

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 1: February 2018



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 6th February: Memorable Tramps - John Beech, Linda Campbell and Tim Swale

John Beech will speak on a recent trip to the Hollyford track which runs up the river of the same name from its mouth at Martins bay to the Hollyford road end. The intention was to fly into Big Bay, 1 bay further North, then walk out visiting 7 huts over 5 days.... Highlights include seal colony between Big Bay and Martins Bay, and Lakes McKerrow and Alabaster. Linda Campbell will speak on a club trip around the Pouakai Circuit in Taranaki National Park and Tim Swale will speak on walking the Queen Charlotte Track. Great opportunity to pick up some ideas and information for future tramps!



Classic Hollyford Image

Tuesday 6th March: How to enjoy the Cook Islands – Bob Hodgson



In the company of Sue, my wife, I have enjoyed many active holidays in the Cook Islands. Our initial visit was made in 2000 to Rarotonga, the Capital Island, and we continue to make it our base. Since our first visit to Rarotonga, we have also visited; Mangaia, Atiu (twice) and Aitutaki (four times). Our main activity has been snorkelling in the lagoons but we have also walked, tramped and cycled as well as descending into caves in Mangaia and Atiu, going ocean fishing and sailing in a vaka (ocean sailing canoe). One unlikely activity was making a tour of the Green Peace flagship, the Esperanza an ex Russian navy, submarine mother ship. I have also on two visits, operated an amateur radio station from Rarotonga with the call sign E51RMH. By finding out what local events are taking place and attending them it is possible to enjoy the special nature of the Island community and move beyond being a mere tourist!

Recently we made our thirteenth visit to the islands. Over the years we have gained a love of the islands and have come to admire the friendly and capable islanders. In this talk illustrated from our large collection of photographs, I will give a brief history of the Cook Islands who incidentally celebrated the 50th anniversary of their independence from NZ in 2015, describe the Islands and discuss what they offer to the active and curious visitor.

REPORTS AND NOTICES



MTSC President: John Beech

president@mtsc.org.nz

Hi all, I hope you have all had an enjoyable and relaxing Christmas and New Year break. As we move forward into 2018 I am confident that the club will continue to meet the needs of those of us in the outdoors community. In particular, there are upgrades to the club's lodge at Whakapapa that will continue to provide a quality experience for all who use it.

Hopefully, most of you will have spent some time in the outdoors enjoying the fine weather (mostly) that we have had over the summer. I know there are a group of club members who have been in Japan taking advantage of the ski season over there. From the Facebook posts, it looks like you have been enjoying yourselves. Hopefully we will hear about your experience during a club meeting at some stage. For myself, I walked the Hollyford track just prior to Christmas. This was a track that I hadn't done before and has been on my bucket list for a while. We were fortunate in only getting soaked on two of the days! I'll have a slideshow and talk on the first club night so you can see what a stunning part of the country it is.

My other experience was a trip with Forgotten World Adventures on the mothballed Stratford to Okahukura line. Although there is very little strenuous exercise involved, it is a spectacular outdoor experience just the same. It involves travelling on the old railway from Stratford to Taumaranui, staying a night in Whangamomona if you do the whole line. You drive a golf cart that has been converted to run on the rails. The scenery was spectacular (helped by two days of stunning weather) and the history spellbinding. Although quite expensive, it is a truly unique activity and I would recommend it as a must do Kiwi experience.

As we head into another year (they go so fast these days) I hope you will all get some time in the outdoors to enjoy our parks and wild places.

