

# 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 1: February 2017



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.

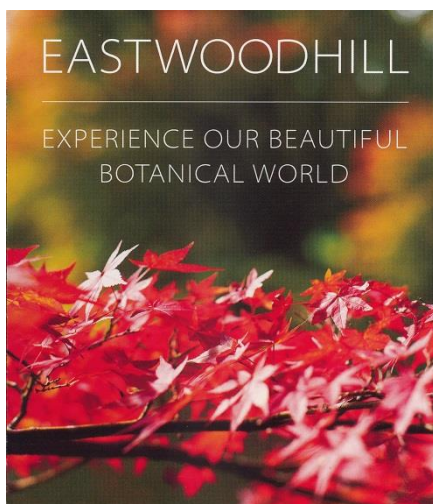
### Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February: The Ruataniwha Dam and DOCs Heritage Stewardship

#### John Beech

The Ruataniwha dam has been a controversial issue ever since the HBRC (Hawkes Bay Regional Council) introduced the concept in 2010. Many interested groups have taken part in the debate. As recreational users of the Ruahine Forest Park, the effects of the dam on it are our major concern. Farmers, the government and local councillors look at it from the economic benefits. Forest and Bird and other NGO's look at it from the environmental cost perspective.

How do we balance the needs and wants of all three? I will try and give a balanced view.

To balance this serious topic we will start the meeting with a 10min video that Shane Veale put together for his Dad, Bill (present for Bill's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday), of their December 2015 trip down the Pohangina River and through Cattle Creek and Standfield. It's a mix of still shots and video footage to music that shows the countryside, the huts, a deer they shot and some blue ducks.



### Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March: Eastwoodhill, New Zealand's National Arboretum Jenny and Alex Davies

Eastwoodhill is New Zealand's National Arboretum. Planting began over 100 years ago on a farm near Gisborne. Today it contains more woody exotic species than anywhere else in New Zealand, including the largest collection of Northern Hemisphere trees south of the equator. There are 135 hectares with over 25 km of tracks and walks. The largest trees are near the visitor centre, as are the extensive homestead gardens. The year-round beauty of this place can be easily appreciated by all. There is also excellent self-catering accommodation. Two years ago, Dan Haliday was appointed curator. He is our nephew. Dan and his wife Monique both rejoice in this dream-come-true. Because the national awareness of this treasure is quite low, we are eager to spread their enthusiasm, and appreciate this opportunity to do so.

# REPORTS AND NOTICES

## MTSC President Report: John Beech

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



Hi all, I hope you have all had a happy and restful Christmas break. I guess most of us will be back at work by now and as usual I presume Summer will make its presence felt now we have less spare time. Hopefully, we have been able to get into the outdoors over the break, whether to the beach, the hills, or the mountains. Since my last report I have managed to spend some time tramping and biking including the Abel Tasman track with the school kids and some mountain biking on the old Coach road near Ohakune.

Some issues that have popped up recently include DOC's final decision to close the Ongaonga base. A number of clubs wrote letters to DOC regarding this, including our club. Unfortunately all the community objections have been completely ignored and I am extremely disappointed at this decision. Not only has scant regard been paid to the community but we have lost another valuable DOC staff member through this short sighted decision.

Within the last couple of weeks I visited a couple of huts in the Ruahines that I had not been to before; Dead Dog and Herricks. The former was starting to show signs of wear and tear and the latter a lot more. Dead Dog is supposedly fully maintained by DOC while Herricks is community maintained. My concern with these huts and others in the far North Eastern part of the park is whether they will be maintained appropriately from Palmerston North given the long drives to get there. DOC has assured us there will not be any reduction in service with the loss of Ongaonga. You can bet we will hold them to that.

I also submitted, on behalf of the club, to DOC's amendment of its Tongariro National Park management plan <http://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/have-your-say/all-consultations/2016/tongariro-national-park-management-plan-partial-review/>. This is being amended to increase the amount of mountain bike tracks in the park. Two new sections are being proposed to provide a loop track for the old coach road and a new dual use track from Turoa to the bottom of Mountain road using the old Blythe track. DOC was seeking input prior to final submissions in March. After consultation with your committee, we have given support for the two lower sections but not a dual purpose track from Turoa. Our main reason for opposing the dual purpose track was the conflict with walkers particularly with the likelihood of it being a fast downhill run.

