

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 3 May 2019

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 7th May, 2019: The Timber Trail, Pureora Forest by Ken & Mary Mercer

The Timber Trail is an 84 km track which skirts Mt Pureora, NW of Lake Taupo. Te Araroa walkers typically take four days while cyclists can do it comfortably in two. The track passes through very beautiful bush, along historic tramways and over many spectacular swing bridges.

Tuesday 21st May, 2019: Annual General Meeting 7.30 pm Rose City Club Rooms, 50 Park Rd, PN
The MTSC is your club so do come along!

Tuesday 4th June, 2019: Walking the Northern Camino in Spain by Linda Campbell

Tuesday 6th August: Club Photo Competition

Tuesday 8th October: Interclub Photo Competition

REPORTS AND NOTICES

MTSC President: Rob Pringle

president@mtsc.org.nz

Another year is racing by. With daylight saving ending, I am somewhat amazed about the absence of clocks around the house that require adjusting. The majority undertake the activity themselves. Aside from the effects of retraining the body for the hour's difference, the transition is now virtually seamless thanks to technological advancements. With the onset of autumn, the calm fine weather has provided plenty of opportunity to get out and enjoy the days in the hills.



Rob at work on Lodge Lockers

Items of note this month are the success that the club has had, largely thanks to John Lyttle's efforts, in securing a significant grant to contribute towards the redevelopment of the lodge. This will ensure that the project can continue to advance. As the ski season bears down upon us, there is the ever present realization that we have a reasonable amount of work left to complete. However, I also acknowledge the huge amount of time and effort that has gone into the works to date from an amazingly talented pool of volunteers. If people are finding themselves at a loose end or know of people who are able and prepared to assist with this project, please get in contact with John or myself. There will no doubt be a few weekends spent up the mountain between now and ski season that didn't make the trip card as official work parties.

On a slightly different note are the progressions of van replacement conversations. As with any volunteer organization, often wheels of progress can turn a bit slower than perhaps we might wish. However there has been some significant research gone into which direction to take and we are now in the process of choosing a specific vehicle. Hopefully we will all get to enjoy the creature comforts of this in the not so distant future. Special thanks to all those who have continued to use the existing van, and to those who've been involved with researching options for the replacement. Your patience, time and expertise as always is appreciated.

At the time of writing, unfortunately the offer has just come to a close, but great to see Ruapehu Alpine Lits (RAL) offering life passes up for sale again. For anyone who is a committed skier, these provide a great option to secure economic skiing well into the future. It is an investment, and as such, commands a reasonable premium up front. However my maths makes it quite viable in the longer term. Unfortunately, the cost benefit ratio declines the older one gets! The ski field is currently on track to have a new Gondola operational for the start of the winter season, lifting 2400 people per hour from the base of the Rangatira, (kiosk area) to Knoll ridge. They're offering leather seats, wifi, and all in your own spacious glass cabin with room for 10. So, in signing off I shall leave you with a point to ponder: When we go camping and take too many home comforts, it's considered to be glamping.... What is it called when the skiers ramp it up a level and begin to use wifi on the chairlifts from the comforts of a leather chair....? Chocolate fish for the best descriptor anyone can come up with...

Enjoy the outdoors this month....

Rob

Lodge Manager: John Lyttle 027 433 6307

lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz

Lodge Upgrade Project: Pub Charities have given the club a significant grant towards the renovations at the Lodge. Work is proceeding apace though never as fast as we would like. One of the consequences of using volunteer labour is that work is limited to weekends and public holidays like Easter but, thanks to all of the hard work of all our volunteers, good progress is being made. All going well, the important alterations will all be completed in time for the coming ski season.

John Lyttle

Men (and one woman) at work in the Lodge basement over the Easter break



Iron Gate Closure

NZ Defence Force could be commencing Iron Gate Hut replacement as early as June 1st 2019. This hut will be closed from June until August; if there are weather delays the work may not be completed until September 2019. Once we have an accurate start date we'll post that here also. The DOC website will be kept up to date with relevant alerts.

