

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 8 October 2019



Club meetings are held on the 1st Tuesday of the month at the Rose City Aquatic Club Rooms, 50 Park Street, Palmerston North (next to the Lido). Meetings begin at 7.30pm.

Tuesday 1st October: Interclub Photo Competition

7.30 pm at Rose City Aquatic Clubrooms (next to the Lido), 50 Park Road, Palmerston North

Hosted by MTSC. Enjoy tea and biscuits while viewing this year's best images from the MTSC, PNTMC and MUAC competitions. An invited judge will comment on the images and choose the prize-winning entries. Prizes have been provided by Hunting & Fishing NZ, Bivouac, Macpac, Bruce Watt Photography and New World Summerhill.

Tuesday 5th November: What happens when you activate a PLB?



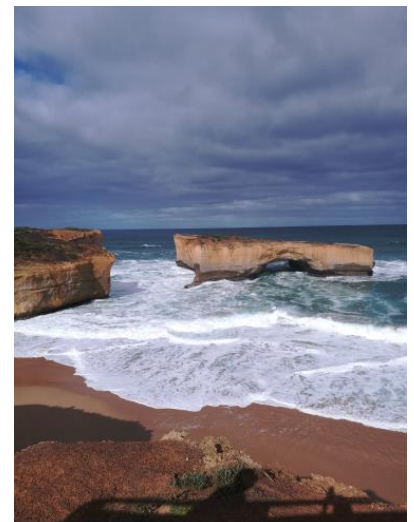
John Ashby and Chris Henshaw are Senior Search and Rescue Officers at the **Rescue Coordination Centre NZ** where they have worked for the past 15 and 10 years respectively. In the role he has acted as a **Search Mission Coordinators** for major sea, land and air based incidents. John and Chris will present a brief overview of RCCNZ and the SAR system, talk about activation and use of Personal



Locator Beacons, and discuss some real life saving scenarios.

Tuesday 3rd December: Walk and Dinner

For our December Club night and end of year function the plan is to meet at 6.00pm and walk for approximately one hour before going to dinner. Why not get a group of your fellow trampers together and either walk and have dinner or just join us for dinner. The dinner venue is yet to be confirmed. All welcome



REPORTS AND NOTICES

MTSC President: Rob Pringle

president@mtsc.org.nz

Another month is upon us, and for the keen skiers amongst us, October signals the conclusion of the ski season and the beginning of the tramping season. With spring here, it is pleasantly refreshing to have the longer days and evenings allowing us to enjoy the region more. For those of you for whom the tramping season has not stopped or slowed, I admire your tenacity and your eagerness to get out in the hills. It's fantastic to see strong groups such as the Wednesday and Thursday trampers going out so regularly and including so many people.

Over the past month I've managed to spend a few weekends hanging out at the club hut. Evenings spent at the ski lodge on Mt Ruapehu are filled with never-ending dialogue across wide variety of subjects with an amazing variety of people from all sorts of back grounds. One of the highlights was spending an afternoon outside in the snow building an igloo. Over the years I've been fortunate to have a few adventures out and about in the snow, building snow caves, ski touring, climbing, camping, to name a few. On a particularly average ski day recently I retired early to the lodge to be met by an enthusiastic group who were keen to build an igloo. Foundations were laid, size was agreed, and we set to cutting blocks from the snow pack to construct. The snow on this particular weekend seemed to be just perfect for creating blocks suitable for igloo creation – with a firm layer approximately 15cm deep. For those of you who have any sort of building / practical bent, you'll appreciate that the vertical section of wall (albeit curved) on an igloo is relatively straightforward, with blocks laid with joints staggered, while the roof section is a little more challenging, as it is built with nothing to support it.

Question was soon raised as to how we were to form the roof. To aid with the structural integrity, Peter Rawlins kindly 'volunteered' his recently acquired skis, which were used to bridge the opening above the entrance and to support the roof, while the snow 'sets up' and refreezes together, allowing it to support its



own weight. From here, the skis could be slid out, and a new section of roof constructed. Steady progress was made as the patch of daylight above the igloo got smaller and smaller, with the final blocks able to be passed up, and skis returned to Peter, before the interior and minor holes were plastered to provide a wind- and weather-tight finish.