On a more positive note, I was invited to participate in a meeting with DOC and others regarding the maintenance of the old NZFS huts in the Ruahines. This was part of a project led by Rob Brown and Geoff Spearpoint (co-authors of 'Shelter from the Storm' and 'A Bunk for the Night') to give some guidance on how to maintain and restore these structures. This is becoming more important as more work on these old huts is now being carried out by volunteers. It was a positive meeting with plenty of support from our local DOC staffers. I look forward to the continuing good work being achieved through the positive relationship between the local community and DOC.

As another year starts off I look forward to the clubs continuing participation in all aspects of the outdoors. *John*

# UPCOMING TRIPS

February Wednesday Tramps			February Thursday Tramps		
Date	Leader	Phone	Date	Leader	Phone
1	Marian Beedle	323 3246	2	Christine Scott	354 0510
8	Linda Darbyshire	354 6171	9	Royce Mills	355 8556
15	Bev Akers	325 8879	16	John Brock	329 4834
22	Robert Bruce	329 7858	23	Hugh Wilde	356 9450

## The Next Trip Card: Winter (April-October) 2017

Now that the Summer trip card has been printed, it is time to start thinking about all the exciting trips **you want to see or to lead** on the next Winter trip card. At random times, people think of trips they would like to go on or lead but forget about them before it is trip card compilation time again. To get around this problem, we have put a form for the next trip-card in a Google Drive folder; you can enter your trips or trip suggestions for the next trip card

before you forget what it was you wanted to do, and well ahead of the next deadline. The link is <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/18mz-5fAFwspTrTfooWzu6fuaC8u1mGamGiVZOfoxVEE/edit?usp=sharing>.

February Weekend Trips				
Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
4 – 6	Waiohine River Headwaters	Fit	David Harrington	021 240 9056
4 – 6	Mt Taranaki	Medium	Linda Campbell	06 323 3836
11 (Sat)	Iron Gates Gorge	Medium	Adam Matich	022 358 8062
11 – 12	Lodge Work Party	All	John Lyttle	04 473 5300
18 – 19	Rimutaka Cycle Trail	Mountain Bike	John Beech	354 9310
19 (Sun)	Atiwhakatu Gorge	Easy	Tim Swale	06 376 6556
26 (Sun)	Te Ekaou Stream	Fit	David Harrington	021 240 9056

**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.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> February: Waiohine River Headwaters**

**Fit**                      **David Harrington**                      **06 8395766 or 021 2409056**

At this stage I'm looking at walking into Mitre Flats hut on Friday evening. On Saturday it's up and over Mitre and Girdlestone, along Tarn Ridge and past the Waiohine Pinnacles to a small saddle just before Lancaster where we'll drop into the head of the Waiohine River, sidling one waterfall and camping at the first available spot. On Sunday, it's all river travel with mostly reasonable travel including a few deep pools down to Mid Waiohine Hut for the night. The final day on Monday is out via Mt Holdsworth, Jumbo, the Pinnacle Ridge and back to The Pines somehow (yet to be decided).

#### **4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> February: Mt Taranaki**

**Medium**                      **Linda Campbell**                      **06 323 3836 or 027 333 4493**                      [lindammc@xtra.co.nz](mailto:lindammc@xtra.co.nz)

The plan at this stage is to travel to Taranaki on the Friday evening. If the weather is suitable we will climb Mt Taranaki on the Saturday. If not we will take a walk lower on the mountain instead and try again for a summit climb on the Sunday. Thinking positively, we will climb from Stratford Plateau to Tahurangi Lodge. From there we climb the stairs, the scree and finally the rocks that form the Lizard before dropping into the crater. From there it is a short climb to the summit. If needed we will have a faster and a slower group and I have invited a member of the Egmont Alpine Club to walk with those who wish to travel faster than others. Another option if the weather is not suitable for climbing is the Pouakai Circuit.

#### **Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> February: Iron Gates Gorge**

**Medium**                      **Adam Matich**                      **022 358 8062**                      [adam.j.matich@gmail.com](mailto:adam.j.matich@gmail.com)

We will head from Petersons Road along the track to about an hour past Alice Nash Memorial Heritage Lodge where the track drops down to the river. We will then rock hop down the river past Alice Nash, to the beginning of the Gorge which is just below the confluence with Umutoi Creek. We will be swimming through the gorge and somewhere on the other side will try to pick up the trail that leads back to the road end again. This could be an interesting bush-bash/navigation exercise, as I have not been through the gorge before. People will need to have good rock-hopping skills for the river and also be able to swim. Waterproof pack liners might also be a good idea. Don't worry if it all goes wrong as PNTMC are coming through the next day; I am sure they would be only too happy to rescue us.

