

# 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 4: May 2018

## CLUB MEETINGS

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 1<sup>st</sup> May: Birds in the bush – Russell Poole, Forest and bird

Russell Poole will talk about the native birds most likely to be seen or heard on the Club's favourite tracks. The work of DOC, Forest and Bird, and Pukaha (Mt Bruce) in protecting and fostering native birds will also be discussed.



### Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> May: AGM

As the AGM is almost upon us, all committee and leadership positions are available! **In particular we need a new Newsletter Editor and a new President, as both incumbents are stepping down.** Should any club members be interested in any role please approach any of the committee members prior to the AGM.

### Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> June: Riparian Plantings



Protecting waterways and a great habitat for birds – what's not to like!

# REPORTS AND NOTICES



## MTSC President: John Beech

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

Hi all, yet another month flies by and we are well into Autumn. From the forecast this week it looks like some serious winter weather is about to arrive, particularly in the South Island. As these conditions start to prevail heading into a new season, I am reminded of the need for care when in the bush. The warmer months tend to be more forgiving in the event that trips don't quite go to plan.

Over the last weekend, two colleagues and I conducted a bushcraft course up at Pohangina base. We were ably assisted by two club members, namely Tim Swale and Linda Campbell. I was grateful for their experience and assistance in imparting their knowledge to our Duke of Edinburgh students. From my own perspective, it was useful to refresh my own skills and take a fresh look at some of the aspects of bushcraft that we often take for granted. The river crossing section was particularly useful along with first aid. One aspect that we looked at was hut etiquette. The kids got a good example of what not to do when we arrived at Alice Nash hut on the Sunday. Outside was the stainless steel ash bucket full of cigarette butts and other rubbish. Inside was a plastic bucket by the fire and also full of ash and rubbish. Unfortunately, this is how huts burn down, apart from the rubbish aspect of it. I guess many out there do not get these type of skills imparted to them and this is where the benefits of club membership shine. It is where I learnt the basic skills when I first joined the club in the 1970's. Therefore, I would encourage any prospective members who are new to tramping to take part in a bushcraft course to learn those vital skills. The club runs such courses from time to time so keep an eye on the trip card.

With Winter approaching, it must be time for the skiers among us to start dusting off the equipment and begin planning those trips to the mountain. As most of you will know, the lodge has some exciting new plans so I look forward to those being realised. These will improve the layout and functionality of the lodge and continue to provide for the future of club members and their visitors. In the same way that the club offers bushcraft training, we also offer beginners courses for skiers. What better way to learn the skills useful for skiing and meet new people. Till next time. *John*

## MTSC Lodge Manager: John Lyttle



## Update on upgrade work to the Lodge

The completed, final drawings can be viewed on the club website.

<http://www.mtsc.org.nz/lodge/lodge-20180302.pdf>

These will be submitted to DOC for approval within the next 4 weeks.

We have set up work party dates to get the planned work on the lodge started. Helpers of all abilities and skills required, particularly in the first four planned weekends where there will be a lot of digging and

demolition. Please contact me if you can commit now to one, or many, of these weekends.

John Lyttle    [john@bcsltd.co.nz](mailto:john@bcsltd.co.nz)    027 433 6307

### 2018

20 - 22 October (Labour weekend)  
3 - 4 November  
17 - 18 November  
1 - 2 December

### 2019

20 - 22 January (Wellington Anniversary weekend)  
3 - 6 February (Waitangi weekend)  
23 - 24 February  
16 - 17 March  
6 - 7 April  
19 - 28 April (Easter and ANZAC Day included)



## MTSC Chief Guide Report: Ken Mercer

[chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz)

Serendipity. While going around the Esplanade orienteering course during the last club night, the left temple of my reading glasses broke and fell off. Being right handed it is always a fiddle to get the left bit around my head and I'm clearly a bit rough with them. However what is left is more compact, easier to use when needing a quick look at a map and lighter so they are now my tramping glasses of choice. Get out your cutters and give it a go!

