

beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



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

Issue 7: August 2017

CLUB MEETINGS

Club meetings are held on the 1st 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 1st August: Brian Way, PNCC Leisure Assets Officer

Brian will talk about the PNCC program for the development of recreational tracks, footpaths, bridges, etc in the Palmerston North area. He will cover the provision of the recently opened Arapuke Swing Bridge on the Sledge Track, the planned foot bridge over the Manawatu River along with the present state and further developments of the Green Corridor and other projects underway or planned of likely interest.

Brian at the Arapuke Swing Bridge Opening



Tuesday 5th September: Club Quiz Night

Quiz Masters: Bob Hodgson and Linda Campbell.



MTSC members and friends are asked to form teams of five to complete in the annual club quiz. Teams forming from the various club groups, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Weekenders, Ski Bunnies, etc strongly encouraged. We will also form a few scratch teams from individuals on the night.

As in previous years topics will include but not limited to Hut Identification, New Zealand Native Trees and Scrubs, Geography of Parks, Reserves and tracks, Bird Calls, Kiwiana, SAR and General Knowledge.



There will be spot and team prizes.

Please come along and join the fun as we practice for the inter club quiz on Thursday 14th September.

PS Cell Phones not allowed.

REPORTS AND NOTICES



MTSC President: John Beech

president@mtsc.org.nz

Hi all, the last couple of days has seen snow falling on the mountain and that can only mean good news for skiers, particularly with the school holidays.

Over the last few weeks there has been concern with RAL's proposed plans for parking at the Top of the Bruce and access charges to the Happy Valley slopes; a reduction in overnight parking and a special "Platinum" parking area for those able to pay the extra fees plus new charges for access to the Happy Valley ski area. The former probably concerned our club more as we often drive up on Friday night. Having to find car parks further away for our access and then having to walk to the

lodge late on a dark night does not appeal. This brings up the thorny issue of what is reasonable for a commercial company and what is the public's right in a national park. On behalf of FMC, I emailed DOC's Tongariro Operations Manager over 2 weeks ago to request his view and also to get a copy of the concession that RAL operates under. To date I have had no response at all. This is very disappointing and reminds me of the letter the club sent to the Director General when the Ongaonga base was about to be closed; no response at all until the very end of the process, and then just a common response to all clubs. I am of the opinion that it is common courtesy to at least respond to concerns that the community has over land that the department manages on our behalf. Hopefully FMC will eventually get a response regarding the RAL concession. Notwithstanding the above it was heartening to learn that RAL had reconsidered some of its proposals in response to clubs concerns. They have now added another car park for overnight usage with a similar number of spaces.

The other major issue this week was the Supreme Court's decision over the land swap for the Ruataniwha dam. This project has been fraught with controversy from the start, but most disappointing has been the government's response to the decisions that haven't gone their way. To summarise: firstly, the High Court upheld the decision to swap the land, then the Appeal Court ruled by majority that the decision to downgrade the Ruahine Forest Park land was unlawful. Not content with that, the Minister of Conservation ordered it to be taken to the Supreme Court. Now the court has ruled in favour of Forest and Bird again. Within hours the Government had suggested it would change the law to circumvent the Supreme Court ruling. In my mind this is reprehensible and demonstrates that the Government is determined to get its own way at any cost. The crux of the issue is that protected land is just that, "protected". And incidentally, contrary to the view from some, the 22ha of Ruahine Forest Park land is not rubbish with some of it being classified as "acutely threatened". It is a complex issue and more than what can be covered appropriately in this column.

Now, on to a different issue. Recently, DOC have trespassed a person from the Kaweka Forest Park for driving dangerously by doing donuts around the Mangatutu campsite. On this issue, they are to be commended. The article also exposed vandalism of donation boxes and someone lighting fires on the decking by the hot springs. Having visited the area with school groups and knowing its popularity I can only say good on DOC for taking a proactive approach. The times that we have been there and idiots have been there with their booze and rubbish is all too frequent. Unfortunately, these easily accessible places are often visited by those who have no respect for the environment or anyone else. Let's hope the message gets out to some of them and they think twice before engaging in their destructive behaviour.

And, on that rather long note, I hope you can all spend a bit of time on the ski slopes or in the hills over the snowy season.