#### **11<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> February: Lodge Work Party**

**All**                      **John Lyttle**                      **027 433 6307**                      [buildinsurveyornz@gmail.com](mailto:buildinsurveyornz@gmail.com)

We have no special projects on at the lodge at this time so this work party will be about general maintenance and cleaning of the lodge and its surroundings. This is a great time for members to contribute to the club and just a willingness to help is required. The club van will run from Palmerston North on the Friday evening and the cost of

this is shared by the users. Staying and eating at the lodge is free. Let me know if you have any questions or would like me to book you a seat in the van and/or a bed in the lodge.

### 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> February: Rimutaka Cycle Trail

**MTB Intermediate**

**John Beech**

**354 9310**

[Beech1960@yandex.com](mailto:Beech1960@yandex.com)

The plan is to leave Palmy about 8am Saturday and start the ride at Maymorn in the Hutt Valley. We will ride to Cross Creek. We will camp at one of the campsites, either Cross Creek or Corner Creek depending on the consensus. Affordable accommodation seems very limited in the area and the local holiday park is booked out. On Sunday we will ignore the road section and ride from Ocean beach to Orongorongo. If anyone has a large trailer for carting bikes and wouldn't mind lending it, could they let me know. If there is also someone who would like to shuttle the van for us could they let me know too. <http://nzcycletrail.com/trails/rimutaka-cycle-trail/>

### Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February: Atiwhakatu Gorge

**Easy**

**Tim Swale**

**06 376 6556**

[theswales@xtra.co.nz](mailto:theswales@xtra.co.nz)

The Atiwhakatu Gorge is described as a non-technical introduction to gorge travel. It will entail a walk up towards Atiwhakatu hut then a wet descent down the river. Walking, wading and a couple of swims are likely (see the Atiwhakatu Gorge description on the kiwicanyons.org website for details). This trip will be dependent on the river being at normal levels or lower. With Summer bringing warmer temperatures, this should be a pleasant way to spend a few hours.

### Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> February: Te Ekaou Stream

**Fit**

**David Harrinton**

**06 8395766 or 021 2409056**

The Te Ekaou Stream is in the South Western Ruahines. Hopefully we'll get permission to drive through the farm to Te Ekaou Hut. We'll drop into the Te Ekaou Stream and follow the most Southern branch up into the headwaters. Could be slippery rocks and waterfalls so may be difficult travel. Most likely way of return is via the long bush ridge immediately South West of the stream.



### Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November: WWWs Tramp to an Elusive Burn Hut

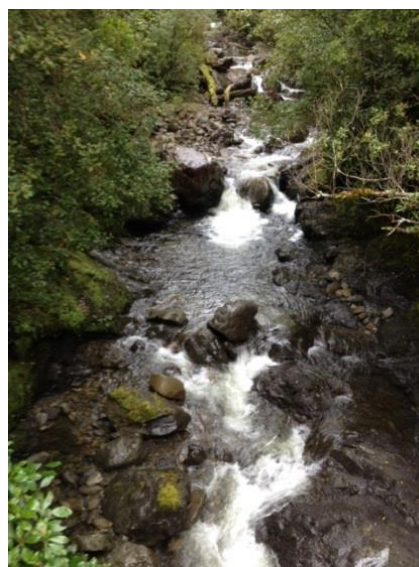
Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Maureen Naylor

At 9.35am on Wednesday 9/11 2016, potentially a date of significance, 21 Wednesday Wilderness Wanderers assembled at the Mangahao No 2 dam to be briefed before making their way across the dam (320m) and then onto the sidle track along the river bank. The party included Kamil from the Czech Republic who joined us for a taste of "real" Kiwi tramping. It was a dull, overcast day with low clouds and an unfulfilled forecast of sunshine later. The river track has a justified reputation for its demanding roughness and unforgiving nature with lots of tight scrambles over and around roots and steep drops over boulders. It is typical of the less frequently tramped Tararua and certainly not a candidate for designation as a front country "Great Walk".



*No 2 Dam*



*The river*

Seven of the faster trampers including Kamil made it along the river, up the steep climb through the leather wood and then through the tussock to Burn Hut (752m). We have to take their word for this because the clouds were low and visibility limited to about 30m; those who turned early never even saw the hut! On the way out some found extra focus at the sight of dribbles of blood deposited on the edge of an early climb down to a stream crossing. All were, more or less, safely out by about 3.30pm in grey damp conditions, making coffee taken at the Horseman Café a joyful event.