*We welcome Ewen Cameron, Carol Dickson, Mary-Anne O'Donnell and Raewyn Ritchie to the club.*



# UPCOMING TRIPS

May Wednesday Tramps			May Thursday Tramps		
2	Chris Teo-Sherrell	355 1816	3	VACANT	
9	Russell Poole	022 658 0661	10	Syd Easton	356 7462
16	Leonie Lowndes	359 5005	17	Richard Ellis	357 6410
23	Allan Rae	358 3962	24	Carolyn Brodie	358 6576
30	Ian Brookes	358 7974	31	Suzanne Clarke	356 8322
May Weekend Trips					
5 – 6	Upper Matakuhia Hut	Easy/Medium	Mark Learmonth	355 9143	
Sun 6	Rae Ridge	Medium/Fit	Garry Grayson	027 269 5934	
12 – 13	Pureora Forest Mountain Bike	Medium	Ken Mercer	027 364 6475	
19 - 20	Upper Makaroro Hut	Medium/Fit	Mark Learmonth	355 9143	
26 – 27	Maropea Forks Hut	Medium/Fit	Garry Grayson	027 269 5934	
Sun 27	Palmerston North Walkways	Easy	Linda Campbell	027 333 4493	

**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 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.

Please Note: Swap of dates for the following weekend trips in June, dates will now be

- 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> June: Putaputa Stream hut – Kakariki David Harrington
- 17<sup>th</sup> June: Baber – Dick Creek Loop (or maybe Burns Loop) Garry Grayson

### 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> May: Upper Matakuhia Hut

**Mark Learmonth** **Easy/Medium** **027 2004960 or 3559143** after hours

For somewhere a little different, Upper Matakuhia hut is a little known 8 bunk hut in the Waipunga Forest, which is situated between Minginui and the Napier Taupo Highway South West of the Whirinaki Forest Park. The track mainly follows the Matakuhia Stream and should be reasonably easy.

### Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May: Rae Ridge

**Garry Grayson** **Medium/Fit** **027 269 5934**

Starting the day, it's a drive to Otaki Forks and park our vehicle at the Southern end camping area (if we're lucky there may be a bakery open in Otaki on the way through). Choices from the car park are to jump the Waiotauru onto the Arcus Loop track and continue on track up through Field Hut to the Dinnan high point, stage right and beat a retreat down Rae Ridge back to the car, OR do it in the opposite direction, whichever suits participants on the day.

### 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> May: Pureora Forest MTB (Timber Trail)

**Ken Mercer** **Medium** **027 364 6475**

Pureora forest was the scene of the treetop protest in 1978 to halt selective logging and save the Kokako's habitat. It now features an 85km, two day MTB ride. We will take the van with a driver and travel to the Pureora road end on Friday evening camping at the Ngerenga campsite. On Saturday, we'll cycle to Piropiro campsite then complete the trail on Sunday. We only have room for 11 cyclists so please book your space ASAP.

### 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> May: Upper Makaroro Hut

**Mark Learmonth** **Medium/Fit** **027 2004960 or 3559143** after hours

This trip is very much weather dependant as it involves crossing the Makaroro River. We're hoping to cross the Makaroro and follow the ridge track heading towards Parks Peak Hut. Then from a Junction near Parks Peak hut, head down the ridge, crossing the Makaroro again to reach the hut on the other side and returning the same way. If the weather has not been kind during the week leading into the weekend or is going to rain over the weekend, we will head for a safer location.

## 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> May: Maropea Forks Hut

Garry Grayson

Medium/Fit

027 269 5934

My plan is to take a route passing through Sunrise Hut / Armstrong Saddle and North along the ridge to drop down a slip into the Maropea River headwaters. Splashing on down the river, we should eventually arrive at Maropea Forks Hut for the nights activities. Next day is river travel again, but up the South Branch of the Maropea, climbing out near the top to take the track via Top Maropea Hut. Continuing on from this hut on the track will take us back through Armstrong Saddle, Sunrise, and a return to our vehicle. Weather conditions and river levels may again rule the day which means an alternative destination if the situation arises.

## Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> May: Palmerston North Walkways – Manawatu River Pathway

Linda Campbell

Easy

027 333 4493

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

We will walk the path that follows the Manawatu River from the end of Maxwells Line through to Riverside Drive and back to the start. If you would rather just walk one way or just do part of the walk, you are still welcome to join us. Suitable for all ages so great for families.



## 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> March: Dundas Hut via Harris Creek / West Peak

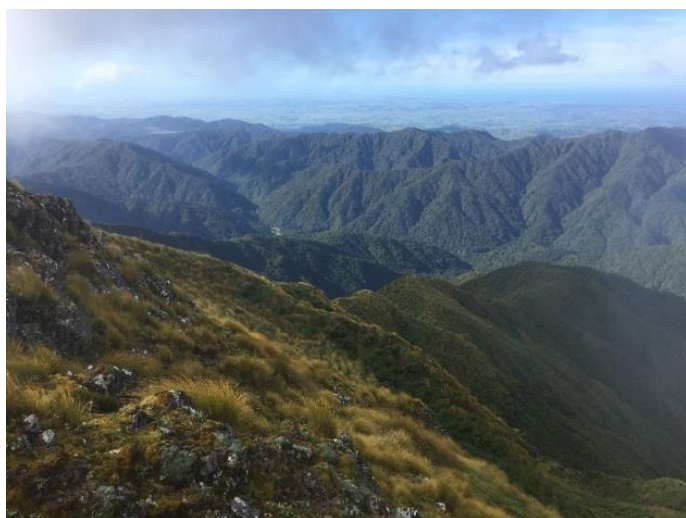
Report: Garry Grayson

Photos: Garry Grayson

A quick dash via Colyton to pick up Dave then a 1.5 hr drive, albeit rather slowly up the pothole ridden road to the #1 Top Mangahao Dam saw us parked and ready to hit the track around 9:00ish. Deciding on river travel rather than track to the first swingbridge seemed a quicker option to take given the longish day ahead. That done, a small smoko break then on via track to reach Harris Creek by 11:00am.

At this point it was 'off track' and beginning of the 'slog' section up to West Peak. All was reasonably straight forward until the Leatherwood and other annoying scrub band was encountered. Remnants of a previous 'unofficial' track put us in the right spots but now very overgrown again meant only occasional 'saw cuts' were obvious. Climbing over, climbing under, and pushing through was the theme for an energy sapping exercise to reach the open areas near West Peak in a rather extended 5hr 'gutbuster'.

By this time it was obvious that the cool Southerly wind and semi-clagged in tops were going to be with us for the remainder of the day which required extra layers and raincoats. Pushing on over Walker and Pukemoremore, the very welcome sign to turn off down to Dundas Hut was reached, although the 'Hut 10mins' being well under estimated we concluded. Arrival time ended up at 6:30pm, a long, 'Fit ++' day, no need for camping outside or floor sleeping as the hut was also empty! A bit late for a snacks and nibbles session, just a quick hot drink, then tea was consumed and rest time for aching body parts.



*Stunning views*



*but quite chilly.....*

The mist turned into damp, almost light rain during the night and it became quite windy early in the morning. Next morning was patchy with clear glimpses of the surrounding area being taken as they appeared. An 8:30am departure back up the '10 min' (20+min) climb to the signpost, then back to Pukemoremore peak where it was deemed 'not an option' to go back down the spur of this peak to the track below. On a nice day maybe, but due to claggy patches still around and a Southerly still pushing in, it seemed a far better option to return via our Saturday route.