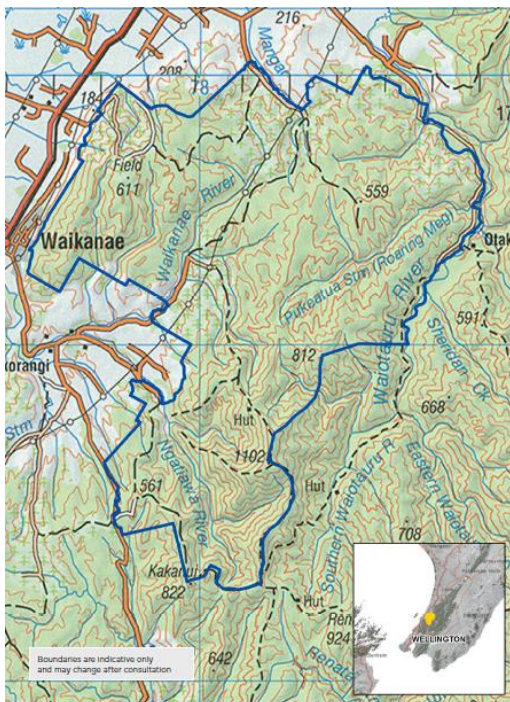
John

→ → THE MTSC WINTER TRIP CARD ← ←

The plan is to print the trip card in early March so that it can be posted with the FMC Bulletin. Below is the link to the trip card planning spreadsheet. If you haven't done so already and you would be so kind as to run a trip please go to this link and fit your trip in. This needs to be done by the 8th March!!

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1XHJRR5sP8Z9kLJhMCqEgrqeY39d7oz6jBZRFgUX6e8/edit?usp=sharing>

Aerial possum control – Project Kapakapanui



This is to advise that Tbfree New Zealand is planning an aerial operation to target possums in the area your tramping club may operate in. The operation was due to be completed in September 2017, however due to unfavourable weather conditions, the operation was postponed. The Kapakapanui operation has been rescheduled to begin in February 2018, but timing will be weather-dependent.

This operation will help reduce the possum population to the low, even numbers to prevent the spread of bovine tuberculosis (TB). Please see the attached operational fact sheet that includes a map of the proposed operational area. We kindly request you read this carefully, as it contains vital information about the operation. The operation will be using sodium fluoroacetate, also known as 1080, and will include deer repellent across a portion of the operational area. For further information on 1080, please visit www.1080thefacts.co.nz.

Tbfree New Zealand has contracted Vector Free Marlborough to carry out this aerial operation. Their contact details are: 021 502 811 vectorfreebarry@xtra.co.nz

Consultation has been occurring since November 2016 via the 2017 National Plan for Tbfree Pest Control Operations document, and we are now in the final stages of consultation with affected landowners. Following consultation, final operational plans will be prepared and permission will be sought from all consenting authorities. These will include affected landowners, Medical Officer of Health, Department of Conservation, Regional and District councils.

If you have any questions regarding the Tbfree New Zealand programme, please visit our website www.tbfree.org.nz or contact us on 06 3532710.



UPCOMING TRIPS

February Wednesday Tramps			February Thursday Tramps		
7	Rita Hodson	323 5491	1	Christine Scott	354 0510
14	Coralie/Evan Davies	357 6288	8	Royce Mills	355 8556
21	Harold Pettersson	357 4248	15	John Brock	329 4834
28	Chris Teo-Sherrell	355 1816	22	Hugh Wilde	356 9450
February Weekend Trips					
10 - 11	McKinnon Hut	Medium/Fit	Jean Garman	021 176 0209	
17 - 18	Somes Island and Wellington Walks	Easy	Linda Campbell	027 333 4493	
17 - 18	East Waitewaewae River	Fit	David Harrington	021 240 9056	
24 - 25	Mangahao Flats Work Party	Medium	Jean Garman	021 176 0209	

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 Land SAR/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.

10th – 11th February: McKinnon Hut

Medium/Fit **Jean Garman** **021 176 0209** **trampski.cave@gmail.com**

Due to lack of access through the Kauwhata Base these days this trip involves a fair bit of river walking. We will park at the twin bridges and make our way up the Hikurangi Stream, all the way onto the tops which we will follow round and down to McKinnon Hut for the night. The next day it is back up onto the range and heading along and down to the cage across the river. As there is no point in crossing to the other side we will instead drop into the river and follow it for a fairly boring 2 hours back to the twin bridges.