Obligatory selfies were taken, high fives slapped, Facebook post was shared, and discussion turned to whether anyone could survive in the igloo. A couple of keen members decided to give it a crack, while another couple of equally keen members

headed to a nearby snow cave that had been created behind the lodge. Hot chocolates were drunk and birthday cake consumed prior to curling up inside respective sleeping areas to see how long and how cold a night on the mountain could be. I was pleasantly surprised to see how warm it was inside the snow cave, as well as the total silence from the wind outside. A fair night's sleep was had, and I awoke in time (and wifi distance) to check the morning ski report.

For those who've not yet had an opportunity, while this season is drawing to a close, I'd really recommend getting out. An environment like the lodge offers a safe haven of retreat should the prospect of sleeping in an igloo / snow cave not work out for you. It also offers some great opportunities that I for one don't come across in my everyday life. Season passes will soon be on sale for the 2020 season, and I'd encourage you to consider these for the coming year – they have historically offered a great value for money way of interacting with the mountain.

As usual, take care out there, and see you same time, same place, next month.

Rob

First Tracks

ski@mtsc.org.nz

The Whakapapa and Turoa ski areas are open until 28 October 2019. Springtime offers some of the best skiing on Mt Ruapehu and with an upper mountain snow base of around 2.5m, I expect the lifts will be open until Labour Weekend.

We had a slow start to the season, with no snow until after the July school holidays and then persistent storms that kept the field shut for many days during August. I hear that there are spaces still available at the Lodge and you have the opportunity to make up for lost time. This past weekend was a perfect example of the best in Ruapehu Spring skiing. We had 2 perfect days, the queues were not too bad and several members made the trek to the crater followed by a 1000m-plus descent back to the carpark. Memories are made of this!

Howie



Chief Guide

chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz



Recently a club member broke their ankle on a tramp so another member set off their PLB so the injured party was evacuated by helicopter. As well as showing the value of carrying a PLB it has given us a chance to review and improve our procedures.

The rescue coordination center (RCC) first called the contact registered with the PLB, which did cause her family some concern until the situation was clarified for them. Meantime RCC did some detective work and found that the injured person was on a MTSC trip, looked at the website and called the president, Rob. Unfortunately Rob doesn't receive the intentions email, and three of us who do happened to be back country skiing in the South Island, out of phone range. Of course RCC still sent the helicopter, However we have now included Rob, Tim, the secretary, and Bev, the day trip coordinator, on the intentions list.

If required, the email will be forwarded to RCC to give them as much information as possible.

To speed up RCC making the connection between a personal beacon and the MTSC you can ask RCC to add a note to your file in the notes field. Mine currently mentions Tramping, Kayaking etc and I have asked that www.mtsc.org.nz be added to this field.

RCC have agreed to talk to us all at a club night. This is scheduled for the November meeting and I, for one, am looking forward to it.

Ken

Iron Gate Closure Delay

Iron Gate Hut replacement has been delayed. NZ Defence Force now plan to commence work in September. In the meantime the hut is open for use.

Sue Moore

Senior Ranger (Biodiversity)- Kaitiaki Matua (Kanorau Koiora). DoC-Te Papa Atawhai Te Papaioea / Palmerston North Office

28 North Street or Private Bag 11010, Palmerston North 4440.

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

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

We welcome Cheryl Dawson, Daniel Lynch and David Schaaf and family to the club.



UPCOMING TRIPS

October Wednesday Tramps			October Thursday Tramps		
02	Carol Kennerley	329 9694	03	Syd Easton	D 356 7462
09	Bev Akers	325 8879	10	Richard Ellis	357 6410
16	Ewen Cameron	022 034 1180	17	Geraldine Fovakis	356 4327
23	Allan Rae	358 3962	24	David Grant	D 328 7788
30	Richard Hunter	357 6821	31	Wayne Lincoln	D 021 068 5237
October Weekend Trips					
7 Sun	Poutaki Hut	Medium	Adam Matich	022 358 8062	
19-20	Herepai Hut	Easy	Tim Swale	022 134 8384	
26-27	Mukamuka Stream/ Paptahi Loop	Med/Fit	Adam Matich	022 358 8062	
26-28	Ski/Camp: Mangaturuturu Glacier	Technical	Ken Mercer	027 364 6475	

Trip Intentions: The email address for leaving trip intentions is intentions@mtsc.org.nz. Intentions sent to this address will not be acted upon UNLESS a party is reported overdue (e.g. by a family member, flatmate, friend, etc). The email is sent to several MTSC members. This information will be provided to Land SAR/RCC only if the party is reported overdue or a MTSC-owned PLB is activated. The email should include: a list of participants and their contact details; a brief description of the intended route and possible alternative routes; starting point; start date; date/time due out; vehicle registration; and any other relevant details.