John



First Tracks - Ski Captain Howard Nicholson

A useful tool when travelling to the Lodge is "On The Move" (<https://onthemove.govt.nz/>). Created by the NZTA, registered users can use the web site to request regular updates on road conditions for particular routes and for regions. Set up your own route from your hometown to Iwikau Village and you can be the first to know of any road closures, road works, or accidents along the way.

Once you arrive at Iwikau Village at the top of the Bruce Road, you need to know that there are designated areas for overnight parking and that the area is different from last year. See the map on the MTSC website for guidance (<http://www.mtsc.nz/lodge>).

Objections to a recent plan to reduce the number of overnight car parks by about 100 spaces were submitted by MTSC and other Ruapehu clubs, and I am pleased to say that RAL listened to the concerns and made another area with a similar number of parks available. Please respect the notices about parking so that RAL can be effective with their snow clearing, and be warned that they intend to enforce the parking restrictions this year.

Do check the trip card and newsletter for details about upcoming ski trips. There are trips for beginners through to advanced snow users, and some lodge-based events to boot. The snow is dumping so it's time to go - see you up there!

Howie Nicholson



MTSC Chief Guide Report: Ken Mercer

chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz

Tramping inevitably involves driving long distances both in the morning when everyone is fresh and again in the evening when fatigue becomes a problem. The good news, for many of us, is that young people are more susceptible but that doesn't mean we can be complacent. Stopping for coffee on the way home provides a break as well as a caffeine boost. It is also an opportunity to change drivers to someone who has had a short rest. While many people may not feel comfortable driving someone else's vehicle or the van on a tight gravel road, I would encourage you to offer to do so once on the highway. So, if you can, share the driving :)

2017/2018 Summer trip card

Yes it's time to start working on the summer trip card. Start dreaming of the trips you would like to do over summer's warm, dry and long days. Please feel free to visit the link below and fill in the details of the trips you are willing to lead. https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1zyO0Ca9XtASuP7hchVNoV-VpzdbFvhtEMYV_juFiCjI/edit?usp=sharing

We welcome Penny James, Paclo, Flavian, Lucus & Malou Ludermir, Alice, Tony & Issac Mila, David, Karlo, Karlos, Nikolas & Kaka Schaf and Richard Wilson to the club.



August Wednesday Tramps		
Date	Leader	Phone
2	William Laing	358 4876
9	Judith/Peter Zwart	353 5087
16	Bev Akers	325 8879
23	Linda Darbyshire	354 6171
30	Rod McKenzie	357 0136

August Thursday Tramps		
Date	Leader	Phone
3	David Grant	328 7788
10	Peter Wilson	357 2403
17	Judy Swainson	358 4082
24	Christine Scott	354 0510
31	Merv Matthews	357 2858

August Weekend Trips				
Date	Trip	Grade	Leader	Phone
6 (Sun)	Sunrise Hut	Medium	Jenny McCarthy	021 215 2197
12 – 13	Technical Ski Improvement	Intmed. & ↑	John Lyttle	027 433 6307
12 – 13	Crater Lake (Ski/Board/Walk)	Intmed. & ↑	John Lyttle	027 433 6307
12 – 13	Pizza night at the Lodge		Howard Nicholson	027 294 1941
19 – 20	Triangle Hut	Medium/Fit	Jenny McCarthy	021 215 2197
26 – 27	Holdsworth-Jumbo Circuit	Medium	Tim Swale	06 376 6556
26 Aug – 3 Sept	Ski Tour Canterbury	Technical	Ken Mercer	027 364 6475

Trip Intentions: The email address for leaving trip intentions is intentions@mtsc.org.nz. Intentions sent to this address will not be acted upon UNLESS a party is reported overdue (e.g. by a family member, flatmate, friend, etc). The email is sent to several MTSC members. This information will be provided to LandSAR/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.

Sunday 6th August: Sunrise Hut

Medium Jenny McCarthy 021 215 2197

Sunrise hut is in the eastern Ruahines with a well graded track to the hut. According to the DOC web site it will take between one and three hours to get to the hut. Weather permitting we will continue on into the Armstrong Saddle and have lunch in the sunshine before returning home.