The consensus was that this is a tramp to be repeated sometime in summer conditions. Thanks to trip leader Bob and our heroic drivers Chris, Anne, Marion and Rod.

### Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November: Rangipo Hut, Mt Ruapehu

Report: Royce Mills

Photos: Royce Mills & John Brock

It's a long drive for a day walk and the weather forecast leading up to this Thursday tramp was very changeable, so the trip was on, then off, then on again at a late stage (just the afternoon before). As it turned out, the weather was most pleasant; it being calm and mild with high cloud. The 7km drive from the Desert road to the parking place at the towers on the Tukino road was slow and very rough at times. Eighteen were in our group. We set off along the Round the Mountain Track, crossing a high footbridge over the impressive Whangaehu valley. It was just a two hour walk to the hut for lunch. We enjoyed wonderful views with so much open space around us - so different from our usual bush tramping in the Ruahines and Tararuas. Thanks to our leader Carolyn Brodie for organising such a good day out - we all arrived back at our vehicles with big smiles.



*Gillian Thornley crossing the Whangaehu River valley (John Brock)*



*Rangipo desert (John Brock)*



*Lunch at Rangipo hut (Royce Mills)*

### Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November: WWWs Hot-Wet-Foot-It to Atiwhakatu Hut!

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos and calorie count: William

The Wednesday Trampers had intended to tramp the Pinnacle Peak loop involving a river crossing above the Atiwhakatu Hut. We travelled South in intermittent rain enjoying a near continuous sequence of magnificent rainbows along the ranges on our right hand side. The ranges were shrouded in a miasma of mist and rain. All the rivers, including the Atiwhakatu, were in high flow making our planned route impassable. We arrived at Holdsworth in heavy, squally rain. The decision was made to brave the rain and to tramp in to the Atiwhakatu Hut.



*Lean- in and cautiously advance!*

Twenty one hardy, rain-wrapped souls set out at about 9.15am. We experienced only brief snatches of sun between alternating heavy and light showers. The track was in surprisingly good order, the bush beautiful in its soggy green and the river and

tributaries intimidating in very high flow. Most made it to the hut and after a dry respite from the rain all then departed the hut by noon.

The track features several fine bridges including the high decked swing bridge about three quarters of the way to the hut, built as a replacement for the one devastated by a high flood five or six years ago. Out of keeping with the safe and easy track is the gnarly slip crossing featured in the photo. It is certainly not a family friendly feature and caused the Wanderers to proceed with special caution both ways. The slip has been a challenge for several years; let us hope that DOC is able to make improvements soon.



*Lunch in the clean and dry Hut*



*Now for a change of clothes and then a cup of coffee!*

All were safely, if not dryly, out before 2pm having consumed 2000+ calories. We quickly changed and gleefully converged on the Masterton i-Site cafe. Thanks to Trip Leader Dennis and our drivers, especially van driver Chris.

## **19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> November: Herepai - Mangahao Crossing**

Report: Dave Mitchell

Photos: Esther Pothuis

By Thursday night the weather forecasts were all indicating rain and wind on Saturday, then clearing on Sunday. There were only two of us going and because I could not arrange someone to pick us up on Sunday at the dams, it meant we could only go half way then retrace our steps. How far we got also depended on the weather as well.



*Esther and Dave enjoying the Sunday sunshine*



*Travel along the ridge line*

We left Palmerston North at 9am and drove to the Putara road end. Esther had not been to Roaring Stag hut before so we went down there first for a late lunch. There were three Wellington trampers there for the night. They said it had been a cold night in Herepai hut. It was with a little reluctance we left a nice warm hut to slog it out up to Herepai hut for the night. It continued to rain all the way up there. We arrived at Herepai to find Nicola and Quentin there, Quentin was trying to get the fire going with wet wood. It did eventually provide a little warmth.

That evening it blew and rained a lot, however it was good being in the hut in preference to battling our way across the tops.

Next morning, the weather had cleared although there was a cool NW wind blowing but at least there was some sun. Esther and I made our way up the track towards Ruapae. I was able to point out all the country that can be seen from Ruapae. The plan was to head towards Ngapuketuru along the tops except we would only go as far as Hines before turning back. The remnants of the original Putara track can be followed along the ridge; it was quite sheltered on

the lee side. After a break for some chocolate fish we retraced our steps back to Herepai Hut for afternoon tea. There were a couple of hunters with dogs in residence, who were taking it easy in the afternoon sun. It did not take us long to tramp out to the cars via the normal route. I was quite relieved to see I had not left the lights on.