Sunday 7th October, 2019: Poutaki Hut

Adam Matich Medium 022 358 8062

Poutaki Hut is the only hut in the Wakarara Range and is accessed from the Wakarara Road end on the Makaroro River.

Immediately after our two-hour drive we get wet feet crossing and heading a little way down river to the first stream confluence on the true left. We head upstream to Makaroro Road to Leatherwood Road, and finally the Poutaki Track which initially is quite steep. It will probably take 2-2.5 hours to reach the hut for a slightly late lunch.

19th- 20th October, 2019: Herepai Hut

Tim Swale Easy 022 134 8384

This easy overnight trip will give us a chance to practise some off track navigation skills. From Putara Road near Eketahuna, we cross the first swing-bridge and then head directly uphill on a compass bearing to high point 655m. Some easy off track terrain through the forest takes us to the creek just south of Ruapea Falls. Following the creek downstream we will locate the bottom of the old Bottles Track that leads up to Herepai Hut, a basic 10 bunk hut, where we will spend the night. You will need to be fully self-sufficient with cooking

and overnight gear and prepared for all weather possibilities. The route out on Sunday will be down the main track, although if there is enthusiasm within the group, we may head up to Herepai summit first. The distances and times are not great, so this trip is suitable for anyone starting out on overnight tramping and wanting something a bit more than a walk along a path.

26th to 27th October, 2019: Mukamuka Stream-Papatahi Loop (Remutaka Forest Park)

Adam Matich

Medium/Fit

022 358 8062

This no-rain-allowed trip involves a 2.5 hour drive down to the coast west of Lake Ferry. We will walk along the coast, from Wharepapa River mouth, and then head up Mukamuka stream to the South Saddle. After a side trip to Mt Matthews we will drop down into the Orongorongo River and head up-river a little way to find somewhere to camp for the night (You will need camping gear for this). On day two we will take the Papatahi Crossing to Wharepapa Hut and follow the river back down to the coast.



Wednesday 21st August, 2019: Six Discs & Broken Leg Tramp

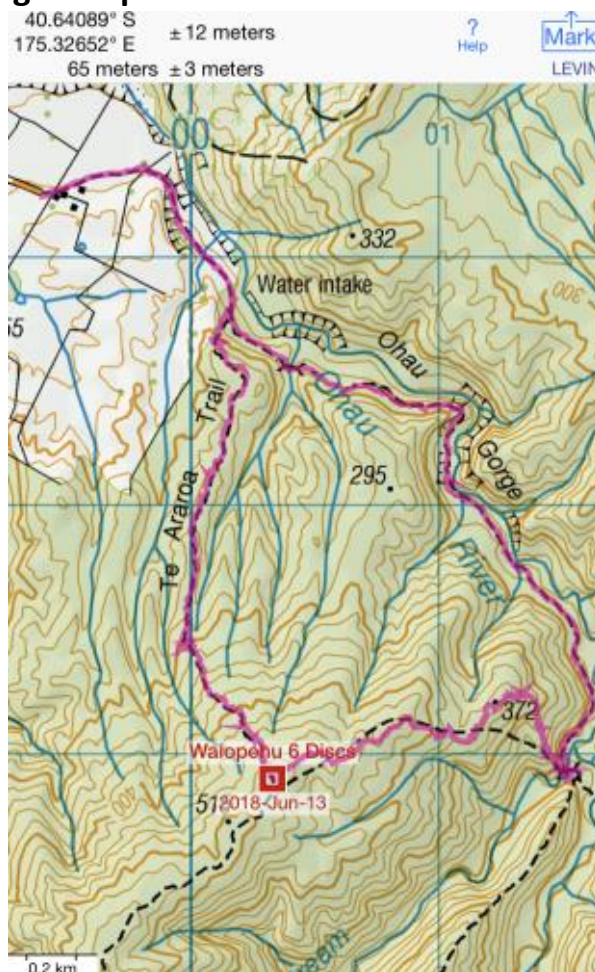
Trip Leader: William Laing

Photos: William

Sixteen trampers set off to do the six disks track anticlockwise, ie up the Waiopehu track to the intersection with the six disks track, down the hill to join the Ohau river track. The plan was also for a shorter tramp for those wanting an easier alternative to go up river over the bridge, lunch on the river bank and return the same route. Those wanting a hill climb, were to join the others for lunch at the river bank, and then all to return via the river. Everyone was to be back by 3:00pm at the latest, probably back by 2:00pm in time for coffee and cake.