12th – 13th August: Technical Ski Improvement + Crater Lake – Ski, Board or Walk + PIZZA night

Intermediate and up John Lyttle 027 433 6307

Technical Ski Improvement: These weekends will focus around the technical aspects of the physical side of your skiing, your equipment and the different disciplines of skiing now available. We will also go over some basic on-the-mountain skills. It will be run by fellow skiers that jointly have decades of experience and while we won't be instructing you in your skiing, we will discuss and review each other's style and form, with input provided as to what may make a difference in your technique. This interaction is free for members.

For me personally after 38 years of skiing I'm always on the lookout for ways to make my skiing easier and my technique more refined by ensuring that it's still fun. Looking for a better way has helped me keep my passion for skiing going. While this is more for the intermediate to advanced skier, beginners and snowboarders will also get some benefit from this course. Numbers are limited so please let me know if you wish to attend one or all of these weekends, ASAP.

Crater lake: Weather and conditions permitting we look at visiting the Crater Lake – walking or skinning up and coming back down by feet, skis or board depending on personal preference.

PIZZA night: This is the real deal. The big-brand national pizza chains don't deliver to our lodge, so we will make them ourselves! The club will provide bases, the basics and some special toppings. If you have a super-duper "surprise" topping of your own that you wish to add, then bring it along, too. I hear that beginner skiers are right into doing pizzas, but for this event, everyone is welcome. Book your place in the lodge now with our Lodge Booking Officers to join the party.

19th – 20th August: Triangle Hut

Medium/Fit

Jenny McCarthy

021 215 2197

Weather permitting I am planning to go up the Deadman's track from the Rangī car park then along the ridge to the Triangle Hut track turn off and take the track down to the hut (no plans at this stage for off track adventuresome stuff). After spending a comfortable warm night in front of the fire we will put on our wet boots, cross the stream and retrace our steps as far as the turn off to Rangī Hut which we will take back to the Rangī car park.

26th – 27th August: Holdsworth – Jumbo circuit

Medium

Tim Swale

06 376 6556 022 134 8384

This classic Tararua circuit is an awesome walk under favourable conditions with stunning views and a couple of excellent huts along the way. At this time of year it is likely that there will be some snow around, so ice axe and crampons should be carried. Weather permitting we will head up to Powell hut for Saturday night and then go across the tops and down to Jumbo and the Atiwhakatu Valley on the Sunday. The tops section will be weather dependent so we may have to come back down the same way if the wind is too strong. Good sleeping bag and full storm gear required.

26th August – 3rd September: ~~Ski Tour Canterbury~~ Week at the Lodge with possible Ski Touring

Technical

Ken Mercer

027 364 6475

Ah, the best of intentions..... It is very likely this trip will morph into a week at Ruapehu. We'll base ourselves at the lodge but, when the weather cooperates, tour and camp somewhere with a fantastic view.

PNTMC Snowcraft courses: Applications for registration required by the 27th July

PNTMC are running a series of three snow craft courses which MTSC members are welcome to attend.

Snowcraft 1 is for beginners and those wanting confidence for tramping and basic survival in snow conditions.

12th or 13th August, Mt Ruapehu (evening intro and briefing Wed 9th August)

Snowcraft 2 is Intermediate in level and includes basic rope work for alpine tramping and climbing.

26th or 27th August, Mt Ruapehu (evening briefing and intro rope work Wed 23rd August)

Snowcraft 3 is Advanced and includes more skills for mountaineering.

9th or 10th September, Mt Ruapehu (evening briefing and rope work Wed 6th September)

Each level (or equivalent) is a prerequisite for the next. The Wednesday night sessions are an integral part of the programme. For further information and to register use the link below or call Grant Christian, 06 354 5843 or 021 1176921. http://www.pntmc.org.nz/courses/Course_info.html



Extended Queen's Birthday Weekend 1st - 6th June: Abel Tasman, Inland and Coastal

Report: Adam Matich

Photos: Jean Garman

On an extended Queen's Birthday weekend, we took four days (plus two days of travel) to tramp both the coastal and inland tracks through the Abel Tasman National Park. Ferry travel during the working week was a far better experience than at high traffic times; there was room to swing a big cat. On the way home we were entertained by

an abandon ship drill for entertainment. There was plenty of accommodation at Marahau, it being off-season, so we elected to stay there both before and after.