Sue Moore

Senior Ranger (Biodiversity)- Kaitiaki Matua (Kanorau Koiora)

Department of Conservation-Te Papa Atawhai

Te Papaioea / Palmerston North Office 28 North Street or Private Bag 11010, Palmerston North 4442

DDI: +64 6 350 9675 | VPN: 6985 | 027 539 5466

www.doc.govt.nz<<http://www.doc.govt.nz/>>

Cell Phones and Safety in the Hills. Bob's Message: Attention Rescue News Editor

.....I am writing to express my concern about the article on the final page of the Autumn 2019 Rescue News. It reports on a rescue from the Wharite Peak track. The report includes "a first lesson to self" to ensure that all cell phones are fully charged. Fine except that in many parts of the Forest Parks and DOC lands there is no phone coverage so even fully charged phones may be of no immediate use in an emergency. **I suggest that the article should have made this point and suggest that tramping parties should carry at least one personal locator beacon, PLB. Please take the next opportunity to commend the use of PLB's to trampers and hunters. They are available for short term hire and some are available that cost less than \$400. The PLB takes the search out of search and rescue!**

As a background to this ;

I am a regular trumper with the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club (MTSC). The club owns several personal locator beacons that are distributed between party members on trips. In addition, about a quarter of members carry their personal PLBs. In addition we all carry first aid kits and adequate additional warm clothing. This is best practice.

For example I carry in my pack a PLB, a cell phone, a Garmin GPS as used by SAR, a first aid kit that includes soluble aspirin and anti histamine, extra food and warm waterproof cloths.

Cheers

Bob [R M (Bob) Hodgson]



May Wednesday Tramps			May Thursday Tramps		
01	Leonie Lowndes	359 5005	02	Wayne Lincoln	D 021 068 5237
08	Allan Rae	358 3962	09	Leonie Lowndes	359 5005
15	Ian Brookes	358 7974	16	Merv Matthews	357 2858
22	Dennis Jensen	329 3229	23	John McLeod	323 5785
29	Jill Faulkner	323 6094	30	Chris Mercer	D 356 2635
May Weekend Trips					
4-5	Dundas loop	Med/Fit	Jean Garman	021 176 0209	
12 (Sun)	The Pinnacles	Medium	Tim Swale	022 134 8384	

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.

4th-5st May: Dundas Loop

Jean Garman Medium/Fit 021 176 0209

Weather permitting (no strong wind or heavy rain) I am planning on doing the classic Dundas Loop which visits 4 huts, crosses the Ruamahunga River twice and involves a fair bit of up and down. It starts at the Putara Road end, travels up through Herepai Hut, then up and down around the tops and down to Dundas Hut for the night. Sunday is down to the Ruamahunga River then up to Cattle Ridge, visit the hut, then down to the Ruamahunga River, visit Roaring Stag Hut, then a wee bit more up and down back to the road end.

12th May: The Pinnacles

Tim Swale Medium 022 134 8384

Pinnacle at 877m is a peak to the east of the Atiwhakatu Stream, accessed via the Mount Holdsworth Road end. There is no track marked on the map so good navigation skills will be required. However, I have heard that there is a reasonable ground trail which should eliminate a lot of bush bashing. If the river is low enough we will drop down to the creek and cross by Atiwhakatu Hut. From there it is an easy walk back to the road end. In total about 12 km and about 700 m of climbing so expect it will take about 6 hours.



9th-10th February, 2019: Mangahao Flats Work Party

Report: Jean

Photos: Bernadette, Adam and Jean



Five keen people crammed in the ute and bounced up the long and winding road to the Dams. A leisurely wander up the track, tidying it up as we went, saw us reach Mangahao Flats hut early afternoon. At the hut the toilet/hut/mattresses were cleaned and some gardening of the front lawn carried out before a halt was called for the marathon eating session. Two other people turned up but they were possibly overwhelmed by our self-indulgent over-consumption and turned down our invitation to join us. A very good selection of nibbles and wines preceded the 5+++ a day salad

with smoked chicken. When it came time to contemplate dessert we were, alas, too full so opted for port and chocolates instead. Everyone reported a good night's sleep and the cheesecake went down very well for breakfast. More gardening, window/gutter cleaning along with a trip back to a nearby windfall to mark the track around it filled up most of the morning before we packed up our stuff and that left behind by others and headed out down the river. Bernadette was keen to experience the joys of river travel especially pack floating - Malcolm, Adam and I are water babies but Jenny was a bit more reluctant. - It was a stunning day for it, warm with crystal clear waters. The wades got deeper and we got some good pack floats before we reached Harris Creek. Below Harris Creek the pack floats get a bit long and tedious so Bernadette and Jenny took the track while Adam, Malcolm and I continued on down. Both routes took exactly the same length of time to travel.