West Peak was conquered by 10:45am and again a 5hr downward leg to Harris Creek Bridge was achieved. Pushing downwards through the leatherwood was a lot easier as one only needed to lean forward and gravity did the rest, the final bit of navigation to ensure we dropped out right at the bridge turned out to be the most `challenging` due to the broadness of the spur near the bottom, (missed it by about 100m). A further 1.5hrs put us at the swingbridge, then wet feet again to finish off the day, reaching the car about 5:45pm.

Thanks for the company Dave; we were Garry Grayson and Dave Mitchell.

### Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March: Field Hut

Report: Harold Petterson

On Wednesday morning 27 club members went to Otaki Forks to tramp toward Field Hut and Table Top. There were no traffic problems. However, once the tarseal ended, the gorge road became rather rough and narrow, but there were no slips to stop driving to the carpark.

There was rain when leaving Palmerston North but only drizzle occurred at times during the day. The track went through Kamahi and Beech forest to the hut at about 900 metres above sea level. Many of the party reached the Hut in two to three hours. Some went up to the tussock beyond Table Top (at 1000 metres), but the South Island was not visible due to low cloud to reward the extra climb. Some trampers went at their own pace and were also able to enjoy the exercise and social contact with views of ferns, bush and rivers down in the valleys.

People left when their cars were full and stopped for coffee at the Riverside Café in Otaki. All returned without any problems.

### 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> March: Upper Makaroro Hut

Report: Pak Lam Yu

Photos: Pak, Howie and Ken

Day 1: 700m up, 600m down. Day 2: 600m up, 700m down. The two-day tramp was not easy (for me) but I did it. With much pleasure, I submit this report. The weather was fantastic, considering there were cyclones before this weekend, and one on its way to NZ. We arrived after a three-hour drive from Palmy to the Mangleton Road track entrance via Tikokino and Kereru.

Within a few minutes of walking, there was the Sentry Box Hut (four bunks), next to the stream with the same name. From there, it was a tough climb to the 1300m ridge line. The forest was mainly of Mountain Beech and Totara. On the track, I learnt about Tutu berry, Cutty grass, and Snow berry (red and white forms). Important to know which berry is poisonous or edible! On the way to Parks Peak Hut (six bunks), three trampers came from the opposite direction and they told us that they saw us arriving at the track entrance, so they hurried to the hut and occupied their bunks before going for a leisurely walk. We met their other mate in the hut who had lit a fire. Parks Peak Hut is quite new and sits in an alpine meadow location. I would've loved to check in to the hut and called it a day, but Howard, the group leader, had a different plan. At the end, we continued (losing all the height advantage) to the next hut. After crossing the fast Makaroro River, using the technique learnt from the Bush Craft course, we arrived at the Upper Makaroro Hut (four bunks). This hut is not new (built in the 60s?) but in good condition, with a river and water fall view.



*Descending to Upper Makaroro Hut*

*Preparing dinner, dinner, snow berries for dessert ??*



Dinner was super: hot tea; hummus and crackers; creamy carbonara seashells pasta with bier sausage, fresh beans, capsicum and onion; vanilla custard and dried apple slices for dessert. I could not expect a better meal in such a lovely natural setting. On day 2, after a good night of sleep, we were all keen to start after a warm breakfast with muesli and hot tea. The river level was lower and the flow was gentler than the evening before, so the river crossing was not difficult. At that point, I felt energised and more used to tramping. In fact, Ken timed the ascent and our speed was like three hundred meters per hour (a new record for me). It took us back to Parks Peak Hut, at a perfect time for morning tea. We had the whole hut to ourselves, as the four trampers had departed. After the break, we took a little

side trip to see the Pohatuhaha Trig (1368m) which gave us a fantastic panoramic view of the Ruahine and Wakarara Ranges. Far away, Mt Ruapehu was visible from there. It was 3:30pm by the time we got back to the car.