It was raining gently when we set off, four choosing the river route, 16 the round uphill route. PLBs and radios were distributed among the groups and we squelched our way across the farmland which seemed even wetter and more pugged than on previous trips. DOC permits dogs on leash, but we were lucky not to have brought our miniature schnauzer, Elke, as she would have been submersed completely in the mud. The river track is mostly well formed, with humps and drops into side streams, some patches of mud and slippery rock. The hill climb was not so bad, a typical Tararua climb with morning tea at the start of the downward six disks track. The bush was glistening in the wet, with not much undergrowth. However the downward leg was steep and muddy and slippery.

Disaster struck at about 11:30 am about 160 vertical meters and 400 horizontal above the river. One of our party slipped and trapped her foot in a hole. As she said, "I knew it was broken". The question was what to



do. We knew she had badly hurt herself, but we were in among thick tall trees on a steep slope (about 25 degree), steeper in places, sometimes flat, sometimes logs and rocks to get over. There was no way a



helicopter could even hover there. We knew there was a clearing by the river for helicopter access, and cell phone coverage was about an hour and a half away back at the car park. The injured trapper felt she could scoot down the hill to the river track and it was not far from there to the clearing, so several of the party set off to the clearing to activate a PLB and call in the rescue helicopter. The rest of us, about ten people, escorted the injured trapper slowly down the hill to the river track, and rescue. In spite of her what turns out to be severely messed up broken leg near her ankle, the injured trapper was amazingly stoic, not complaining in spite of the

obvious pain when she put her foot to the ground. She scooted down the hill wearing her rain trousers, leaving a snail train behind her. The mud was thick in places, slippery clay in other places, the rain continuing although it seemed to be finishing. Various people supported her over logs and stones under fallen trees and down larger drops, but most of the effort was hers! We reached the river about two hours after the accident and the rain finally stopped. We had heard through the radio that the PLB had been set off so we had lunch and allowed the injured trapper to recover her strength. She did not eat much, showing what a strain the effort had been.



We then helped her along the path, watched her crawl over the bridge and up the path to the clearing to wait for the helicopter. It came quickly and lowered a professional to ready the injured trapper for winching back to the helicopter. The noise and wind was immense, bending the branches of the trees and sending anything not tied down flying. The rest of us then scurried back to the car park along the river path to

arrive back at 3:30 pm, only half an hour late.



This tramp shows the importance of being properly equipped.

1. Having a PLB
2. Having two way radios
3. Bringing proper clothing e.g. rain trousers to slide in
4. Having some pain relief anti inflammatory mild drugs (Panadol etc)
5. Having crepe bandages to bind the leg

It also shows the power of group decisions, and including the injured party. All decisions were made after group discussion which took into account of what the injured party could do. Apart from this accident, people enjoyed the first half of the tramp and the wonderful bush, but not the mud. A DOC ranger I was talking to did say they recognised that the track was substandard and needed maintenance, especially as some of it is the Te Araroa trail. Thanks to all who helped our injured tramper in various ways, to Ewen as van driver and Robyn and Rita as car drivers.

William Laing



24th-25th August, 2019: Roaring Stag (not Neil Forks) Hut

Trip Leader and Reporter: Adam Matich



This was chosen as an alternative due to the lack of winter tramping by me...a fitness issue. To make this easy option a bit longer and harder we did not go in by the direct route. At the junction we turned right towards Herepai Hut and continued on until we came to the Bottles track marker, where we turned around and went back to the start of the old overgrown track down to Ruapae Stream (it's the only way I can find it). We followed the track until it disappeared onto a slip and then followed the edge of the slip until we could clamber down into the stream which we followed all the way down to Ruapae stream. Travel

down Ruapae Stream was easy with lots of trails in the bush, which really weren't needed as it is a lovely open stream bed most of the way. To make sure we didn't get to the hut too soon we set off on a compass bearing to find the hidden lake, and we were successful. It was easy. It took us a bit longer to find our way back to the Ruapae stream by heading through the forest down to the confluence, and then a clamber up to the track and along to the hut for afternoon tea. It took us about 5.5 hours to get to the hut by this route. We spent some of the afternoon cutting up firewood so we had plenty for the night, and next morning cleaned up the hut and took out a bag of rubbish as the hut was looking a bit untidy. The journey out was uneventful and even shorter, and fortunately we had more shade as it had been a bit too sunny on the way in. We were Neil Mercer, Adam Matich and Jenny McCarthy