Track Clearing and Redirecting



Easy, pleasant river travel



Pack floating is fun (honestly)!

The annual Mangahao Flats work party is a relaxed and sociable affair at the nicest, cleanest hut in the Tararuas. There is the option for different routes and for different groups to walk at different paces; the hut log book has recorded times varying from 3½ to 10 hours to reach the hut from the dams. – Most people would take 4½ to 7 hours. - Please consider coming along next year – we would love your company.

Wednesday 13th March, 2019: Mt Thompson from South Manukau Road Quarry

Trip Leader: Richard Hunter

Reporter: Rod McKenzie

Photos: Bob Hodgson

As we left Palmerston North and travelled south the drizzly rain eased so that when we met the two cars from Feilding at the quarry gates there was only light mist around and parkas were optional.

Having obtained the necessary permission we went through the quarry in convoy and proceeded up the farm lane to the second bridge. We then walked up the Waitohu valley for 20-30 mins and took the first turn left starting up an old logging road. The road was a gentle gradient, well benched with lots of overgrown trees. We had broken into three groups and after about an hour there was a stop for morning break in those groups. Starting off again it was a further hour to the high point on the road. This became the lunch stop, and entertainment was provided by the



discovery of tadpoles in the small pond nearby. The back group of four had their lunch about 20 mins below the high point so they missed the tadpoles!

Some of the main group went to the left to the Mt Thompson summit (5 - 10 mins) but did not get any views as it was heavily overgrown. Back down the hill was an easy walk with the last of the groups arriving at the vehicles around 2.20pm. From the car park it was off for a coffee stop at Manakau.

We were 21 trampers enjoying a great day's tramping. Thanks to drivers Evan, Bob H, Rita and Jenny.

Thursday 21st March, 2019: Daphne Hut

Trip Leader and Reporter: Norman Cooper

Photos: None because Norman managed to erase **ALL the** photos from his phone!

The weather on the day of this trip was warm, with very low mist which kept with us until mid-afternoon. That was not bad thing as, for the last 40 minutes of the track, the bush was low giving good views coming down. We started off at 600m and all had morning tea at 900m with our high point on the track at 1000m. With no views because of the mist the bush had a really eerie feeling. Being there with other like-minded people is what makes us trampers. I found it a good track as it was an easy to follow, with good climbs up and down, and mosses of many different colours due to high rain fall. Going down to the start of the Tukituki River, where the North and South branches join, is a 440 m drop. Four trampers decided to stay for a longer lunch at the fork, while 6 took 20 minutes to go up the North branch to Daphne hut, have lunch and sign the book. (2hr 48min to hut). Three of us went 20 minutes past the sign post which said 90mins Daphne hut or 45mins to Longview hut. We three had a good tramp but the other 10 had a **really good** tramp with big smiles on their faces. By the looks of their bodies though, the next day they would know they had completed a very rewarding day, the day before.

Thanks to Van Driver Syd and Navigator Audrey.

20th-21st March, 2019: Roaring Stag Overnighters with Comments from the Bottle Trackers

Trip Leader and Reporter: William Laing

Photos: Bev and Rod

The party split into three groups with the largest group travelling up the Bottle Track to Herepai Hut. A second small group went for broke and decided to tramp to Roaring Stag Hut and back in the same day. This group was met by the seven overnighters on their way back, making the trip in less than three hours one way. The seven overnighters stayed the night at Roaring Stag Hut.



Ian Ritchie comments: I was surprised now overgrown both sections of the Bottle Track were. We were there two years ago and both sections were much more open. I wonder when the main track will be re-routed. It gets worse every time I use it.