*Approaching Parks Peak Hut*



*Pak and Howie on top of the world*

This was a wonderful two-day tramp. Thank you Howard for organising the trip and for keeping us safe from wasp stings! Trip members: Howard Nicholson (organiser), Ken Mercer, Pak Lam Yu

### **Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March: Blue Range Hut/ Mikimiki Trip**

Report: John Ridge

Photos: John Ridge

On Wednesday March 16<sup>th</sup>, twenty two trampers set out from Palmerston North / Feilding to meet at Kiriwhakapapa Road end at 9:15 am or thereabouts. The weather for the day was perfect, we could not have asked for better. It was warm, sunny and practically no wind even on the tops. Fifteen headed for the hut and the remaining seven chose to enjoy the less strenuous but longer Mikimiki track.

The Blue range Hut track on the whole was surprisingly dry considering the rain earlier in the month and progress was good. This is probably a favourite area for many. The scenery we pass through from the stand of Redwoods at the start, through a succession of forest types, finishing with moss laden mountain beech is all beautiful, not to mention the outstanding views both from the "rock" and the hut. Photographers would really be in their element - dreamland!

Our group divided for lunch, some chose to relax and eat at the picnic table provided at the hut and others returned to the "rock". As the weather was so good, the lunch break was extended longer than usual. Our descent was taken in a leisurely manner giving more opportunity to appreciate the surroundings.



*Lunch on the Rock*



*Caption Competition??*



*Clambering across the stream bed*

Meanwhile the Mikimiki trampers enjoyed the track in near ideal conditions with the stream so low that boots were barely wetted and the only challenge was the clamber out of the stream bed. Both the bush and the exotic plantings were in lovely condition probably as result of the episodic heavy rain.

All trampers from both parties were safely out by 3:30pm and then on the journey back to Palmerston North, we stopped in Eketahuna for ice creams.

Thanks to our van driver, Chris and car providers/drivers Bernard, Christine and Anne.

### **Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March: Castle Rock**

Report: William Laing

Photos: William Laing

We left Palmerston North at 7:30 for Waiouru on a rainy day. Later we were told it rained hard in Palmerston North during the day, but we were lucky with the weather in that only the slower members of the party experienced rain towards the end of the return tramp. As we progressed North, the weather improved and the sun came out, although as we parked, cloud and mist seems to be located just where we were going to tramp!

The car park is conveniently placed just off State Highway 1 so an easy drive without metalled roads. After an assurance from the trip leader that it was an easy tramp with some gentle ups and downs, and a message not to

continue on the weathered 4 wheel drive road beyond where the hill climb started, people set off. Immediately those fast trampers went past the turnoff (marked with brand new poles and triangles) and had to be rescued by Sue from walking into the depths of the volcanic plateau.

The rest of us followed the clearly marked track and the fast trampers had to trail behind until they could find room to pass on the narrow track.



*Through tussock and heather*



*Pleasant spot for morning tea*



*Follow the leader*

We climbed the first hill through tussock (the steepest of the hills, about 150m high) and progressed near the clouds across the hills and rejoined the rough road to climb the next hill on top of which we stopped for morning tea.

We then wound our way over the hilltops, through two patches of bush (mostly Mountain Beech, in isolated stands in the valleys). The first patch had little undergrowth, the second more. Finally we arrived at the Castle Rocks, Russell tells me they are Schist rock from the raised seabed, not volcanic.



*One of the patches of bush*



*Finally the Castle Rocks*



*Amongst the Schist*

A bit over 2 hours walk to get there, a net 400m climb over a well formed track mostly. In part over a 4 wheel drive track that had been severely eroded.



All this time we were walking besides the army training area with severe warnings not to trespass!

The view in every direction of the hills was magnificent except towards Mt Ruapehu which was under cloud (although the top peeked out at one stage).

After a leisurely lunch in the shelter of the rocks, we made our way back and arrived close to our planned time of 3:00pm. The stragglers got a bit wet but nothing us hardy MTSC members could not handle. My app failed me, but on my reconnoiter in January the trip was 12.9 km long, a total climb of over 800 m and used 2500 calories. That justified the cake in Taihape. Back in Palmerston North at 5:30pm.

