staying on the mountain means you can take advantage of the conditions when they come right, or head back to the lodge if the weather closes in. Perfect!

I hope you get the chance to get up to Mt Ruapehu for a slide, ski, ride or walk soon. The official season is set to end in late October.

## **Walking Access Mapping System (WAMS) website**

*Merv Mathews*

Any members of MTSC who make use of the Walking Access Mapping System (WAMS) Website will have noticed that it has been completely revamped. In my view the new version is not as easy to use as the old one, but I guess we will get used to it. One advantage of WAMS mapping is that it always has the latest Topo Maps, except that they no longer have grid lines on them. The absence of grid lines makes the maps less useful, particularly if one wants to download a portion for printing on to an A4 sheet and when used in conjunction with a GPS receiver. I queried this omission with Steven Lau of the Walking Access Commission, who replied as follows:

*"Regarding the topo basemap, we've switched to a new provider (which is free) and currently they only provide for a gridless version. In due time, if there is a demand for a version with a grid (I understand the practicality of it as well) we can look into creating a gridded version as an option as well. But this will not happen immediately as we acclimatised ourselves to the new environment."*

If enough people write and object to the change perhaps the grid lines might be restored sooner. Send an email now to the Walking Access Commission at **Email: [contact@walkingaccess.govt.nz](mailto:contact@walkingaccess.govt.nz)**

## **Likely increase in FMC affiliation fees**

The FMC affiliation fees are to be decided at a special meeting in Wellington in November with some cost increases likely. Partially declared clubs (such as MTSC) are looking at a fee rise of \$5 bringing the total FMC contribution to \$17 per full member. There has been much pressure on the conservation estate from tourism and cuts to DOC's budget resulting in FMC having a larger advocacy role which is increasing its operational expenses. The general consensus of the MTSC committee opinion was that FMC represents our interests well and we should continue to support their work so as a consequence MTSC membership fees are likely to see a corresponding increase next year.

## **Aerial 1080 drop in Tararuas from the middle of September**

As part of the ongoing work to decrease the number of predators within the project Kaka area within the Tararua ranges, a pre-feed and poison drop is planned within suitable weather windows after the 14<sup>th</sup> September. More information available here [Project Kaka expanded](#) .

## **Envirofest Volunteers Wanted, 2-23<sup>rd</sup> October**

Want to help with EnviroFest? Gain work experience and meet great people? PNCET needs help with various event co-ordination tasks, and can write testimonials for volunteers. They are keen to hear from anyone who would like to volunteer at EnviroFest. Email PNCET if you would like to be involved - [pncetprojectcoordinators@gmail.com](mailto:pncetprojectcoordinators@gmail.com)

## **It's spring - so here is a link to the Ruapehu spring snow bulletin**

[http://www.ohakune.info/uploads/113476/files/Spring2016\\_ruapehusnowbulletin.pdf](http://www.ohakune.info/uploads/113476/files/Spring2016_ruapehusnowbulletin.pdf)



# 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/RCC only if the party is reported overdue or a PLB is activated. 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.

| October Wednesday Tramps |                      |          | October Thursday Tramps |                    |          |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------|-------------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Date                     | Leader               | Phone    | Date                    | Leader             | Phone    |
| 5                        | Rita & Arthur Hodson | 323 5491 | 6                       | John McLeod        | 323 5785 |
| 12                       | Maurice McDonald     | 357 5522 | 13                      | Chris Mercer       | 356 2635 |
| 19                       | Anne West            | 357 5716 | 20                      | Glenn Prendergrast | 356 7487 |
| 26                       | Chris Teo-Sherrell   | 355 1816 | 27                      | Syd Easton         | 356 7462 |

| October Weekend Trips |                           |            |                  |              |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------|------------------|--------------|
| Date                  | Trip                      | Grade      | Leader           | Phone        |
| 1 - 2                 | Crater Camping            | Technical  | Jean Garman      | 021 176 0209 |
| 8 - 9                 | Makaroro                  | Medium/Fit | Howard Nicholson | 027 294 1941 |
| 9                     | Manawatu Gorge            | Easy       | Alla Seleznyova  | 027 308 9583 |
| 15 - 16               | Climb Ruapehu             | Technical  | Jean Garman      | 021 176 0209 |
| 22 - 23               | Labour weekend Sth Island | Medium/Fit | Adam Matich      | 022 358 8062 |
| 29 - 30               | Waikamaka                 | Medium     | Jenny McCarthy   | 06 376 8838  |