Rod McKenzie comments on the Bottle Track: A very steep clamber up from the main track on an indistinct trail with old markers. An easy walk once on to 655 but again trail overgrown making slow progress. Lunch in creek at the bottom of Bottle Track. Easy gradient up Bottles till met the main Herepai Track. Across to junction well worn. All back by 3.30.

The seven overnights made a slower trip through the lovely bush. Once at the top of the major 350 m climb, the track down was more gentle, ending in a short flat stretch along the river to the hut. One of our party promised fish for tea and set off with his rod, flies and license to catch a trout big enough to feed seven. However no luck either that night or next morning. The rest of us relaxed, swam and explored the surrounds. Not sure where the hole in the rock came from?



The hut is in excellent condition, comfortable and well set out. Our resident expert lit a fire which meant it definitely was not cold that night.

After a good nights sleep we breakfasted and made an early start along the track, arriving at the car park just after lunch. A highly enjoyable overnights. Thanks to van driver, Evan, and car drivers, Richard Lander, Richard Hunter and Ian Shipman.

Wednesday 27th March, 2019: Ridge Road, Orua Farm

Trip Leader: Rod McKenzie

Reporter: Richard Hunter



Thirty keen trampers set off to experience a visit to David and Gaewyn Grant's farm situated high up between the valleys of the Rivers Orua and Pohangina.

We welcomed Anthea, an experienced trumper new to PN, along with two visitors, Millie and Ruth (friends of a member). David greeted us on arrival and led us over 13 km of memorable countryside where we experienced wonderful views over the valleys, a mild sandstorm as the forecast strong winds arrived, great social interaction within the group, and one or two surprises that prevented anyone falling asleep or

getting bored! Those challenges were approached and overcome with careful execution by the able trampers, and I congratulate them on their efforts, well done!

The Cambridge English Dictionary describes "a walk in the park" as something that is easy to do, and usually pleasant. The latter was true for our tramp as the day was very pleasant and enjoyable, but it was certainly not "a walk in the park"!

The Ginger Bird Café co-owner, Elle, kindly remained open for us, prepared well for our numbers, and gave us a warm welcome. It was a pleasure to be able to support these young entrepreneurs.





My grateful thanks go to our host, David, who gave up his time, led us through his and two of his neighbours' farms, provided interesting narration along the journey along with some practical first aid on a member's leg wound that later required eleven stitches. The wound was, apparently, clean and the stitches come out in about a week's time.

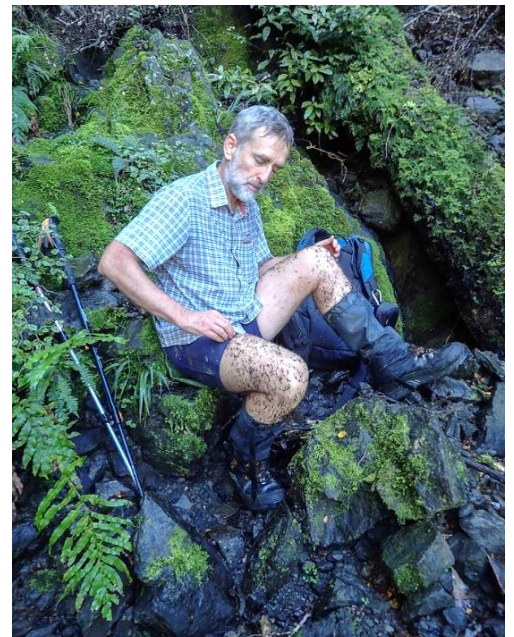
My thanks also to our drivers, Chris, Allan, Bob Ho., Anne R., Jenny and Rita. Very much appreciated.

Saturday 30th March, 2019: Holdsworth Creek

Report & Photos: Jean Garman

Last year we explored the stream that runs directly down from Mt Holdsworth. At the bottom of this stream there is another branch that runs down directly from Powell hut so it was decided the objective for this year was to check out both this stream and how the reinvention of Powell Hut was coming along.

We headed up the Atiwhakatu valley to the 1st swing bridge where we dropped into the stream and headed up the true right branch. The stream started off very prettily with many shades of green in moss, fern and leaf.