Although we didn't exactly achieve what I had intended, Esther got to see what the Tararuas can throw at you on a typical weekend. I like Herepai hut especially when there is bad weather up on the tops.

We drove back to Palmerston via Woodville where we stopped for thick shakes at the corner dairy. We were Esther Pothuis (PNTMC) and me.



## Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November: WWWs Whareroa Farm to Orange Hut

Report: Bob Hodgson

(almost dry and mud-free)

Photos: Maureen & William

When 31 Wednesday trampers arrived at Whareroa Farm, the parking lot at Mackay's Crossing was already crowded with cars and a group of trampers from the Tararua Tramping Club. Luckily our tramping footprints did not coincide since their objective was Mt Wainui and ours Orange Hut in the Akatarawa Forest. However, a late arrival for Mt Wainui somehow got mixed in with our group and decided to stay with us, so we were 32 on departure at 9.30am. According to Wednesday trampers who are experienced in these matters, as a mere 19.9km return trip, the walk to Orange Hut falls into the "easy" category. It is not, however, easy on the feet as much of the tramp is on rocky surfaces.



To avoid possible high speed downhill mountain bikers we took the newly mown horse track up through the farm to Campbell's Mill road where there are some magnificent views of the Kapiti coast. Then it was down into the Akatarawa Forest on Hydro Valley road. Dennis, who was in the leading group, placed pointer arrows at intersections with other forestry roads so possible confusion was avoided and 2/3 of our group had lunch at the hut after walking 9.9km in. The balance of the party turned back at the entrance to the forest.

The forest walk started out through a small area of pine forest. For most of the walk we were in second growth native bush.



The new Orange Hut was developed by the local 4 wheel drive club after the previous hut burnt down. Extensive use of concrete flooring and concrete block walls gives a very "solid as" feel to the new hut and the very functional adjoining semi enclosed BBQ area.

All our party were back at the parking area by 3.00pm on what turned out to be a raincoat free tramp, a welcome change! The next stop was one our favourites, the Otaki Riverside Cafe. Thanks to van driver Chris and car drivers Bernard, Charles, Dennis, Marion and Russell. Various tramping calorie-counter reportage has yet to be "fact checked" but 2500 calories is a best estimate.

### **Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November: Wildly Wet Conditions on the Waiopehu Hut Track**

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Maureen & William

On the last day of spring, thirty odd trampers assembled at the Poads Road entrance to the Ohau Conservation area and the Tararua Forest Park. In wet conditions and heavy rain, three groups formed, most of the day trampers set out to tramp up to the junction with the Six Discs track and then along the ridge towards Bush Corner and the Waiopehu Hut with a small group intent on following the river below to the swing bridge. A third heroic group of seven had the intention of tramping to the hut for an overnight stay.



*A wet trumper strikes a pose!*



*The soggy seven smiling in adversity!*

The rain was relentless and the local track conditions as bad as anybody in the groups had experience on past tramps there. Some way beyond the junction, the slower overnights with their heavy packs met the returning majority of the day trampers who happily shared the news that the track ahead was extremely muddy and "several small lakes needed to be crossed." Undaunted the gallant seven tramped on later meeting with William and Russell, two fast group outliers who had also decided to turn back. The gallant seven then plodded on for a half hour or so then also decided to turn as the heavy rain continued. The key factor in making the decision was that the Waiopehu Hut has no heating by which to dry gear. So it was that the gallant seven were lured by trip leader into walking for 6+ hours with overnight packs only to return to the car park to get changed in fine conditions at last. All trampers returned muddied and dampened but uninjured.

Thanks to (siren) trip leader Christine and to our drivers including Evan who drove the bus.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> December: Blyth Hut**

Report 1: Annalise (8 years old)

Report 2: Helen Peek

Photos: Helen Peek

#### **REPORT 1**

The trip leaders were Me and Granny and the trip members were my Mum, Alan, Jassi, Sarah and Michelle.

First we were all dry and clean but when we walked through the first stream my mum slid off rocks and she got so many scratches on her thigh and two big bruises on her butt and thigh. On the way up I got to eat small chocolate Easter Eggs.