**1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> October: Tongariro Winter Camping**

**Technical/Medium                      Jean Garman                      021 176 0209                      [trampski.cave@gmail.com](mailto:trampski.cave@gmail.com)**

The trip is dependent on a favourable forecast! Competency with ice axe/crampons and a good standard of camping gear are needed. The plan is to go somewhere in the Tongariro area taking a combination of tracked and untracked routes into a favourable crater/valley (somewhere where we can find snow to melt or running water) to set up camp for a chilly night. There may be the option is to climb Ngarahoe if conditions/weather/inclination all align.

**8<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> October: Makaroro**

**Medium/Fit                                      Howard Nicholson                                      357 6325                                      027 294 1941**

This trip will visit the heart of the eastern Ruahine Ranges, including a section of the Makaroro River if the weather is fine. The intention is to camp for the night in tents, but as I am averse to getting too wet, then we may head to a hut if the weather is less fine. The grading is medium-fit, so expect up to 8 hours tramping per day.

**Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> October: Manawatu Gorge**

**Easy    Alla Seleznyova    027 308 9583**

The Manawatu Gorge Track is a pleasant easy walk approximately 12 km east of Palmerston North. The walk is about 10 km long, it has a number of lookouts along the way and takes 3-4 to complete (one way). There are different walking options. I usually go to the Windy Lookout and return. We will meet at 9.30 am at the Ashhurst end car park. For more information see

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/Documents/parks-and-recreation/tracks-and-walks/wanganui/manawatu-gorge-tracks-brochure.pdf>

**15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> October: Climb Ruapehu**

**Technical/fit                                      Jean Garman                                      021 176 0209                                      [trampski.cave@gmail.com](mailto:trampski.cave@gmail.com)**

The trip is dependent on a favourable forecast. Competency with ice axe/crampons and a good standard of gear are required for this trip. We will head up to the lodge on Friday night, hopefully on Saturday we will climb to the top of Ruapehu and tiki-tour around the crater area with a shorter day trip somewhere on Sunday. If the weather is better on Sunday the options will be reversed.

## 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> October: Labour Weekend South Island Trip

Medium/Fit

Adam Matich

022 358 8062

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

This trip has now been extended a day so the dates are 21st-25th; leaving Wellington on the Friday morning ferry and getting back to PN late Tuesday night. The intention is to visit the Cobb Valley and surroundings. On Friday we will travel all the way to the Cobb Dam and tramp up to Sylvester Hut (2hr) for the night, or go even further and camp if conditions allow. On Saturday we will head NW along the Lockett Range and drop down the Waingaro Peak Track to stay at Fenella hut for the night. Sunday we climb up onto the Peel Range and take two days to make our way along it (camping one night) through to Asbestos Cottage for the last night. On Tuesday morning we will bush-bash up onto the ridge track from Asbestos Cottage and follow said track back to the road and the car and hopefully get back to Picton in time to catch the ferry. If the weather is dodgy I will think up an alternative destination that does not have so much open tops travel. If anyone is interested in coming we still have two spaces in the car!

## 29<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> October: Waikamaka

Medium

Jenny McCarthy

06 376 8838

There are at least two possible options for the trip to/from this Ruahine Hut. Option 1 - A gentle stroll up the Waipawa River then a short sharp climb up to the Waipawa Saddle and down the stream on the other side to the hut. Option 2 - Up to Sunrise Hut, over Te Atuaoparapara, down to the Waipawa Saddle and down the stream to the hut. This will be a weather dependent trip due to the river travel.

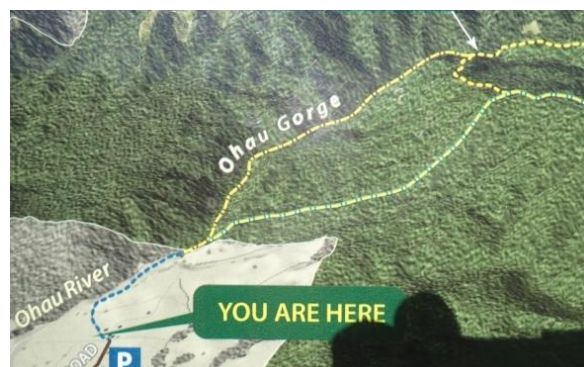


## Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> August: 6 Discs and Golden Sun for the WWWW

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Maureen, William and Bob

On a sunny winter's day, best described as "one out of the box", twenty-seven spry trampers assembled at the Poads Road entrance to the Tararua Forest Park reached over the rickety, rickety bridge (no gruff billy goat seen) leading from Gladstone Road, inland of Levin. The cool, sunny conditions called for layers so, unlike our noble and skimpily clad athletes in faraway Brazil, the Wednesday Wilderness Wanderers bore more of a resemblance to the swaddled infant in a nativity scene than olympic athletes in lycra!