17th – 18th February: Somes Island and Wellington Walks

Easy **Linda Campbell** **027 333 4493** **lindammc@xtra.co.nz**

Thank you to those who have let me know they are interested in the trip. The plan is to drive to Wellington on Friday night. Those taking their own transport, preferring to travel down on the Saturday morning or already in Wellington will need to meet us at the East West Ferry Terminal on Queens Wharf at 9.15am on Saturday morning. Prices at the time of writing this for the return trip on the ferry are

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Seniors with their Gold Card – Free | Adults – \$23 |
| Tertiary student with ID – \$19 | Child (3-15) – \$12 |
| Child (under 3) – Free | Family (2x adult and 2x child) – \$67 |

Group members will be free to wander around the island looking for Tuatara, lizards, other animal and bird life, enjoying the scenery and taking in the history of the island. There are also some geocaches on the island for anyone who is keen to locate them. Everyone will need to return to the wharf at the agreed time. I will be advised, by East West staff if the weather is not suitable for the trip earlier in the morning. We will not be staying overnight on the island as accommodation there has been booked out for quite some time. If you would like accommodation please let Linda know. Should the weather be unsuitable on the Saturday we will try again on the Sunday. There are a variety of walks in Wellington and we will decide which we will do depending on those wanting to walk and the time available.

17th – 18th February: East Waitewaewae River

Fit **David Harrington** **021 240 9056**

From North Manakau Road, which we may need to walk from the gate, we'll follow the track up to Waitewaewae, then East to spot 969, then drop East into the head of East Waitewaewae River. From here we'll travel the full length of the river starting with pleasant travel at first with a few waterfalls before entering the gorge proper that will be full on for the next 5kms. On reaching the West Waitewaewae, we'll travel up this a little way then take the leading spur WNW up to spot 828 and follow the ridge track N past Thompson and back to North Manakau Rd. It's possible I may make this a 2.5 day trip to avoid having really long days.

24th – 25th February: Mangahao Flats Work Party

Medium

Jean Garman

021 176 0209

trampski.cave@gmail.com

It's that time of year again ☺ Time to wander the gently undulating track up the Mangahao Valley doing track work along the way to the fabulous Mangahao Flats hut where we will clean, weed, cut firewood and do whatever other things we think should/can be done. The evening will be spent eating yummy food, having a convivial drink and socialising. Sunday morning will be finishing off anything not finished on Saturday then there is the option of walking out via the track or splashing and swimming out down the river.



Sunday 12th November: Atiwhakatu Valley

Report: Linda Campbell

The weather wasn't bad but it wasn't great either when eight of us set off from the Holdsworth Road end for Atiwhakatu. The plan at that stage was for all of us to walk to the Atiwhakatu Hut for lunch and for four of us to go back down through the gorge while the other four walked out. We had a very pleasant stroll up to Atiwhakatu although there may have been a few "Oh my goodness" moments when Barbara and Mike, who only been in New Zealand around six weeks, came across their first swing bridge. Once all safely on the other side, we were again enjoying the track to the hut. There was drizzle on and off and it was cold. Quite a bit colder than we had expected. Once we got to the turn off, those who were going to go down through the gorge decided to leave it until a better day when there was no rain and it wasn't so cold. When we arrived back at the road end, Alla, who had been camping there, kindly made us coffee. While having our coffee Barbara told us that where they are from in the United States it is very flat and the walk we did would be considered medium rather than easy as it is here. It was a very enjoyable and pleasant day out thanks to Tim, Ken, Mary, Alla, Helen, Barbara and Mike.

Wednesday 15th November: Kirwhakapapa Capers: A Tramp of Three Halves

Report: Maurice and Bob

Photos: Maureen, Judith, William and Peter

On, at last, a perfect sunny day with light winds, 33 Wednesday trampers assembled at the Kirwhakapapa Road End for the trip leader's briefing. Three tramping groups were formed each with a leader and at least one beacon. Sixteen of the 33 trampers headed towards Blue Range hut which most reached by mid-day except for the 5 who just wanted to sit on the BIG ROCK for the view and to experience a lack of wind. The green moss at the higher levels of the track, plenty of bird sounds and lunch outside the hut in the sunshine makes tramping worthwhile and everybody could not resist Big Rock on the way down.



A festival of trampers on a rock

The 7 hearty trampers who had bush-bashed up the ridge off the Mikimiki Track to the Te Mara Peak (1104m) and loopback down the track from the Blue Range Hut to record a tramp of 11k and a 1000m+ climb and 3396kcal used caught up to us and we all proceeded to the vehicles by 3.15pm.