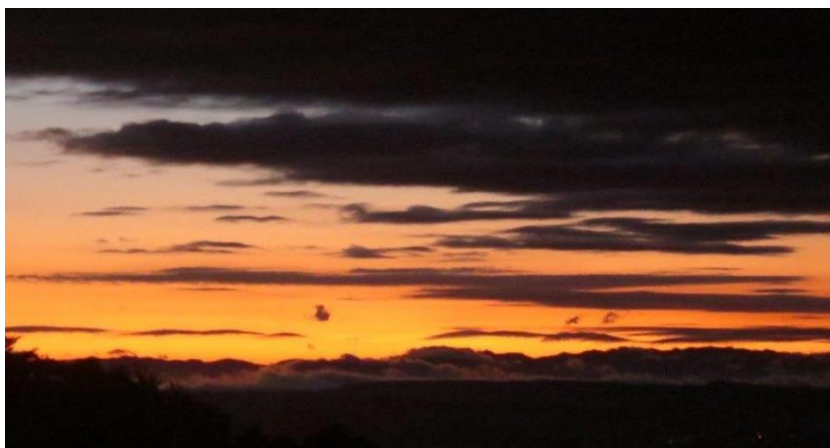
When we got to the hut through all those streams and water I found a guitar and began to play on it. Then I found the beds for me and Granny. For dinner we had



*This is a photo of the start of the walk in front of the sign at the start in the top car park.*



soup, mashed potatoes and rice. Then for pudding we all had ice cream with tiny marshmallows and strawberries which I didn't like because they were dried. I slept on a top bunk and Granny slept on the bunk under me but in the middle of the night I went on the bunk down below with my head facing Granny's.



Then in the morning the sunrise was beautiful and the colour of it was peachy red, yellow and orange. In the morning when I got up I had pasta for breakfast and then got ready for the day. Then when all of us were ready we started off to tramp in the rain for a while then it came nice. Then we walked along the Old Blyth Track and we had to walk over boardwalks and then we had to walk off track because the mud was so deep. When we got back to the car we were soaked and wet and muddy, that was such a fun walk. But bye bye for now see you soon again!!

## REPORT 2

Mid afternoon seven of us met at the upper car park on the Ohakune Mountain Road in clear and calm conditions. By the number of vehicles in the car park, including a van with many seats, I was slightly apprehensive as to how full the hut may be if others had decided it would be a good place for an end-of-year-party, but my fears were allayed by a couple of ladies we met that assured us the hut was empty and the van belonged to one of them. So happily we continued on our PWP way with selfies galore being taken, and exploration of the environment along the way. Eventually we arrived at the hut and much to my granddaughters awe, the resident guitar!

Although the envisaged relaxing evening on the porch watching the sunset didn't happen; it was put the fire on and have tea, the chatter was warm and we did get outside after dark to star gaze and watch passing satellites between drifting clouds while the top of the mountain came in and out of view.

No rush to wake on Sunday and when we did it was overcast but fine, however that didn't last long and by the time we left the drizzle and clag had set-in but it was reasonably mild and wasn't windy although we had intermittent showers during the day. We returned via the Old Blyth Track which was **very** muddy. After a shuffling of drivers and cars we headed off to The Blind Finch Café, a new café with a bit of a Steampunk theme going on, and an option of vegetarian burgers, so a very pleasant way to finish a leisurely tramp with great company.



We were Michelle Rush, Sarah and Jassi Singh, Alan Hawkins, Donna and Annalise Strachan, Helen Peek.

Footnote: When I was growing up our neighbour, Mr Ayers, who then was caretaker at Terrace End School, had helped to build the original Blyth Hut circa 1920. In 1973 we took Mr Ayers back up to Blyth Hut. Somehow it had been established that a new log book was due to go into the hut so it was arranged that Mr Ayers would take it and we collected it from the Ranger before driving up the road and then walking over to the hut. Mr Ayers died in August 1973 aged 73 years. We had some photos from our trip and I left a set in the current log book.



*Old Blyth Hut*



*New Blyth Hut*

## **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December: Maharahara - Kiritaki**

Report: Adam Matich

Photos: Jenny McCarthy

This trip started on the western end of the Maharahara Crossing on Opawe Road. After a slightly confused wander across the farm land we had a solid 700m climb up to Maharahara peak, which took around 2 hours. The track across the tops to the intersection east of Matanginui dragged on a bit longer than expected but eventually we were heading down-hill towards Oruakeretaki Stream. We were fortunate with the weather, as although there was some drizzle, there was little wind and the sun came out for us for our lunch stop on the way down to the stream. Where to go once we dropped into Oruakeretaki Stream was a little confused as there was no immediate sign of the track up to Kiritaki Hut, as is suggested by the map. Said track is actually about 50m down-stream and has a helpful signpost. A steep 300m climb saw us up at the hut, 2¾ hours from Maharahara peak, for a short rest before climbing up the track behind the hut to find the No. 1 Line Track extension. Even though there was no more rain, we needed our rain coats as the vegetation on this track was wet and somewhat closer in than it was on the official, DOC tracks. The extension track is somewhat slow going and so it took us 2 hours to travel this section whereas the descent down the No. 1 Line Track itself was around an hour, so in all we had an 8 hour day. We were Jenny McCarthy and Adam Matich