This was a new tramp for most people and provided mixed scenery with tussock and bush and rocks. Different from the Tararuas and Ruahines, not as muddy as many trips. There were comments that I had down played the hills, but everybody in the tramp (23) made the Castle Rocks in good spirits so it can't have been too tough.

Thanks to the van driver, Evan, the car drivers Marion, Denise and Rod. My apologies for only using my own photos but they formed a nice basis for writing!

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March: RNZAF Ventura Bomber**

Report: Royce Mills

Photos: John Brock

This was a Thursday tramp that turned into a Wednesday tramp. The forecast for Thursday was for very heavy rain in our destination area so the unusual decision was made to move to Wednesday.

Our plan was to locate the wreckage of an RNZAF Ventura Bomber plane which crashed in the hills behind Otaki in 1946 with the loss of all four crew. Some of us had tried to find this crash site back in 2012 but without success.

Armed with more GPS information this time, we set off up the Waitohu Valley, just eight of us this week. In spite of our improved information, we still had some navigational confusion trying to find the correct track leading up from a stream junction. However after a bit of pushing through Supplejack and a scramble uphill, we found the track we were looking for. It was now just a steady climb on a fairly well marked track. Some aircraft wreckage was spotted as soon as we arrived at our waypoint. One of our group wandered off for a toilet stop and noticed a small track leading downhill and came back to tell us he had seen a large piece of a wing. We all followed him down and spent some time studying the wreckage here, quite a bit of crumpled debris was lying about here as well. Sad, but very interesting. At 1pm we set off on our return, all good until we reached our point of confusion going in. After some consulting of maps and GPS's and splashing about in a stream junction, we had it sorted. We were out by 3.45pm, a seven hour day, mostly in raincoats, but all smiles after an adventurous day, successfully finding this air crash site.



*Where to from here?*



*Ernest Ang photographing the wreckage*

### **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March: Knights Track to Toka, Deerford Loop + a short foray onto the Shorts track**

Report: William and Bob

Photos: Numerous contributors

Most of us left Memorial park at 8:00am with the Met Service rain radar showing a predicted narrow band of midday rain over our target Toka. Tantalisingly in the distance beyond the overcast sky, there was an area of blue sky. Luckily little rain eventuated and we had a dryish low-mud climb up the Ruahines along the steep Knights track. The steepest part of the track is about 20% (height/horizontal distance) over 2.6km (compare to Baldwin St in Dunedin which is maximally 35% over 70m or 20% over its full length). On the way up the initial climb, William was talking to Caroline about Bridge, and at the top, she commented such distraction meant she did not notice the climb. The first half of the trek is through native bush with parts steep and the occasional easier slope to give a respite and chance to recover ones breath.



*Steep and not so steep*



*Morning tea segregation*



After about an hour we paused for morning tea with the men sitting on a convenient log and the women facing us on the ground!

We soon left the bush and entered the Leatherwood and then the tussock for the interminable climb to the top. Various members of the party stopped at various points, and some continued, determined to reach the top of Toka in spite of the cloud covering it. However views over the Valley below were spectacular below the cloud, and even sun could even be seen shining on the countryside. Occasional motorised farm noises rose from the valley, showing we were not far from civilisation in spite of being over 1000m high.



In the tussock, the slope seems to go on forever, with no obvious target especially with the mist covering the hill tops. Nearer the top, a light rain pushed by the wind meant the decision needed to be made whether the weather was wet or whether the weather was fine enough to continue without a rain coat. Do you stop under these conditions to put on a rain jacket, or push on in the hope the intermittent rain would not soak us?



*Up through the leatherwood*



*The top of Toka*

However, at the final crossroads five minutes from the top of Toka, the decision was straightforward: The wind was so strong that the only way to keep warm was to put on one's jacket, and the only way to get the jacket on was to twist and turn with the wind so the sleeves blew out in the right direction to get an arms down the sleeves. We did the last five minute dash to the summit, took the obligatory photo showing the trig (mostly demolished) and the

view and then rapidly retreated down the hill again.