Going Up In the World



On the Track Up to the Blue Range Hut



On Top of Te Mara @ 1104m



The third "half" of the trampers, a party of 10 tramped, about 16km along the Old Tram Track to the far, Mikimiki road end enjoying the mixed bush and old plantings with easy dry feet crossings of the streams as a bonus to emerge to join the recently arrived other two halves. It was a good day for all with a minimum of mud and no dramas. We all then hurried to The Lazy Graze in Ekatahuna for coffee, to arrive just before closing where we were made welcome. Thanks to main trip leader Maurice and our drivers.

Map Showing the Three Tramps.

- The Little Black Tail Ends at The Hut.
- The Red Loop The Route of The Hearty Seven.
- The Long Black Tail Ends at The Mikimiki Roadend

Thursday 16th November: Ross Peak

Report: Craig Ross

Photos: Owen Mills, John Brock, Craig Ross



Climbing up the steer pastoral section



On Ross Peak trig

The 16th Nov. Tramp saw 22 of us finally getting up to Ross Peak in the Western Ruahines, after 2 previous attempts (for some of us) cancelled by the weather! But what a difference this trip! Fine, sunny, and warm, with a gentle nor-westerly breeze. We set off across the steep farmland at 8.20 am. After a couple of re-grouping stops at the big Rimu tree and edge of the bush, we headed on up through the pepper and Kaikawaka trees, then Leatherwood, to reach the Ross Peak trig. at 11. Lunch was in a sheltered spot on Ross Peak. Then on the way back down Merv had a recce. to see if he could locate the track they cut years ago across to and down the ridge to the South. After a couple of "enjoy the Manawatu sunshine & scenery" rests, we arrived back at the vehicles by 2pm. On the way out we dropped off a few beers to farmer Shane Carroll for allowing us access across his farm.



Lunch amongst the leatherwood at Ross Peak



Enjoying the view of the Manawatu on the way back down

Sunday 19th November: Beyond Ruapae Falls

Report: Adam Matich

Photos: Adam Matich

We missed the turnoff for the climb onto pt 655 and so sailed on to the second swing bridge, across the Mangatainoka River, from where we climbed North up onto said high point where we found the pink tape trail-markers. We followed the trail NW to the saddle and then headed up the Mangatainoka River to the falls. Travel

wasn't difficult, the water levels being low, and it wasn't long before we had to cross the pool to get to the true Right so we could climb up the rock face next to the little cascade just downstream, and around the corner, from Ruapae Falls. One needs a good reach to get solid hand-holds to avoid slipping back down into the water. A couple of minutes later we were at the base of the waterfall, which is in slightly different places depending upon which edition map you are using. About 40 m back from the falls (upstream of the tiny, rocky side stream) we climbed the steep slope on the true Left. There was lots to hold onto, but as we got higher, we found ourselves on a rock face and had to sidle down-stream to get off it before we could climb further up and around the falls. We eventually found a trail to follow and the descent back into the river was easy (3hr). According to the Kiwi Canyons website (<http://www.kiwicanyons.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Ruapae-Stream.pdf>) we had climbed around three closely-space waterfalls, which were never visible to us, apart from the main falls at the bottom.

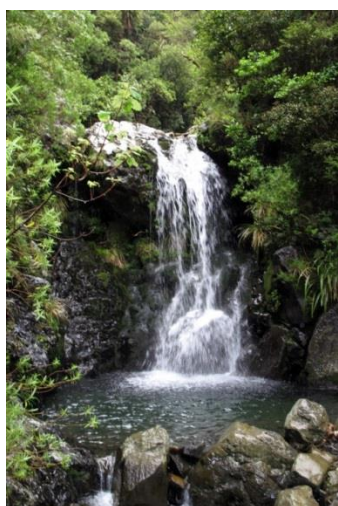


As far as we went up the Mangatainoka



Just below Ruapae Falls

Then we had an easy-ish hour of travel up the river to be stopped by the waterfall about 200m before the confluence with the stream that extends up to Ruapae Peak. It was probably circumventable but we had decided to abbreviate the trip and take the stream up the Herepai, as the weather was a bit suspect later in the afternoon. It took two hours to climb up the stream, and while it wasn't nasty, it was a bit miserable as the vegetation was all wet and we had to do quite a bit of winding through the scrub. The top 150m was the worst of it, where we avoided the overgrown stream, but not by too far as there were bluffs on the Northern face of Herepai. However, between the bluffs and the watercourse we found shingley sections to follow up and arrived just West of Herepai peak at 4pm. Another 3 hours down saw us out after a 10 hour day. We were David Harrington, Fiona Bruins, and Adam Matich.