## **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December: MTSC End of Year Function**

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: William

From 7pm on 6th December 43 of us gathered at the Ashhurst Inn for drinks and bread and dips prior to a meal. Prior to this gathering, 32 of us had assembled at the Gorge car park for a 5-15pm start to a walk around the Tawa Loop. Most walked clockwise with two going in the opposite direction to enable some hand held radios to be checked out for effectiveness. It was a fine mild evening and it pleasing to report that the specialist services of our three Search and Rescue (SAR) participants were not called on. We were all out of the Gorge by 6.20pm and it was a happy and invigorated group that then motored to the Inn. The food was good, the company great and the Christmas cracker jokes as bad and predictable as ever. Bob resisted the temptation to make a speech saying a few words instead.....



*Some Tawa Loopers at rest*



*Rare Manawatu sunshine captured and enjoyed*

## Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December: WWWs Happily Remain Dry & Unmuddied at Waikawa Beach

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Maureen, Judith & William

On Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> of December, a near record 33 trampers assembled at the Waikawa Beach road end for a 9.10am start on a loop tramp. We first made our way north along the banks of the Waikawa stream through pines alternating with sand dunes mostly covered with long grass and requiring careful footwork. An unusual feature was a small colony of shags seen nesting in the pine trees.



*Tarzan (Dennis)*

We then cut through the dunes and made our way north along the beach to the mouth of the Ohau river, passing a colony of black backed gulls. A line of godwits was also to be seen and one alert pair of eyes spotted the remains of three blue penguins.



We turned South for a lunch stop taken sitting on washed up tree trunks. It was a warm, soporific day with diffuse sunlight and a very light sea breeze so lunch was a leisurely affair.

We continued tramping South to the mouth of the Waikawa stream, then turned North to return to the Waikawa road end via the wooden bridge that had been the starting point of our tramp.

This was a gentle, flat Summer tramp, almost a 10km nature walk. Undertaken in ideal weather conditions, it made a welcome contrast to recent demanding tramps made in excessively wet conditions. So it was a happy, unstressed band of trampers who then converged on the Museum Cafe.

Thanks to trip leader Jenny who had carefully piloted our path through the dunes, also to our numerous drivers. To Dennis as well, for showing how Tarzan progressed through the trees...

## Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December: Waterfall Hunting near Mangaturuturu Hut

Report: Adam Matich

Photos: Adam Matich & Helen Peek

An inclement weather forecast resulted in cancellation of the advertised "Tramping from the Lodge" trip, but the following Saturday had golden weather advertised so we went up for a day trip. From the Mangaturuturu road end we dropped down to the Hut and walked up the Mangaturuturu River to the 56m waterfall for photos and lunch in the much needed shade. The river narrows between buffs up near the intended waterfall, and there were other falls on either side of us as we proceeded. Travel up the river was easy and it was possible to walk right up under the 56m falls. However, it was a warm day, not a hot one. Standing near the base of the falls was wetting enough.

After inspecting what the Mangaturuturu valley had to offer we climbed South up steep terrain through the forest and sidled across below some buffs, and a small cascade, to eventually reach the open tops. Around 500m of travel saw us crossing a couple of un-mapped watercourses, one of which was a chain of small waterfalls, and then dropping into a tributary of the Mangaturuturu which has a waterfall at its head that is not shown on the map. We intended to head up this watercourse to around 1450m (BJ34 176 475) and climb up to the little saddle to the south (BJ34 176 474) but a double line of buffs stopped us cold. We sidled South just below the 1400m contour and dropped back onto the around-the-mountain track. Some of this sidle was on a sparsely marked trail.