Rather than making a loop and taking the Shorts Track, Peter decided that he had better make sure his flock was collected up on the way down.

Meanwhile 10 of the original 25 trampers opted to tramp the Deerford Loop with some making a short foray along Shorts Track from the junction. The decision was made to follow the side track down to the Makiemie (Coal Creek) stream. This proved a disappointment as the rain intensified as we arrived and what was once a beautiful picnic spot was found to be now lacking the small, open meadow. The remains of the large log was in the middle of the stream and so we mostly retreated into the bush for an early morning tea.



*Morning tea*



*A bit of fern wading on the overgrown track*



Then we set about the 358m climb up to the junction mainly through steep but open forest. The Deerford is a shortish route but has its challenges, including a sustained section with a 26% slope, it is also overgrown and in need of track maintenance.



*A view of Ruapehu*

On the climb up, we had a few nice views, but in the main the tops were clagged in by misty clouds.

What little of the Shorts Track that we followed, we found to be in a poor state overgrown and with a lot of wind-throw across it. Lunch was taken at the junction. The track down is a steep (24%) zigzag; it makes a distinct contrast with the track up as it relatively open. Here again there were sections in need of track work making more of a trampers' track than a family friendly bush-walk. In the event we all emerged safely. We were taking a drink stop extended by a discussion of the impact of tourism on the South Island DOC camps (several of us having experienced them this summer) when the Toka Brigade started to appear. It was a consolidated party that made its way across the Makiemie stream and through the paddocks back to the carpark well before the 3:30pm deadline. We then had a very

civilised tea and cakes at the Ritchie's with tea, coffee and choices that would put a cafe to shame. All in all a good day of tramping meeting the needs of all.

Thanks to trip leaders Peter and Bev and our drivers Chris, Bev, Peter Linda and Marion. Special thanks to Ian and Angela for hosting the after-match.

## Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> April: Escarpment Walk

Report: Linda Darbyshire

Photos: Linda Darbyshire

27 of us headed to Paekakariki hoping for the forecast sunny day. We parked on Beach Road close to the toilets. From there we walked to the Paekakariki train station. The plan was: we all take the train to Pukerua Bay Train Station and take the trail north back to Paekakariki.

The track starts at the Pukerua Bay train station; the entrance next to the playground. The trail leads through a couple of streets, (watch out for the small Te Araroa Trail signs on power poles) across a Reserve, follows the railway track, then through a gate, from which point you can't go wrong.

The weather delivered clear skies with a bit of a northerly breeze, perfect for enjoying the vistas!! As we were heading into the wind it was just a matter of ensuring your hat wasn't blown away.



*A well-formed track with some stunning views*

Most found it an easy walk. The group spread themselves evenly along the single lane track, in which one section a rope has been installed to help walkers across a slip. There were several groups using the track in both directions.



*A beautiful day to stop and enjoy the sunshine*

After crossing the two swing bridges and climbing the first of two stairways 250 steps high, the group stopped for a relaxed morning tea.

The intermittent bush sections of the track were helpful for comfort stops as most of the trail is exposed.

Just past the 4km mark it was great to come over the hill and see a group of 'gnomes' resting in an open grass area. They had found a great open spot to regroup, relax under the sun and have lunch.

From this point the track gradually descended. Traps to eradicate predators have been placed on these lower levels and areas have been developed to create an environment for skinks and geckos to live. Take your time and you may see a gecko as 2 of the group did.

Described as a great day out!!....thanks to the drivers and cooperation of everyone.

## Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> April: Burn Hut

Report: Royce Mills

Photos: John Brock

It was a sparkling day for a Thursday tramp with blue sky and sunshine. Our goal today was the Burn hut circuit from the No. 2 dam to the No. 1 dam. After ferrying some vehicles to the road end where we would finish, we set off at 9.15am. Sixteen of us were doing the whole loop and another five headed towards Burn hut and would return back to the starting point. Conditions were warm with a welcome cooling breeze higher up. The track was mostly very dry, but still rather overgrown for about the last half hour to the hut. We arrived at the hut at 12 noon, ready for our lunch. Four hunters were in residence at the hut, so we spread ourselves around on the grass outside and enjoyed the sunshine. Soon we were off again on the gently hilly ridge where excellent views were enjoyed. Then it was down to

College Creek. Water levels seemed higher than at other times, surprising given the recent dry spell. We picked our way downstream for about an hour. It took concentration as rocks were slippery, but it was rarely higher than knee height.

After about an hour, we emerged at Baber Forks and then on to No. 1 dam, arriving at 4.30pm. Good to see our vehicles here, and then it was the long, slow drive back out to Shannon.



*Approaching Burn hut*



*Mangahao Upper No. 1 Reservoir*

Thanks to our leader, Judy Swainson, we all finished with big smiles after a most enjoyable day in the outdoors.



### Contact Details

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

### Committee 2015 - 2016

President	John Beech	<a href="mailto:president@mtsc.org.nz">president@mtsc.org.nz</a>	06 354 9310
Secretary	Tim Swale	<a href="mailto:secretary@mtsc.org.nz">secretary@mtsc.org.nz</a>	06 376 6556
Treasurer	Arthur Flint	<a href="mailto:treasurer@mtsc.org.nz">treasurer@mtsc.org.nz</a>	06 356 7654
Chief Guide	Ken Mercer	<a href="mailto:chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz">chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz</a>	06 356 7497
Membership	Sue Nicholson	<a href="mailto:membership@mtsc.org.nz">membership@mtsc.org.nz</a>	06 357 6325
Newsletter Editor	Jean Garman	<a href="mailto:editor@mtsc.org.nz">editor@mtsc.org.nz</a>	021 176 0209
Lodge Manager	John Lyttle	<a href="mailto:lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz">lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 433 6307
Mini-Bus Manager	Ken Mercer		06 356 7497

**General Committee:** Bob Hodgson, Howard Nicholson, Linda Campbell, Karen Tutt, William Laing

### Appointees

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

### New Members

Prospective members must be nominated by a Proposer and a Secunder who are current MTSC members and have been so for at least one year. New memberships are confirmed at the next monthly committee meeting. Prospective members are encouraged to go on a club trip or attend a club night before joining. For further information or an application form please see the club website.

### Club Equipment

Hire equipment: we have packs, 2 and 3 person tents, tent flies (small and large), snow mats, gas cookers, size 8 and 9 boots, billies, food dehydrator and two bivvy bags. Ice axes, crampons, and helmets are also available. We have two personal locator beacons (PLB) for which there is no charge. Contact the Gear Custodian: Peter Rawlins on (06) 356 7443.

**Website** [www.mtsc.org.nz](http://www.mtsc.org.nz)

This contains club information, photos, contact details and back issues of this newsletter, Beechleaves. The club website is maintained by Howard Nicholson (06) 357 6325 and is kindly hosted by **Inspire Net**, a locally based company.

**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>

### **Accommodation at the MTSC lodge on Mount Ruapehu**

The lodge is close to Iwikau Village, has power, heating, hot showers and is stocked with food. Members and their guests are welcome. For Lodge bookings email Liz and Hugh Wilde [lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz) or phone 021 054 2560. 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>\$37</b>	<b>\$52</b>
<b>Secondary School</b>	<b>\$30</b>	<b>\$45</b>
<b>Primary School</b>	<b>\$25</b>	<b>\$40</b>
<b>Pre-school (3-5 yo)</b>	<b>\$12</b>	<b>\$12</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 tent fly (in the passenger door) and a Personal Locator Beacon (in the glove box) are available for use free of charge on trips.