Ohau - 6 Discs - Waiopehu Loop



Bob - Jet lagged up upright

The initial 1000m tramp over the open, muddy paddocks warmed our heroes before they plunged into the cool and relatively gloomy bush to follow the track along the Ohau river towards Gable End Ridge and the start of the Six Discs Track up to the ridge top. In places the track was wet and muddy beyond ankle depth but, with care and the balance characteristic of highly tuned athletes, most avoided wet feet. The party converged on the open area beyond the far bridge to enjoy the morning sun. Thereafter four groups formed: fast and slower up and down. Trip Leader took off at speed in the wrong direction to be Tail End Charlie for the climbers. Happily he reappeared minutes later, this time travelling in the correct direction! Some of our new members found the climb up 6 Discs to be a challenge but all made it to the top and then down on a track found to be in good condition. Those choosing to return on the river bank track had a relaxed but rewarding day in the fine lowland bush.

We all enjoyed the warm and sunny walk out across the paddocks and getting changed in the sun. All trampers were safely out by 3pm and it was a happy band that made their way to the Museum Cafe to celebrate their golden day with coffee and, for some, cakes.

Thanks to Trip Leader Russell and our drivers for a fine winter's tramp in conditions that were a stark contrast with the cold raining weather of the previous Wednesday Wilderness Wanderers expedition.



*Lunch in the sun*



*Floral representation of the day*

## **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> August: Iron Gates Stoa Line**

Report: Adam Matich

It was a cool overcast day, but we managed to get to Iron Gates Hut and back without using our rain coats; but only just. We had been instructed to empty the dead from the stoat traps, but soon discovered that someone had gotten there before us. At the hut, for a slightly early lunch, we discovered it had been just the day before; something we were not overly upset about as it meant avoiding the unpleasantness of dealing with lots of "aging" carcasses, and getting on with what we were really there for. The one dead rat and one dead possum were actually very fresh. There had not been much rain either, and so it was possible to cross Tunupo Stream without wet socks; just a bit damp. We managed a slightly less than 7-hour day, didn't encounter anyone else, and were home in time to mow the lawns. We were Dave Mitchell and Adam Matich

## **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> August: Longview Hutt**

Report: Guido Roberto

Photos: William and Bill

The weather bombs of the preceding fortnight caused massive disruptions in the Central North Island but eased to create ideal conditions for our sortie to Longview Hutt 1200m ASL. Twenty five WWWs exited Palmerston North & Feilding to meet up at the turnoff to SH 50, Takapau. Motoring through verdant Ashley Clinton, we were soon winding up the well named Kashmir Road into the Moorcock Valley.

When tramping up the tussock ridge track, we had great views back over Central Hawke's Bay and beyond. The "accelerati" shot ahead with 9/25 reaching Longview for lunch. The rest ambled along carefully testing the snow covers concealing the track. With the calm, clear and windless day, it was just too inviting to pull up for munchies beside the alpine hebes while enjoying the splendour of it all. No hurry and no worries about getting blown off the ridge this time.



*Blue Skies and Snow on the way to Longview hut*

We descended contentedly. Leaves of the flax *Phormium cookianum* were displaying their unique sheen in the afternoon light. Below in the Moorcock Valley, we could marvel at the regenerating bush; fire from a deer cullers' camp had swept through over half a century ago. Less attractive were the logging operations suspended, apparently, due to poor market returns.



*Blue Skies and Snow at Longview hut*



*Sunshine on the ridge below the snowline*



*mandatory drinkies at Café Norsewood*

We chatted with a possum trapper at his camp before heading off to Café Norsewood and mandatory drinkies. The genial hostess, working alone, was very surprised at our large party but catered to us all in very quick time. Social Convenor Bob Hodgson presented the most venerable John Hunt Esq. with the club's award for "The Most Spirited Trumper." In the evanescent light and before Norsewood's "peerie" trolls emerged to play, we headed off homewards and recovery soaks in the hot tubs.