On day one we crossed the causeway, bright and early, briefly followed the coast and climbed onto the inland track from the Tinline Campsite. There was a lot of up on day one; about 1200m. One notable feature of the inland track was the bird life. There were hut and campsite wekas, tuis, pigeons, bell birds, the occasional South Island robin, and two different types of fantails whose consistent attendance reminded those of us with an imagination, of a particular Alfred Hitchcock movie.

Morning tea was at the 2-bunk Holyoake Clearing shelter (600m climb), after which the climbing eased off there being 200m more climbing to lunch at Castle Rocks hut, where we had to be wary of a predatory weka. After lunch was our final, substantive climb of the day (300m) to the very spartan Moa Park shelter. It was downhill thereafter, to Wainui Saddle which is on the edge of farmland, and down into Wainui Valley to follow the stream down to Wainui hut for the night. The Wainui valley probably had the nicest forest we encountered in the park. Other parts of the inland track were either under scrappy regenerating forest or the trees had been blown over by a storm a few years ago. Wainui hut is an old school hut (open fire, unlined walls, lots of ventilation) so not overly warm; we lit a fire to warm the front of our shins. The clearing also contained a large cage for a Kaka reintroduction project. The perches in the cage would be the only source of dry firewood. We slept with our clothes on and used our thermarest mattresses for added insulation.



The old school Wainui Hut



Devastated forest on the way to and around Awapoto Hut

Next morning was frosty and we suffered a bare-footed crossing of Wainui Stream, this being the only wet-foot stream crossing on the trip. Soon after the crossing we climbed 300m onto the ridge, with not a great deal of climbing thereafter, it generally being downhill for the rest of the day. On sections of this ridge the damage from Easter 2014 was still obvious; many trees had been toppled exposing large root balls, while those that were left



Historic Whariwharangi Hut

standing were either completely dead or had most of their branches stripped. Awapoto hut, which used to have a stand of large trees surrounding it, was reached in time for lunch. This hut is on a high point with good views down to Awaroa Inlet, and has lots of firewood. After lunch we travelled a gently descending ridge line, crossed Totaranui Rd at Pigeon Saddle, and followed a 4WD track over Gibbs Hill before dropping down to Whariwharangi hut for the night. This two story historic building was the original old homestead. Given the dearth of flat land, homestead for what? There were lots of hut wekas, so we didn't leave anything outside on the veranda overnight. Even though it was winter, the coastal huts were still quite busy. No one was using the campsites though!

Day three was again clear, but there were dark rain clouds out over the ocean. The light drizzle arrived just before we reached Bark Bay But, after which it rained properly. This was the day we saw lots of golden beaches, with travel

along some of them. Quite a few of these beaches sported camp sites just back in the trees. We were a little early for the tide at Totaranui so took the alternative track. Unfortunately the DOC office and cafe at Totaranui were closed for Winter so we had to make a do with our normal fare for morning tea. We arrived on time for the compulsory tidal crossing of the Awaroa Inlet. There are tide tables and the DOC website tells how much leeway you have either side of low tide. The crossing enabled lunch at Awaroa hut, after which we carried on through to Bark Bay hut for the night. Unfortunately we took the newer, high track that climbs out of Awaroa and so bypassed the opportunity of coffee and cake at the Awaroa Lodge cafe. Our second culinary failure for the day. Fortunately there were no more.



Crossing the Awaroa Inlet at low tide



Typical golden Abel Tasman beach

Our last day was a little shorter so we had a lazy 8am start. There was still a little light drizzle from the night before so it was on with the coats; but not for long. There was less beach walking on this section and more cutting over headlands; but still lots of lovely views. As we were heading for home and feet were pretty sore from the hard, level tracks we didn't do the inlet crossing at Torrent Bay and check out Anchorage Hut. Lunch was had on Stilwell beach and we were back at the car well before afternoon tea time. We were glad to get back to Marahau for hot showers and some relaxation before heading for home the next day on another empty ferry. Luxury!