There was also some windfall, bushlawyer, cutty grass and stinging nettle, along with rampant bidibids and hook grass. *(Should have shaved your legs Adam)*

We were a little confused by a helicopter that repeatedly flew over us. Initially we thought it might be taking stuff up for the Powell hut rebuild but then we noted no underslung loads so maybe the rebuild was completed and they were opening the hut??

The stream travel wasn't overly difficult until we reached a seriously steep section. We were forced to climb on the true left of the stream to get suitable route options and to have things to hang onto. Luckily above 900m the gradient dropped off again and the moss-covered beech forest was so lovely we decided to carry on up through it.





We knew we were getting close when we spotted some small polystyrene pieces in the bush, followed by an old black water tank that was tied to a root to stop it escaping downhill. A muddy trail was crossed and we popped up directly under the hut. The outside of the enormous new Powell hut was very nearly almost fully completed, but with much more work to come on the inside so the helicopter hadn't been for the hut opening. We had a good poke around then decided just to head straight down as we were a little short of time to head up over Mt Holdsworth and down the East Holdsworth track.

Heading down the track we soon had to hop over the barrier aiming to keep people away



from the construction site – no barriers the way we came. 😊.

We found out the reason for the helicopter as we headed down the endless body abusing steps (there are more than there used to be) and were informed by a few people that there had been a wedding on top of Mt Holdsworth. Great day for it although apparently the ceremony didn't go on for too long as there was a bit of a chill breeze blowing.

All in all, a fun off track explore through some varied terrain. We were Jean, Adam and Jenny.

Sunday 7th April, 2019: Sayers Hut

Report: Jenny Mc Carthy

Adam and I set off on the track to Sayers hoping to get in and out before the forecasted rain came. The track had recently been cleared so no wet shorts from the push through the undergrowth and no trouble finding the track. It took us just over the 2.5 hours suggested on the DOC signpost at the start of the track. The hut was tidy and had been reroofed recently. The trip out was uneventful; we met 3 day trippers and their dog on their way to do a loop through Holdsworth. We did make it back to the car before it started to rain.

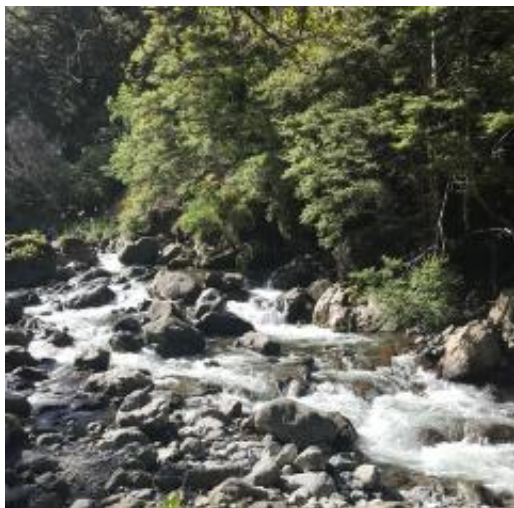
Wednesday 10th April, 2019: Atiwhakatu Hut

Trip Leader and Reporter: Bob Hargreaves

Photos: Judith and Maureen.

Nineteen trampers enjoyed the lovely~14k (return) walk to the Atiwhakatu Hut. We split into three groups, each with a radio and locator beacon. Morning tea was taken by the first swing bridge. All trampers reached the hut in time for a leisurely lunch. The weather was kind so we lunched outside the hut. Along the way we encountered runners, dog walkers, plus folk camping at Donnelly's Flat. We were also treated to several beautiful rainbows. Overall the track is in very good condition except for the big slip area which still requires some careful navigation.





It was near the big slip that a minor drama occurred. One of the trampers became aware the radio had fallen off his belt somewhere, but where? Maybe back at the hut? "Try using a radio to find the missing radio", suggested our radio expert. It worked! By talking into one radio the voice was transmitted to the missing radio eventually found near a swing bridge.

Everyone was back at the Mt Holdworth car park before 3.00pm. Thence to the Masterton ICentre for coffee, refreshments and post tramp analysis.

Thanks to van driver Evan and car drivers Christine and Rita for an enjoyable day out.