Many thanks to Chris, Marion, Bev & Bill for transport



### **John Hunt Presented with the Most Spirited Trumper Trophy**

At the cafe, Social Convenor Bob Hodgson presented the most venerable John Hunt Esq. with the club's award for "The Most Spirited Trumper." As an old spirit stove the trophy takes the form of a visual pun! John is a treasured regular trumper with the "Wednesdays" not only for his 88 plus years but also for his genial disposition and extensive knowledge of tramping routes gained in over 60 years of tramping. He is a most worthy recipient and was delighted by the presentation.

PS We have monitored the state of his eyebrows on recent tramps as he appeared determined to light up the trophy!

### **2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> July 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> August: Oturere Hut**

Report: Adam Matich

Photos: Adam Matich

Inclement weather forced this trip to move to a later date, when there was more snow but trip leader had skived off overseas. However, there wasn't as much snow as expected and so travel up the Mangatepopo valley was easy, as was the climb up to the south crater. We didn't need our crampons until the climb up to the Red Crater, although it hardly mattered as there were lots of people around to rescue us if we had an accident and even though it was a bit cloudy, a competent rescue helicopter pilot could have retrieved our remains.



*Climbing to Red Crater*



*Dropping into South Crater*

There was very little wind, and in the sheltered spots of the South Crater and the Oturere Valley we were feeling the heat. While the top end of the Oturere Valley had a good amount of snow there wasn't much around Oturere Hut. Not far from the hut we encountered two disoriented tourists who had managed to misplace the Tongariro Crossing and needed advice on the shortest route back to transport. It probably took them until 7 p.m. to get back to the Mangatepopo Car Park. There were two other parties at Oturere Hut and so we weren't crowded and the others were fairly civilised. As far as great walk huts are concerned, Oturere Hut is looking a bit tired; more a \$15 a night hut than a great walk hut.



*Descending to Emerald lakes*



*More white than Emerald lakes*

At night the cloud disappeared and there was a bright full moon, so the hapless day trippers we met in the afternoon probably made it out OK. Next day we decided to avoid the tracks as much as possible and so headed up the Oturere valley to the left of the Emerald Lakes track. It was pleasant, easy travel until we reached the base of 1727, WNW of Ngauruhoe. From thereon we needed our crampons again as we sidled up to this peak on the south face of its easterly-heading spur. The first 50 m of the climb was steeper than we would have liked; we could have taken an easier line. Once the difficult bit was over it was a slog up the hard-snow slope which was almost entirely safe as there was a good run-out below us. No bluffs or rocks! We headed NW off 1727 and then SW to climb to 1800 m, above the NE-SW oriented bluffs. This was all easy, safe travel, as was the descent into the south crater on the other side. The bright sun-shine was however making itself felt! We maintained a high sidle to avoid the track until we reached the western lip of the south crater where we found a snow-filled gully to follow all the way down into the Mangatepopo Valley. This was probably one of the best weekends we have had this winter; it wasn't that grueling, the days being about 4½ hours long and we had really nice conditions. Apart from too much sun. We were Dave Mitchell and Adam Matich.



*Looking towards the Oturere Valley*



*Morning view from Oturere hut*



## 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> August: Snowcraft – Mt Ruapehu

Report: Tim Swale

Photos: Tim Swale

Winter is a time of year when many people ease back on their outdoor activities, believing that it is too hard or dangerous to travel above the bushline. However, with good weather and a bit of planning, the mountains at this time of year can be a magical place to visit. The snowcraft course was intended to give keen trampers the skills and confidence to safely venture onto places like the Ruahine and Tararua tops during winter.

After a postponement a few weeks earlier because of a severe southerly storm, we hit the jackpot this weekend with plenty of snow and a perfect weather forecast. We headed up to the Manawatu Lodge on Friday evening, arriving at about 9:30pm for the short walk across to a warm and welcoming lodge.