Waterfalls, waterfalls, waterfalls – Ruapae falls and in the Mangatainoka

Wednesday 22nd November: Wednesday Trampers Chuff* up and down to Summit on the Rimutaka Rail Trail

**verb (of a steam engine) move with a regular sharp puffing sound*

Report: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Maureen

30 keen Wednesday Trampers assembled at the Cross Creek Road in near perfect conditions to tramp up to the Summit and for some, beyond. The track was dry and, perhaps for the first time in six months of tramping, we experienced no mud with only a few small pools of water in the tunnels. On the ascent, the bush was beautiful and the track side adorned with numerous fox gloves. We emerged from the upper tunnel (as indicated on the GPS plot by the lack of white plot points), to a beautiful, tranquil landscape that drained most trampers of any good

intentions to tramp much further on. There were a few cyclists in evidence, a second group of mature trampers and a large party of high school students making the full crossing. So having inspected the old machinery and enjoyed a leisurely lunch, we tramped down again in warm conditions. We were all safely out well before the 3.30pm deadline and then proceeded in a loose convoy to The Bakery in Carterton. There we were made welcome and recognised as an MTSC group from our last call almost a year ago.



The Long Tunnel (565m)



The Summit Station at 1141feet above sea Level



The Wrecked Bridge and Barrier

It was an easy tramp-with-a-difference enjoyed in sunny conditions. The maximum gradient is 1 in 15. Thanks to our drivers, Chris (van), Bev, Bernard, Dennis and Evan on our return trip of ~300km.

25th – 26th November: Kime Hut

Report: Bernadette Heaphy

Photos: Jenny McCarthy

Okay, so you should write trip report straight after your return, as I seem to recall saying that this trip had pushed me to the limits of my ability to walk up hill for hours but that memory has faded a bit. On the trip were Jenny (my Mum and Team leader), Adam, Doug, Malcolm and myself (Bernadette, the novice trumper). I only go tramping from time to time when Jenny suggests I might enjoy the walk.

We had amazing weather for this trip, never have the Tararua's been so still and the sky so clear (so the seasoned trampers tell me). It was warm as well, so I got very lucky, considering there is no heating in Kime Hut.

We got off to a reasonably early start, with the idea of getting to the in hut in time to claim a bed, the thought of sleeping in the bivy bag was only partly appealing (although it did become more appealing later in the night, when those with special nasal passages come in their full glory).



Evening on top of Field Peak



Early morning view looking North

There was quite a lot of talking during the early part of the climb to Field Hut where we stopped for lunch. But I have to say the level of talking after lunch reduced and I suspect that the short steep bit might have had something to do with it. Now, how was this walk to Kime describe to me - "a steady up the Field Hut and then a short steep bit and then it flattens out for a nice walk along the tops to Kime". I'm not sure I agree with description of short steep bit; seemed quite long when I was walking up it. Then, when at the top of the steep bit and asking where the hut is, to then have another hill pointed at and told that we go up to there and then walk around it, was a little disconcerting. But choices are limited when you are almost there and the weather is so spectacular. So onwards

and upwards it was, with photo/drink stops along the way. The worst of the uphill was over and the views were lovely, the low cloud that was hanging around just added to the atmosphere. We seemed to pass a number of people coming down the hill and checking with them, they didn't seem to think there was anyone in front of us.

We were the first to arrive at the Hut and considering it was 3pm-ish (so took us 6 hours to get up) when we arrived, we did have a short lived thought that we might have the Hut to ourselves. This of course was not to be, with the last beds taken with a Father and Daughter group who appeared about 6pm.

My legs had had enough by the time we got to the hut and I really had thought there would be no moving me, however a coffee or two later and some dinner and it was time for an evening stroll to see some amazing views and watch the cloud roll in and then back out again.



Moody Landscape

We had a very early start the next morning and tried to be quiet while cooking breakfast and packing up packs not done so well, but it is hard to lie in when the sun is shining. The walk down was a brisk 4 hour walk, with a few photo stops and less drink stops. It was only morning tea time when we got to Field Hut to find a group of Scouts had spent the night there (there seemed to be hundreds of them) and were in the process of packing up to leave, so a quick sit down for us before heading off again before the Scout group.