Ivan and friend

This trip was quite different from most national parks, with its coastal and inland sections, and winter is an excellent time to walk there if you want to avoid the crowds. However, if you want the beach experience (swimming, drowning, being dragged under by a shark) then summer it is, with lots of other people. While the four day trip was doable, our day lengths were mostly around 8½ hours (no time available for diversions) and the distances travelled gave our feet and legs a pounding. It would have been much more relaxed to have spent 6 days walking these tracks. Doing so would have enabled us to stay at the nice huts (Castle Rocks and Awapotu) on the inland track (they are all nice on the coast) and spend more time having slothful afternoons by the fire. After all, that is what tramping is all about. We were Ivan Rienks, Adam Match and Jean Garman.

Sunday 11th June: Longview Loop

Report: Helen Peek

Photos: Helen Peek, Pak Lam Yu & Tim Swale

Ten of us headed over to the sunny eastern side of the Ruahine Range stopping at a lovely café in Norsewood for breakfast/morning tea.

Eventually we arrived at the Kashmir Road car park, along with the wind and the sun, and started off for Longview hut by 10.30am. As we headed off up the first ridge we met a hunter coming out who advised the wind was extremely strong and cold and we certainly experienced the odd blast on the way up.

Lunch was had at the hut then we rugged up a bit and headed off in two groups, the faster one charged with collecting the van and bringing it back down the road to the Daphne Hut car park.

The tops were windy and cool but far less so than expected and



Rearing to go

with the day being clear and sunny and the views stunning it made picking our way along the tops extremely enjoyable. Needless to say, many photographs were taken.



Travelling along the cool and windy tops with great views

Descending the ridge on the Daphne track was made all the more interesting for the 2nd group as we could follow the progress of our “coach” approaching and monitor how far we would need to walk. We were all out by 4pm.

Many thanks to Tim as leader and all participants for a fabulous day on the tops, and special thanks to Adam for driving and doing the extra walking. We were Tim Swale, Linda Campbell, Pak Lam Yu, Adam Matich, Jenny McCarthy, Helen Peek, Ian Algie, Garry Grayson, Sarah and Paul Joyce.

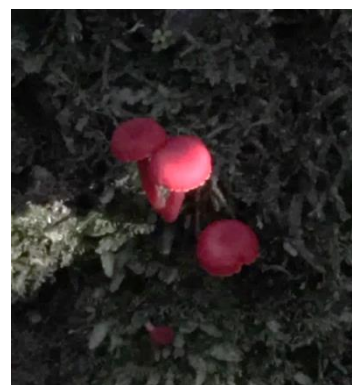
Wednesday 14th June: Field Hut

Report: Russell Poole

Photos: Evan, Maureen, and William

For the trip leader the eve of the tramp was a fretful time, with hail, wind and apparently even thunder rampaging round the Fitzherbert foothills. But his faith in the long-range forecasts plus nightly monitoring of TV1’s weather guru Dan Corbett was rewarded by a Wednesday morning of blue skies if chill temperatures.

The tramp started punctually at 9am, with some participants opting for the gradual circuitous route leading up from the swingbridge and others for the old shortcut. After a steady climb on a wide metal track through regenerating bush the route evened out somewhat and entered older-growth bush with a lot of kamahi, tawa, and rewarewa, just a few rotting hulks of ancient beech trees, and an interesting understory.



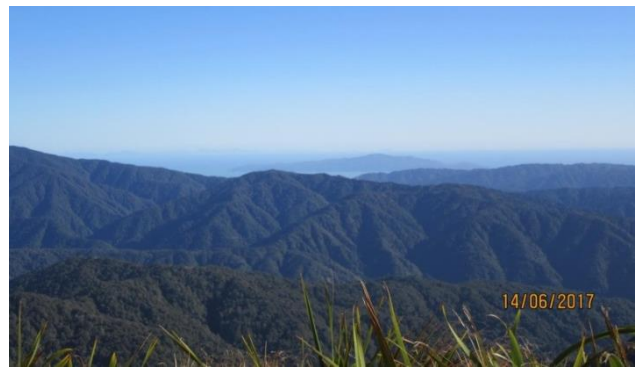
While no doubt the track has been improved and well maintained over the years, it’s a piece of heritage tramping, going back to an early tourism venture in the 1920s. Most of our group of 26 made it to within half an hour of Field Hut. The forward squad who reached the hut found themselves under attack from a chilly southerly draught and most were glad they had heeded Dan Corbett’s instructions to ‘rug up’ for the day. For a lucky few the hut’s corrugated iron cladding provided radiant heat.