On Saturday morning, Brian Webster and Howard Nicholson, who were to be our instructors for the weekend, gave us a briefing and course outline before fitting crampons to boots. The importance of getting weather forecasts, checking avalanche risk and ensuring everyone has suitable gear was emphasised. We then headed out onto the snow, learning how to manage the ice axe and understand how terrain, wind and snow interact. After about half an hour of walking we found a suitable gully for trying out self-arrest techniques in case of an accidental tumble and slide on snow. We first practised stopping without an ice axe, just digging in every pointy bit of the body to try to slow the slide. We did it forwards, backwards, head first, upside down and generally had a great time sliding everywhere and behaving like kids until we were exhausted. Helen with her bright yellow PVC wet weather gear really went well! After a short break for drinks and snacks we moved on to self-arresting with an ice axe. This worked much better and we were able to move to a steeper slope and again practised sliding and stopping from every position. All of this was done without crampons, but keeping feet up so that if it was done with crampons they would not catch and cause injury. With everyone feeling confident that we understood the technique well it was time to return to the lodge for a relaxing lunch break.



*Heading out from the lodge*



*Building a snow dome*

The afternoon was spent learning about emergency shelters. Using an avalanche probe we found an area of snow nearly 2 metres deep not far from the lodge to have a go at making snow shelters. We tried two methods. Firstly a snow mound where snow is shovelled onto packs then tunnelling in to retrieve them, leaving a big hollow space inside. This worked well, keeping lots of people active and warm. The other method involved tunnelling straight into the steep slope and excavating a chamber. This was slow to get started as the entrance was only wide enough for one person to work on at a time. After about two hours both shelters were finished but the snow mound was much bigger and capable of sheltering more people, clearly the best option to use with a bigger group. By now the sun was fading, temperatures dropping and with the lodge so close it was great to retreat to a hot shower, and roast dinner.

All sorts of merriment ensued in the evening kicking off with an interesting physical challenge, the table traverse. This progressed to the beam traverse, proving that some people have far too much energy to spare. There was even dancing, which had there not been kids trying to get to sleep would have probably gone on much longer.

On Sunday morning we headed off with crampons strapped to our packs looking for some steep hard snow. It did not take long to find it. Just a few hundred metres up from the lodge we found a bank where we tried step cutting with the ice axes, going up, down, left and right. After fitting crampons we tackled some steep, icy sections, first going down, and then climbing up again. There was even the opportunity to try some front pointing on a very short section of about 70 degrees. By now the sun and the physical exertion was making us very hot so we took a well-earned lunch break. Finally we went for a bit of a walk up the mountain towards the ski area, all good practice,

finishing off with some steep down climbing before heading back down to the lodge. This brought to an end a wonderful weekend in the snow, with all of us enthused to get out and enjoy what winter has to offer.



*The group enjoying the beautiful conditions*



*Tackling the steeper stuff*

We were Alla, Ginny, Helen, Linda, Russell, Alan, Hassan, Reuben, Tim and our wonderful instructors Brian and Howie. It is truly a privilege to be part of a club that has members with such a depth of experience that are also prepared to give up their valuable skiing time to pass on their knowledge and skills to others. So, a very big thank you to Brian and Howie from all of us.

## **20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> August: Weekend at the Lodge in the Snow**

Report: Robin Lane

The hut was full with skiers and snow-craft people, since that course had been postponed due to the weather. There had been two weeks of bluebird days up to the weekend and this wonderful weather continued through to the Monday. The temperature had been below zero every day as well, so the snow had kept its quality although each afternoon it became progressively more granular. Both the skiers and the snow-craft groups were well satisfied with the trip.

## **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> August: WWWS Wintery Tramp to Herepai Hut Equals 2500Calories!**

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: William

At 9:20am 29 Wednesday Wilderness Wanderers assembled at the Putara Road entrance to the Tararua Forest Park in conditions of persistent drizzle and low cloud. Trip Leader Leonie directed her flock to percolate themselves off along the track in the knowledge that the two, single person swing bridges to be crossed, would slow and spread the flock out and yes it did so. The track from the car park along the banks of the Mangatainoka to the first swing bridge was a muddy splash. The track along the west bank between the two swing bridges was also very muddy and wet in places.



*Happy swingers*



*At the junction*

*Lunch at Herepai Hut*



After the second swing bridge the steep climb up 358m was just as steep up as when we last did it but the deep, muddy sections were an extra. The bush was a delight with tall mixed podocarps; Miro, Matai and Rimu up to about 700m. Almost all of us made it to the Herepai Hut/Roaring Stag Crossroads and 21 of the party made it the extra 1.5km each way (and 100m in altitude) to Herepai Hut arriving in waves for lunch. The conditions made for slow going in places but all were safely out by about 3:45pm and on the road to Ekatahuna for coffee by 4pm. William's cell phone later informed us that those who made it to the hut had used about 2500 Calories (later equated to 1.2kg of dairy ice cream).