Once on the track, we climbed up the waterfall face and diverged from the track to continue up past the 30m falls to the saddle we had not been able to approach from the other side. After an afternoon tea stop, we dropped back down and climbed the spur on the South side of the 30m falls, which gave us a good view down onto them. The 30m falls are over a large overhanging rock that appears well known by the rock-climbing community. There were two people playing with ropes and harnesses and we could see many anchor points and carabiners hanging from the ceiling created by the rock shelf. From there we had a sidle to visit the 18m waterfall and then a gentle descent back onto the around-the-mountain track, arriving back at the car after a 6½ hour day. We were Helen Peek, Jenny McCarthy, and Adam Matich

## 17<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> December: McKinnon Hut

Report: Jean Garman

Photos: Ivan Rienks & Jean Garman

Two of us enjoyed a weekend of brilliant weather. As it is still not possible to access the Kauwhatau Base, we started from the twin road bridges and made our way up the Hikurangi stream. The first section is very easy going but as there is little gradient the stream winds back and forth so involves many many stream crossings accompanied by the strong scent of lupins. From the stream junction near the park boundary the going was slower as it was tighter, more scrubby, and had a steeper gradient. Just before reaching another open section there were some waterfalls that can be passed on a bit of a trail on the True Right, start at the little grassy flat above the river on the down stream side and there is a cairn on the upstream side. Above this, it was open easy going as we continued a wee way up the stream then up the very washed out side stream on the True Right which we followed straight up to the ridgeline. It was a pretty straightforward climb and not even difficult to climb out to the little saddle just to the East of pt 1468. From there we just followed up the ridge to the Hikurangi range and over to McKinnon hut for the night (a 7½ hour day).



*No go this way, time to find a different route*



*Super easy travel further up the stream*

Another stunning day on Sunday with a cooler breeze to stop us from overheating as we regained the ridgeline then dropped down to the cableway. The track is in good condition except for the last 100 vertical meters where the flaxes are taking over and there is a bit of stinging nettle. There is a little track to get down into the river, then it was just a tedious 2 hour plod (didn't get our shorts wet) back to the road bridges (a 6 hour day). Stunning area so a shame about the access difficulties. The route as described is all legal access but can only be attempted when there has been no rain and no rain is forecast! We were Ivan Rienks and Jean Garman



*Easy climb out of the top of the stream*



*Nice travel up the ridge*

## **New Year's Eve: Haurangi Hut**

Report: Alla Seleznyova

Photos: Alla Seleznyova

Haurangi hut is one of the sole occupancy DOC huts in Catchpool valley (12 km south of Wanuiomata). It's a very nice 10 bunk hut in a forest clearing near Orongorongo River. On 31 December we assembled at the Rimutaka Forest Park campground and after an early lunch proceeded to the hut following the Orongorongo track and the Big Bend Track (around 7.5 km in total). After settling in the hut, we went down for a walk in the riverbed and collected and cut some firewood. This brought us to the happy hour with a selection of cheeses and nibbles followed by dinner. Previous occupants wrote in the Hut Book that they saw a kiwi near the hut on 29<sup>th</sup> December. We were also hoping to see one (I have even got up in the middle of the night) but we weren't so lucky. The weather forecast for the next day was good, and our plan was to go up the Whakanui track to enjoy the views of the Rimutaka Ranges. However, it turned out to be very rainy and when we reached a possible view point, all we could see was fog and it was very windy in exposed areas. We decided turn back at that point, because trusting the weather forecast some of us forgot/left behind our best rain gear. We were back to the hut around 3 pm and spent the rest of the day stoking the stove, drying our clothes, reading, talking etc. It was very nice to have the hut to ourselves.



The next day was grey but with not much rain. We had a relaxed morning in the hut and then wandered back to the Rimutaka campground via one of the alternative tracks and set a camp. We decided to stay an extra night and check out the nearby Baring Head walk to the lighthouse and Climbing Boulders on the beach below.

<http://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Parks-and-Recreation/East-Harbour/WGNDOCS-878100-v1-BaringHeadleaflet.pdf>

Baring Head is now part of East Harbour Regional Park and its cliffs, escarpments and marine terraces form one of the region's most distinctive landscapes. It is an easy pleasant loop walk. First we went along the Wainuiomata River to the beach to see the Climbing boulders. One could easily spend a day wondering on this beach with its interesting rock formations and bright grasses standing out against the grey sand, but it was raining again! We climbed to the light house and to check out the quaint cottages nearby that are being restored to provide accommodation in the future. The fog was so thick when we reached the highest point of the track, Para trig, that we could not see any poles marking the return route to the car park following the ridge and had to retrace our steps along the river.



My companions were Linda Campbell, Helen Peek and Allan Hawkins. The weather was not the best but we still enjoyed this trip, it was a good way to start the New Year!



### Contact Details

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### 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.

	<b>Members</b>	<b>Guests</b>
<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.