Enjoying the sunshine at Field Hut

The hut is a venerable 1924 structure with modern upgrades like a concrete sleeping pad and a fire escape. We must make sure to book in for the centennial celebrations! An outstanding collection of memorabilia is housed at the hut, including good-housekeeping instructions for the tourists. These instructions had obviously not been noted by some more recent occupants.

From the hut a determined cadre of half a dozen ascended to Tabletop to enjoy sweeping views of Kapiti, the Richmond Range, and perhaps even the Kaikouras, plus of course the high ridges of the Tararuas. Some of these lynx-eyed folk claimed to have sighted the 8m swells breaking along the Kapiti coast.



Stunning views to Kapiti Island

All trampers had returned safely to the car park by 3pm in continuing sunshine, some taking a pleasant break at the clearing. A late afternoon tea was enjoyed at Otaki's Brown Sugar Café.

Thanks to our drivers Evan, Bob, Bev, and Marion.

Thursday 15th June: Apiti Track

Report: Royce Mills

Photos: Royce Mills

Our destination was the Apiti track which starts from Ngamoko Road in the hills behind Norsewood. It was a fine winter's day with sunshine and blue sky, but an icy wind was blowing down from the hills above us. Track conditions were very good, not wet and muddy as we remembered from a previous tramp. We knew there would be a couple of washouts further up the track which could be challenging. However there were no serious problems, just care needed. We took a rope just in case and used it for reassurance in one place.



Raewyn & Judith use our rope handrail above a washout



Some welcome sun for lunch

We reached the Makaretu track turnoff right on lunchtime and stopped here, enjoying the views, some sunshine and shelter from the wind. There were 11 in our group. Thanks to John Doolan, our leader, for a good day out, a 6½ hour tramp which took us through some very attractive bush with good viewpoints along the way.

17th – 18th June: Lodge Food carry

Report: Howie Nicholson

Photos: Helen Peek



Not all hard work

Preparations over the previous weeks culminated in a lodge-full of people arriving at Iwikau Village on Friday night. Blue skies greeted us on Saturday morning. All ages were represented with people as young as 0.8 years and as old as ..mum..bl..e taking part to carry, rearrange, stack and record the food as it progressed from road end to shelf. The obligatory scones were manufactured and scoffed, before the afternoon fun of cleaning and maintaining the lodge was done.

We had time to enjoy the afternoon sunshine, with some people taking in a walk and others trying out the only snow in town, made by the new system recently installed in Happy Valley. We don't need to wait for Winter to ski anymore.

The evening meal started with lodge-made sushi followed by a delicious "mystery meat" dish, made with unlabelled packets of meat that should've been diced steak and sometimes was. Ice cream and porridge pudding finished us off - it tastes way better than it sounds!

More odd jobs were completed on Sunday, but drizzle and showers dampened the enthusiasm of some for outside activities. Most people headed for home about mid-afternoon.

Thank you very much to the many people who mucked in and helped to prepare the lodge for the coming snow season.

Wednesday 28th June: A Tale of Two Tramps, a Serious Accident and a Helicopter Rescue

Report: Harold Pettersson & Bob Hodgson

Photos: William & Judith

At about 9am, fourteen trampers left the Coppermine Creek road end for Wharite. The morning was cool but generally clear. However, the track was wet, slippery and very muddy which meant a few messy falls. It took about three hours to climb and, at least for one group, over three hours to get down. Views were quite good, though parts of the Wairarapa remained under cloud all day and at times the Wharite instillation was hidden by cloud. Lunch was at the base of the rather bleak tower. Overall this was a strenuous tramp and would be a better choice outside of winter.