Thursday Group 3rd-5th April, 2019: Mitre Flats and Mitre

Trip Leader and Reporter: Syd Easton

Eleven of us walked in to Mitre Flats from The Pines carpark in two groups (4 and 7) on Wednesday afternoon. The forest was attractive; small orchids were flowering; the track was dry and not too rough; it was a routine 4 hour tramp. Two photo-hunters were already there so the hut was nearly full. We spent a convivial and comfortable evening and night. Some in the party heard morepork calls, rats, plus people up and down all night, some snoring. I slept well.

The next morning ten of us set off at 8.00 to head up Mitre. One stayed back, content to enjoy the walk in, the beauty of the Waingawa Valley and the two nights in the hut. Chris did a superb job of maintaining a measured steady pace we could all match. It took just over two hours to emerge from the forest, which itself was worth the trip, and then we were amongst the tussock, alpine meadows and rocks. We paused regularly to admire the view, consult cellphone GPS apps and pick out salient landmarks.

We all made the summit of Mitre right on midday, and spent nearly an hour admiring the views, having lunch and taking photos of ourselves, "because I'm not likely to ever be here again," a sentiment reflecting our average age in the upper sixties. There was no wind; wisps of cloud moved around obscuring some of the



peaks for a while, but essentially we were in the clear. We could see the Tasman Sea out over the western ridges, and the Pacific out beyond the Wairarapa. We could see Kapiti and a small sliver of ocean inside it, and the small spike above the distant cloud was Taranaki.

Shortly before 1.00 pm we began our descent, again staying together. Back in the forest, we heard the squawk and then parrotty chatter of a kaka. We reached the hut shortly before 4.30. The fire was going; we enjoyed a good brew and some snacks. The second evening

was as enjoyable as the first. Some were not quite so eager for an early night in bed. Unlike the previous night, there was a clear view of brilliant stars, though quite a narrow sky from the floor of the valley.

The walk out on Friday was again enjoyable and marked by a sighting of a kaka. We reached the car park at midday, just as it began to rain. It was raining steadily as we enjoyed a celebratory lunch together in Masterton, before heading home. One carload stopped for dessert in Eketahuna. The other cars passed on that. We were Audrey, Bev, Chris, Jenny, Judy C., Judy S., Judith T., Leonie, Margaret, Suzanne, and Syd.



Contact Details

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

Committee 2018 - 2019

President	Rob Pringle	president@mtsc.org.nz	027 426 2176
Secretary	Tim Swale	secretary@mtsc.org.nz	06 376 6556
Treasurer	Arthur Flint	treasurer@mtsc.org.nz	06 356 7654
Chief Guide	Ken Mercer	chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz	06 356 7497
Membership	Sue Nicholson	membership@mtsc.org.nz	06 357 6325
Newsletter Editor	Mary Mercer	editor@mtsc.org.nz	021 176 0209
Lodge Manager	John Lyttle	lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz	027 433 6307
Mini-Bus Manager	Ken Mercer	minibus@mtsc.org.nz	027 364 6475

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

Appointees

Lodge Bookings	Hugh & Liz Wilde	lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz	021 054 2560
Gear Custodian	Peter Rawlins	gear@mtsc.org.nz	06 356 7443
Ski Captain	Howard Nicholson	ski@mtsc.org.nz	06 357 6325
Social Convenor	Bob Hodgson	social@mtsc.org.nz	06 356 2915
Wednesday Trips	Bev Akers	bevakers@xtra.co.nz	06 325 8879
Thursday Trips	Merv Matthews	merv6817@gmail.com	06 357 2858
Facebook	Ivan Rienks, Karen Tutt, Howard Nicholson	facebook@mtsc.org.nz	

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 021 054 2560. To confirm your booking, payment must be made by cash to 179 Cook St Palmerston North 4410 in person or internet payment (please email to confirm before depositing) Westpac account number 03 1521 022035300.

	Members	Guests	The lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860.
Adult	\$37	\$52	
Secondary School	\$30	\$45	
Primary School	\$25	\$40	
Pre-school (3-5 yo)	\$12	\$12	

Booking the MTSC Van: For bookings: Contact Ken Mercer 027 364 6475. 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.