Wednesday 28th August, 2019: Totara Reserves

Trip leader & Reporter: Bob Hodgson

Photos: Maureen

The day was mild and dry with a forecasted high of 15C and so it proved to be. Twenty one trampers, variously starting from Palmerston North, Feilding and Dannevirke, converged on the upper entrance of the Pettifar loop for an 8-45 start. We anticipated wet and muddy tracks. Once down the 49 steps we soon discovered that given recent weather, the tracks were remarkably dry and that the Pohangina River was in rather low flow. This made for unexpectedly rapid progress. We enjoyed the kahikatea-dominated forest in the wetter areas and the old totara-dominated forest in the drier areas. An early morning tea was taken



sitting on a large log in the river bed after a muddy scramble down a bank and across a side stream for the Gilchrist track. Progress was easier than expected though the passage along the vehicle track paralleling the Pohangina Valley East road was muddier than the earlier sections. The theory was advanced that the areas near to the river were regularly covered in easy draining coarse river sand and so not as inclined to be muddy. We soon reached the lower road entrance to the tracks and the end of the Gilchrist and start of the

Pettifar which we then followed as it meandered back to the 49 steps and our vehicles.



View over Pettifar Loop bush

Next we motored the few kilometres to the camp for an early lunch and the luxury of shelters, seating and flush toilets. Then we made our way back down the road to the carpark for the Fern Walk. Although higher than the river flats of the morning the fern walk was much muddier. After less than two hours of views of the old totara, rimu and rata, not to mention the ferns, the party re-emerged and we made our way to the Herb Farm Cafe near Ashhurst for a well-deserved coffee stop. This was a gentle tramp of about 12km and a total height gain/loss of about 180m. No dramas just nice bush views good company and



Lovely textured bark

muddy boots!

Thanks to drivers Robbie, Chris, Marion and Cheryl.

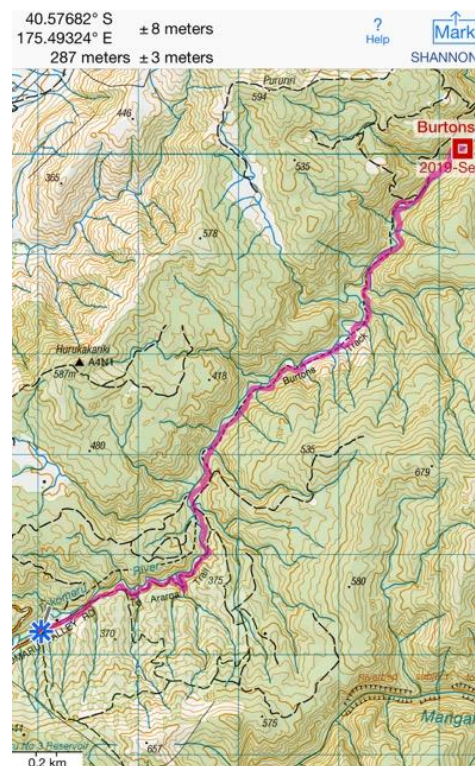
Wednesday 4th September: Burrton's Track

Trip Leader and Reporter: Christine Finnigan

27 trampers travelled up Mangahao Rd and onto Tokomaru Valley Rd. A car park is positioned by the barrier arms at the start of the walk. This is part of the Te Araroa trail and runs through from Mangahao Rd to Scott's Rd. Our walk took us 500m up the metal road to where the walking track veers off to the left. The metal road has a new shelter (Tokomaru shelter). It is a basic shelter of corrugated iron with an enclosed room and lean-to. Inside there is a table and 4 chairs - enough to get out of the weather!