At the Wharite turn off



In the Leatherwood



Lunch at the Bleak Tower

Unfortunately, Marion slipped on the track back to the cars and broke her leg. This happened about 10 minutes from the road end. Members immediately went into rescue mode using previous SAR and first aid training to ensure that she was as warm and comfortable as possible. Trampers first aid kits were used. A PLB alarm was activated and also two people drove to get cell phone coverage to call 111. After about an hour the rescue helicopter came and a medic was winched down to begin evacuation. A fire had been lit and an orange sheet set out as a marker. The group with Marion helped carry her about 50 metres to a small clearing from where she was lifted up and taken to Palmerston North hospital. Allan has circulated the latest information and we all wish her well. Fellow trampers have looked after her car and tramping gear and will assist her return to Feilding when

she is able. As trip leader I am most grateful for the competent and willing assistance given in this emergency and certainly appreciate the expertise of the helicopter rescue. I understand that the club will show appreciation of the helicopter service. Trampers clearly carried the correct gear for an emergency - first aid packs, extra clothing, torches, personal locator beacons which were all used. We left in the dark and cold.

There is a footnote concerning the radio phone of the winchman. After he descended the phone fell down a quite steep bank and could not be located - so no communication with the helicopter pilot. However a policeman from Woodville unexpectedly came in response to radio chatter and he could talk to the pilot. The device costs about \$500 so three members decided to go on Friday morning to find it. However, just after 8am I got a call telling me that the winchman had gone and found it himself. I immediately rang to halt the trip but they had set out just before. After quite a few phone calls the group was contacted. A fine gesture indeed.

On the same day a party of seven chose to avoid the muddy Wharite Track in favour of a visit to the Coppermine and Tunnel followed by the Coppermine Creek Loop. Our route was less muddy but we counted eight stream crossings including crossing the lively stream adjacent to the car park. We were mainly mud-free on return but to various degrees wet - such are the delights of winter tramping! The track up to the mines is in a poor state having fallen away in several places making the stream the route. As the attached photos confirm, this is a beautiful side trip but needed special care in the conditions. We took our time on the subsequent climb up and ate our lunch where the track emerges from the bush where we enjoyed the view into the foggy Wairarapa. We were safely out by 2pm and by 3.15pm groups of the well muddied Wharite warriors started to emerge and the drama aptly described above by trip leader Harold, unfolded.



Along the Stream Bed to the Mines



Coppermine Loop lunch view

Thanks to Trip Leader Harold and our drivers but a special thank you to the rescue helicopter crew for their impressive work.

PS The policeman said that Tramping groups were usually well equipped and able to deal with emergencies. This was certainly our situation. May Marion recover quickly!

Thursday 29th June: Six Discs Tramp

Report: Christine Scott

Photos: Craig Ross

No-one was keen on an over nighter so a last minute decision was made to do the Six Discs Loop up the Ohau River. The weather really turned it on for us and the dare was made at the morning tea break at the turn off to the Six Discs track on the Waiopehu Ridge. "If you go for a swim – I'll go for a swim".

So once we reached the Ohau river there was nothing for it but find the deepest hole with a sandy bottom and jump in before having lunch. With not a breath of wind and full sunshine there were no excuses. We just should have passed a hat around first and raised donations for a worthy cause.

Swimmers were Jude and Christine. Pikers were Judy, Suzanne, Norman, Syd, Ruth, John, Chris, Malcolm, Craig, Audrey, Jill, Nigel, Darlene, Sheralee, Judith and Peter.



Swimming weather ??

Wednesday 5th July: High Loopers and Low Party

Report: HIGH Russell (who won the day's Muddy Bum award), LOW Ian Ritchie

Photos: HIGH William & Sheralee, LOW Allan & Peter

THE HIGH LOOPERS. A group of five doing the loop trip (A-Frame Hut, Takapari Road, Stanfield Hut, Holmes Ridge) set out at 9.15am. We rapidly ascended into cloud which started to disperse only in the early afternoon. We found the track up to A-Frame in good condition, particularly the final stretch with a fine broad avenue through the leatherwood.

At A-Frame we put on extra layers of warm clothing to meet the cold conditions up on the ridge. William notes that the hut, while 'a bit dismal', appeared to be 'structurally sound'. The broken window appeared to have acquired an extra layer of glass -- possibly the start of a double-glazing initiative on DOC's high-country accommodation. We walked onwards from this Air BnB up the Takapari Road, where we encountered clumps of snow and ice and large puddles.



Snow and Sunshine



Along the way we gained occasional views over the Holmes Ridge and towards Dannevirke and these tempted us to stop punctually for lunch at 12pm.