So, as lunch time approached, we got to the van. We had a quick change of clothes and off to the ice cream shop. I am pleased I did the walk into Kime Hut and I am doubly pleased that the Team Leader arranged for the weather to be so magic. The walk up to Kime is probably my limit for walking up hill but who knows what the future holds next.

2nd – 3rd December: Ruapehu Walks

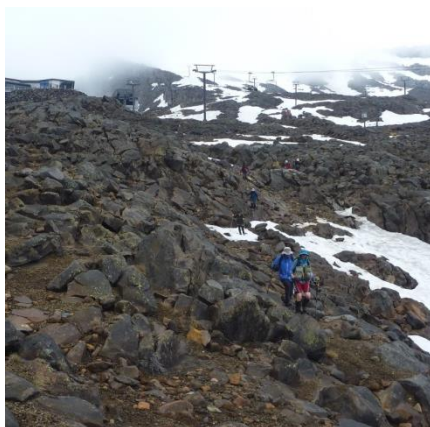
Report: Tim Swale

Photos: Tim Swale

The MTSC Lodge on Mt Ruapehu is an awesome asset enabling trampers to experience the mountain environment whilst enjoying comfortable accommodation at a very reasonable price. This weekend was a combined trip with Ken Mercer's ski weekend which had drawn in a good number of energetic people prepared to put in the hard work to climb high on the mountain to ski now that the lifts have closed for the season.



Rocks



Rocks



and Snow

Our group of nine set out on Saturday morning from the Bruce Road shortly after runners on the Iwikau to Turoa running race had departed. Our lunchtime destination was Whakapapaiti Hut which we reached in just over an hour. We were just in time as it started to rain just as we got there, so it was great to have a nice dry place to spread

out and enjoy lunch. The rain was still going when we left so it was on with raincoats for the next hour whilst we followed the Whakapapaiti stream downhill. There was one river crossing which was about knee deep resulting in wet feet all round, but a good opportunity to teach correct river crossing technique to those who had not done it before. Soon the rain stopped and apart to having to deal to a boot with a flapping sole, the journey out to the Chateau was pleasant and uneventful. A big thank you to Ken and Mary who after finishing skiing, walked down the mountain road, collected the van and brought it down to pick us up.



Outside the Lodge



Inside the Lodge

Sunday dawned bright and sunny so a plan was made to walk up behind our lodge to the New Zealand Alpine Club lodge then traverse across to the café for lunch. We picked our way up through a moonscape of volcanic rocks until a couple of hours later we emerged onto the top of the ridge by the NZAC hut. The views were stunning. We found a suitable way down the snow covered slopes onto the ski-field to the SW of the hut. By this time the snow was soft enough to walk on safely, so it was an easy and enjoyable walk across to the café. We met up with Ken's group for lunch. After lunch, we made our way down the ski-field, which looks very different without snow on it, compared to a few weeks earlier when the ski season was still in full swing. Back at our lodge there was time for afternoon tea before starting the drive home.

Altogether a superb weekend with quite contrasting walks. We were: Helen, Alla, Pak, Emily, Ben Joe, Carolyn, Linda and Tim.

Wednesday 6th December: Kapakapanui on a very warm day

Report: Marion Beadle

Photos:

A hot sunny day, heat haze masking the view, all mud has vanished and some turned to dust.

Most of the group reached the hut; some continued on to find shade on the ridge for lunch and return the same way while 6 went on around the whole loop. The northern route via the hut is longer but slightly less steep and proved to be quicker for the journey down. This route has good tree cover retaining full shade all the way to the Hut. The steep lower end of southern loop has less dense cover, some dusty ground with loose sharp stones. Both routes still have areas of fallen trees to be negotiated. At the bottom, the Ngatiawa River was much appreciated for cooling down and drinking.



The Stream

Kapakapanui Hut

An enjoyable day and also a good test of capabilities. Ice cream in Otaki and thanks to the other drivers.