This track meanders along the Tokomaru river, in and out of regrowth bush, with a few areas of prickly gorse. We lunched at the historic site of Burrton's whare, about half way to Scott's Rd. We returned to cars via the same route with all out by 3pm. For a day that promised rain and wind, we had some light drizzle and spots of sun. This is a sheltered valley with beautiful ferns and bush and minimal climb.

Thanks to our drivers, Robbie, Bob, Jenny, Chris and Rod.



Wednesday 18th September: Otangane Loop - Arawaru Trig

Trip Leader and Reporter: Linda Darbyshire

Photos: David Cushing and Linda

The track starts at the Naenae Road end. We were gifted with blue sky, warm weather and no wind!! The plan was for a faster more experienced group to take the route to Arawaru Trig, and the rest of us to climb the hill and walk the Otangane loop including Pukenaenae trig (the Nipple).

The track begins on farmland. Firstly there's a stream to cross in which some got wet feet, followed by a muddy climb to the bush. A couple of stiles are crossed and you meet another stream and follow it up a steep slippery hill through bush with a couple more shallow crossings. Quite a few steps have been installed along the track up, up, and up, and orange paint sprayed on rocks and trees help navigate the way. It took approx. 1.30 hrs for the whole group to get to the Otangane loop junction where we regrouped as planned.



At this point some decided they wouldn't complete the 3hr loop but instead go part way and return to the road. Many of us stopped at Pukenaenae to enjoy the view given the perfect weather.

The loop track has overgrown grass in parts so watching your footing was paramount. Other parts of the track have been mowed and are easy to follow. There are some quite open flat areas and it is easy to wander off track as one trumper found out. Thankfully that person stopped, blew their whistle to draw attention and were soon found.

The group visiting the Arawaru trig took approx. 6-7hrs. Tramping the loop from Naenae Road takes approx. 6 hrs.

While leading a group you become conscious of how all decisions made individually impact on others and determine the outcome of a day in the bush. Reducing risk is a responsibility of the whole group. If we ask ourselves: Do I know which route I'm tramping today? Can I ensure I'm walking with people of a similar pace to myself and in groups of at least 4? If I'm not sure about this, start with a slow paced group and work your way up. Can I keep the person behind me in sight? Do I know how many people I'm tramping with and regroup from time to time? Is the group taking breaks to eat and drink? If I change my mind during the trip have I communicated this to the leader?

The Wednesday group is large and leading is helped when members communicate their intentions. Thanks to those who did this on my lead. Thanks too for the photos, and those who drove vehicles.

Thursday 25th July: Burrton's Track

Trip Leader and Reporter: Hugh Wilde

Photos: Pak Lam Yu

This trip was scheduled for the Coppermine Loop but we discovered at



the last minute that the Coppermine Track was closed owing to slips. Instead Burrton's Track from the south end was decided upon. Starting the walk from the north, or a crossover from both ends and swapping transport, wasn't an option as there was insufficient time to obtain the gate key, and nobody really wants to walk from Scotts Road if they can ride.



Seventeen of us turned up at the Tokomaru Rd carpark. The day was sunny but cool. The track started out muddy with plenty of overhanging gorse. However, the 'race horses' went ahead and were first to push the overhanging damp vegetation aside for the rest of us. Progress during the day varied. Many got to the Tokomaru River before returning; fewer got near to the river and some not quite that far. On the return walk there was opportunity to inspect the new long-drop toilet (built in Dave's garage by Dave and John D) and the

rather spartan shelter—a converted former farm building. From all accounts everybody enjoyed the day and arrived home at a reasonable hour.



Contact Details

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

Committee 2019 - 2020

President	Rob Pringle	president@mtsc.org.nz	027 426 2176
Secretary	Tim Swale	secretary@mtsc.org.nz	06 376 6556
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Mini-Bus Manager	Ken Mercer	minibus@mtsc.org.nz	027 364 6475

General Committee: John Beech, William Laing, Richard Lander, Howard Nicholson, Peter Rawlins

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	Linda Campbell	social@mtsc.org.nz	027 333 4493
Wednesday Trips	Bev Akers	bevakers@xtra.co.nz	06 325 8879
Thursday Trips	Merv Matthews	merv6817@gmail.com	06 357 2858
Facebook	Ivan Rienks, Rob Pringle, 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	\$40	\$58	
Secondary School	\$32	\$48	
Primary School	\$26	\$42	
Pre-school (3-5 yo)	\$13	\$13	

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.