Lunch was followed by a scramble down the steep muddy track to Stanfield Hut ('a 30 degree slope', notes our statistician).

We were pleased to see that our colleagues in the other party had left this hut in good order, duly recording their visit in the book.

From there, thanks to some strategically-placed pink tape and excellent scouting by our trip leader and others, it was a reasonably straightforward exit to the car park by around 4pm. Too late for coffee, we contented ourselves with icecreams and similar refreshments at the Caltex service station in Woodville.

Thanks to Christine as driver and trip leader for the Loopers, to Ian R as organizer of the trip as a whole and to Chris B for his work with the tape.

THE LOW PARTY. 15 Wednesday Trampers left Memorial Park at 8am and arrived at the West Tamaki stream car-park about 9am. The main divide looked stormy but the ridge to Stanfield looked good. Initially the group split into two groups with the men opting for Stanfield and the women to the A Frame. It turned out that the women wanted to keep their feet dry! After last week's epic rescue it was agreed that we would all head for Stanfield with the PLB. Unfortunately one member slipped on the slippery stones when crossing the creek and later decided to return as the bruise made itself felt.



Enjoying the sun



Lunch at Stanfield Hut



The slippery stream

Morning tea was on the grassy bank on the ridge where rain drops made the scrub bushes sparkle and the light drizzle bright in the sunlight. We got to the hut and had an early lunch, heading back a bit after mid-day. The cloud on the tops was clearing and a dressing of snow was visible well down into the head of the valley, explaining the very low temperature on the way in. We got back to the car park about 2.30pm and headed to The Bridge Cafe for a leisurely coffee and cake.

Many thanks to Chris for driving the van and accompanying the wet and bruised member back, and the Shipmans for the use of their car.

Thursday 6th July: Escarpment Track

Report: Royce Mills

Photos: Royce Mills and Richard Ellis

We were lucky to enjoy a sparkling winter's day with great views. Eighteen in the group, most of us decided to walk from Pukerua Bay to Paekakariki for a change.



So many steps ...



A million dollar view at morning tea

The van was parked at Paekakariki and we caught a train to Pukerua Bay - free for most of us Goldcard holders! It was good walking with the sun on our faces and a light breeze at our backs.

We took generous stops for morning tea, lunch and reading information boards, so the walk took a leisurely 4 hours. How nice to have views of the sea, Kapiti Island and even the South Island for a change.

A pleasant cafe stop was had at Paekakariki before driving home. Thanks to John Doolan, our van driver today.

8th – 9th July: Beginner's Ski Boarding Weekend

Report: Ken Mercer

Photos: Ken & Ivan

14 "beginner's" headed up to the lodge on Friday evening despite a snow base of only 10cm and a forecast of rain + snow. Ivan's carload arrived ahead of the van which was great as Mary had macaroni cheese ready by the time we arrived.

On Saturday morning tickets were purchased and lessons booked. Most of the group were raw novices, intent on boarding. Paul and Angela, from Europe, put on a brave face and skied. Ken helped out for a while and had a run on the rock garden then headed back to the lodge where he and Ivan rebuilt the emergency lighting system. To our surprise no one came back until 5pm, all having had a successful day.



Learning to board in Happy Valley



An evening game of cards

Sunday dawned with snow blanketing the ground and continuing to fall. Most of the boarders went back for further lessons, imitating “falling leaves”. Ivan and Ken circulated in the rock garden until it became crowded then Ken had a go on a pair of Nordic Skis, which have been donated to the club by Bob Kent. They’re great uphill but troublesome on the downhill. There’s four sets with shoe sizes from 37 to 45 so, with a little more snow, we’ll be able to have races around the lodge!



The group in front of the lodge on Saturday



The lodge on Sunday morning

At some point Mead’s wall was visited and a snow shelter built by the “let’s cruise” group while the boarders continued until the lifts closed at 4pm. Subway was enjoyed in Taihape on the way home.



Contact Details

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New Members

Prospective members must be nominated by a Proposer and a Seconder 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

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 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	\$36	\$51
Secondary School	\$29	\$44
Primary School	\$24	\$39
Pre-school (3-5 yo)	\$11	\$11

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 tent fly (in the passenger door) and a Personal Locator Beacon (in the glove box) are available for use free of charge on trips.