Up on top of Kapkapnui

9th – 10th December: Leon Kinvig Hut

Report: Jean Garman

Photos: Jean Garman

A lovely weekend for a lovely tramp into the heart of the Pohangina River. We followed the Shorts Track up onto the tops for some lovely views before dropping down to the Leon Kinvig Hut on the banks of the Pohangina River for the night. It was quite warm as evidenced by Adam jumping into the river for a refreshing swim. A pleasant afternoon was whiled away and we ended up with the hut to ourselves for an equally pleasant evening. No blue ducks were seen which is a shame, hopefully all were just further up or down river. Retracing our steps back up onto the range the next day was a smidge harder than coming down had been, then we finished off the loop by going out via the Shorts Track. A beautiful relaxing pre-Christmas interlude. We were Adam, Garry, Jenny and Jean.



Views for miles



Heading down to the Pohangina



Hot enough for a swim

Sunday 17th December: Tree Trunk Gorge

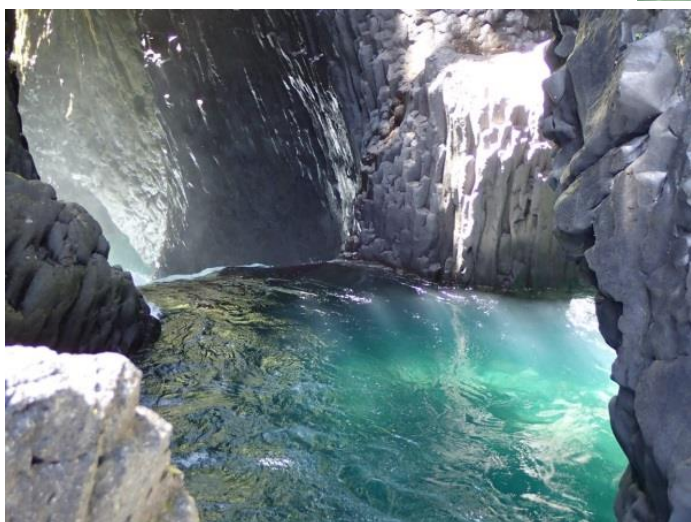
Report: Adam Match

Photos: Adam Match

Dropping into the Tongariro River just below Rangipo Dam (Rangipo Intake Road) was simple and easy, as was travel down the river to Tree Trunk Gorge (3hr), even though there were multiple river crossings and lots of rock hopping. The crossings were never more than waist deep; although deeper would have been fine as it was a hot day. The flip side, though, is that a couple of inches deeper and some of the crossings would have been difficult. We saw two sets of Blue Ducks, the second pair with ducklings, and some hysterical dabchicks. Lunch was at the entrance to Tree Trunk Gorge (which you do not want to travel through), after which we had an easy climb on the true left up to the road bridge. The descent back into the river below the gorge was not so straight-forward. Just north of the road bridge, we eventually found a remnant vehicle track that degenerated into a trail down to what might be the site of a footbridge across the gorge. This didn't work for us though as there were bluffs between us and the river. So we sidled north along the bluffs until we found the remnant of the track that drops all the way down to the river. This had a long length of heavy gauge rope for less sure-footed people and in places, the remains of wooden steps. We do not know where this intersects with Tree Trunk Gorge Road. However, it got us safely back down to the river which has a nice big pool just below the gorge.



Starting from the road



In the river and the amazing Tree Trunk Gorge

Travel down to The Pillars of Hercules was straightforward (90 minutes), although there were a couple of deeper crossings. There was noticeably more water in the lower reaches of the river due to the streams coming in from the west and there was quite a lot of debris, including two road signs that transit NZ may be missing. On the up-river side of the Pillars Gorge is an excellent, deep pool; ideal for swimming in on a hot day. It would be an easy, but slow (as there is little current), float through the gorge to the other side. Unfortunately, access to this pool from the car park above is not straightforward. We climbed out on the true left on a little-used trail; one section required a difficult climb up a steep, rooty face. Definitely not a family picnic friendly route, which is a shame as it is a nice swimming spot. From thereon it was less than 2 hours of easy tramping back to the car via the Tree Trunk Gorge Track, accompanied by lots of thunder and some rain a few minutes before the car. We were David Harrington, Fiona Bruins, and Adam Matich.



Contact Details

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Facebook	Ivan Rienks, Karen Tutt, Howard Nicholson	facebook@mtsc.org.nz	

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

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.