Thanks to trip leader Leonie and drivers Chris, Bob, Rod, Marion, Russell and Rita.

### **Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> August: The WWWs return (almost 2 years later) to the Makahika Track**

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Maureen and Bob



*Enjoying the Sun at the Lookout*

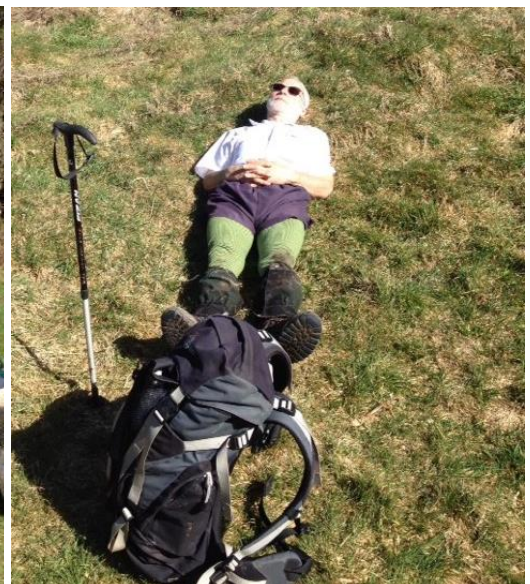


*Tramping the Bush in Dappled Sunlight*

It was a bright and pleasant day worthy of the spring that was due to officially spring the following day. Thirty plus trampers started from the Tararua Forest Park entrance reached via Gladstone Road to walk the Makahika track as a walk-in, walk-out. About half made it to the picnic table lookout or beyond for lunch and a third chose to turn at the first look-out. A count of token leaves clutched to a bosom, confirmed that, to reach either of the look-outs involved 29 stream and river crossings in **each** direction. In addition to wet crossings there were many more muddy sections so boots became waterlogged and dry feet a memory. In spite of these tribulations and a few (temporarily) lost souls, this was well enjoyed tramp. The quality of the bush in the river valley was outstanding. We will return sooner next time! Thanks to trip leader Ian and our many drivers.



*Enjoying the Sun on Exiting the Bush*



*Harold Not Deceased- Just Resting!*



*Two thirds of the Team*

## Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September: Longview Hut

Report: Royce Mills

Photos: John B and John D

Our destination was Longview hut and the Hawkes Bay turned on a beautiful warm day with blue sky and sunshine. Twenty-two of us, we enjoyed wide-ranging views as we headed up to the hut. Upon reaching the ridge we were unexpectedly blasted by a strong, cold wind. Suddenly jackets, hats and gloves had to be pulled on.



*En Route*



*At Longview hut*

Thirteen of the group battled on to have lunch at Rocky Knob. The rest of the group stopped for an early lunch at the hut, then headed back downhill taking several stops in the now calm conditions to again admire the views. Thanks to our leader Christine for a memorable day out.

## Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September: Coppermine Loop

Report: Tim Swale

Photos: Tim Swale

The Coppermine Loop just north of Woodville is neat little walk that starts out with a leisurely amble up the valley on an old miners track. A new slip shortly before the Wharite turn off is clearly still active but easy to clamber round. Many of our group of 12 trampers ended up with wet feet crossing the creek, but the ensuing climb of over 300 vertical metres soon warmed them up again. There was some light precipitation as we moved through gaps in the bush canopy, but for the main part the weather turned out rather better than expected. Helen's grand-daughter Analise who is only eight years old did remarkably well in getting round the circuit and probably spurred on the three boys that I had brought along from the Bush Blue Light group.



*enjoying the bush and views*

Lunch was had at a clearing on the ridge track looking out towards Wharite with faint traces of sunshine breaking through. The going after lunch was much easier with great views across the Tararua District as we descended

farmland back to the car park. A final crossing of the stream served to clean up any muddy boots before we hopped in the van and headed home. A lovely little walk and great to get kids into the outdoors with lots of supportive adults.

## Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September: Sunrise Hut

Report: Allan Rae

Photos: Evan, Maureen and Bob

Twenty-seven WWW'ers set off at 7.30am bound for Sunrise Hut. DOC had advised all the recently-fallen trees had been removed (thanks DOC) and that little if any snow or ice remained on the track – and so it turned out. The forecast was for 19°C in Hastings, but that was too far away to be relevant.

The tramp started under overcast skies with very strong north-westerlies. Just as we were about to leave, a large 'local' group (average age similar if not greater than ours) arrived in the car park. They thoughtfully delayed their start to allow us to have first use of the hut for lunch. Temperatures fell rapidly as we approached the hut, when one of our group said the Norwegian weather bureau had forecast -1C for Sunrise hut! So after lunch it was a rapid descent to relative warmth. We met the 'local' walking group just below the hut as we were leaving, so the hut was indeed empty when they arrived.

Driving home included travel through a massive rain downpour and gales, accompanied by a rapid temperature drop to just 7°C in Dannevirke where we warmed up with coffee (not a single ice cream was to be seen) courtesy of Wild Bean. A most enjoyable late winter romp.

Thanks to trip leader Allan, van driver Evan and other drivers.



*Sunrise Hut*



*A cold day but only a few traces of snow left*

Bob adds: We climbed 703m, tramped 12.8km and, William claims, used 2225 calories in the process - time for a glass of wine!



### Contact Details

#### Committee 2015 - 2016

|             |              |  |             |
|-------------|--------------|--|-------------|
| President   | John Beech   | <a href="mailto:president@mtsc.org.nz">president@mtsc.org.nz</a>     | 06 354 9310 |
| Secretary   | Tim Swale    | <a href="mailto:secretary@mtsc.org.nz">secretary@mtsc.org.nz</a>     | 06 376 6556 |
| Treasurer   | Arthur Flint | <a href="mailto:treasurer@mtsc.org.nz">treasurer@mtsc.org.nz</a>     | 06 356 7654 |
| Chief Guide | Ken Mercer   | <a href="mailto:chief_guide@mtsc.org.nz">chief_guide@mtsc.org.nz</a> | 06 356 7497 |

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

|                   |               |  |              |
|-------------------|---------------|--|--------------|
| Membership        | Sue Nicholson | <a href="mailto:membership@mtsc.org.nz">membership@mtsc.org.nz</a>       | 06 357 6325  |
| Newsletter Editor | Jean Garman   | <a href="mailto:editor@mtsc.org.nz">editor@mtsc.org.nz</a>               | 021 176 0209 |
| Lodge Manager     | John Lyttle   | <a href="mailto:lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz">lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz</a> | 027 433 6307 |
| Mini-Bus Manager  | Ken Mercer    |  | 06 356 7497  |

**General Committee:** Bev Akers, Bob Hodgson, Howard Nicholson, Rob Pringle

### Appointees

|                 |                  |  |             |
|-----------------|------------------|--|-------------|
| Lodge Bookings  | Hugh & Liz Wilde | <a href="mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz">lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz</a> | 06 356 9450 |
| Gear Custodian  | Peter Rawlins    | <a href="mailto:gear@mtsc.org.nz">gear@mtsc.org.nz</a>                     | 06 356 7443 |
| Ski Captain     | Howard Nicholson | <a href="mailto:ski@mtsc.org.nz">ski@mtsc.org.nz</a>                       | 06 357 6325 |
| Social Convenor | Bob Hodgson      | <a href="mailto:social@mtsc.org.nz">social@mtsc.org.nz</a>                 | 06 356 2915 |
| Wednesday Trips | Bev Akers        | <a href="mailto:bevakers@xtra.co.nz">bevakers@xtra.co.nz</a>               | 06 325 8879 |
| Thursday Trips  | Merv Matthews    | <a href="mailto:merv6817@gmail.com">merv6817@gmail.com</a>                 | 06 357 2858 |
| Facebook        | Ivan Rienks      | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/mtsc.org.nz">facebook@mtsc.org.nz</a>    |             |

### 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. 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      |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Adult</b>               | <b>\$35</b> | <b>\$50</b> |
| <b>Secondary School</b>    | <b>\$28</b> | <b>\$43</b> |
| <b>Primary School</b>      | <b>\$23</b> | <b>\$38</b> |
| <b>Pre-school (3-5 yo)</b> | <b>\$10</b> | <b>\$10</b> |

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.