

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 9 November 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 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 this role they have acted as **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 we will meet at the children's playground car park at the Esplanade, off Fitzherbert Avenue at 6.00pm. From there we will walk the bridge to bridge loop crossing the Fitzherbert Bridge first and returning over the He Ara Kotahi Bridge. This walk is approx. 4km long. After our walk we will head to Angkor Restaurant, 4 Coleman Place, Palmerston North for a 7.30pm dinner. Vegetarian mains available. Mains range from around \$18 to \$25. BYO.



Why not get a group of your fellow trampers together and either walk and have dinner or just join us for dinner. All welcome.

So that she can book for everyone, please let Linda know on or before Tuesday 26 November if you will be joining us for dinner. Phone/text 027 333 4493 or email lindammc@xtra.co.nz



Tuesday February 4, 2020: Navigation

It is important to know where you are and where you are heading when you are out tramping.

Tim Swale, club member and Outdoor Training New Zealand instructor, will share navigation tips to help you in the hills. He will cover basic map and compass skills. Maps and compasses will be provided to use on the night.



MTSC President: Rob Pringle

president@mtsc.org.nz

Daylight savings is upon us and the settling of the weather is well - may be - upon us soon. While the ski season is drawing to a close, as an offer of goodwill the Valley T bar will stay open for the weekends in November, albeit with reduced operational hours. Check the Ruapehu website for additional details. As mentioned last month season passes are on sale now too - with varying price points and offers available.

As the days lengthen, it's been really good to get out and enjoy a few evenings in the hills. I've been fortunate enough to spend a couple of evenings up on the summit plateau in some superb weather and company. The skiing highlight of my season would have to be standing on the col between Paretaitonga and Dome with Charlotte, Isaac, and Hazel.

We had a postcard bluebird day for the trip and made our way up through Restful Ridge over to the Whakapapa glacier. All of us were stoked to be there and followed it up with an amazing ski down through 'Black Magic,' a section of the ski area that has been out of action for most of the ski season due to storms and lift damage - virtually untouched 'corn harvesting' took place all the way to the bottom of the Far West chairlift - where we uploaded to retreat to the Knoll cafe for some well deserved snacks. For those who have the inclination, I'd encourage you to get out and have a go. It's a glorious part of the mountain.



Coming into November my thoughts have also turned to summer months - camping trips , swimming at the beach and mountain biking trips are all on the calendar. Check out the trip card to ensure you are able to take full advantage of any club trips that are going.

For a number of years now I have been using the DOC website for planning summer camping missions. DOC campsites offer an affordable way to get out and see the country for well below commercial campsite rates. I've found the majority to be clean tidy and well-kept, as well as being in some fantastic locations. There are always friendly and interesting people to strike up conversations with as well. Camping can range from two person foam-squab sleeping - to fifth wheel style, self-contained 'glamping' and everything in between. It's there for all ages and abilities and can be a great way to bring people together.

For those of you who haven't quite got your fill of skiing for the year, RAL have advised that gondola access to the upper mountain will be provided for ski touring / self propelled uphill travel over summer - provided a waiver is signed at customer services. - Clubs have been reminded that, over the summer, the ski field will not have a functional Medical Centre or ability to recover people above the ski field so, if any trouble is encountered, first port of call should be to 111.

Over the weekend of 19/20 October, I attended the AGM for Ruapehu Mountain Clubs Association (RMCA). One of the take-outs from this was that club members should be prepared. There have been a number of instances, over the season, with guests of clubs on the mountain arriving with inappropriate equipment and/or being unsure of how to access the lodge they're residing in. We, as clubs, have been strongly encouraged to engage with our membership and guests of members to ensure people arrive with appropriate gear, and know where to go to access the club huts. A great way to do this in relatively safety is a trip up during the summer months. The roads are clearer, occupancies of the lodge is generally lower, and weather more settled. There are some great tramping and mountain biking trips in the area and the lodge makes a great place to base yourself and enjoy the park. If you haven't been up yet I'd encourage you to take an opportunity. Grab a few friends and make a weekend of it.

Have a great month out there.

Rob

Lodge Manager John Lyttle

lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz

After a late start to the season and after good snow falls, weather has not always been favourable for skiers with many 'closed' or poor weather weekends. This has, unfortunately, resulted in a drop in occupancy levels at the lodge this season.

Before the next season, the lodge sub-committee, consisting of myself, Rob Pringle, Peter Rawlins, Ivan Rienks, Ken Mercer and Howie Nicholson, are planning to complete the work that was included in the building consent that covered the upgrade of the downstairs drying room. Work this year will be dependent on obtaining funding from outside the club. It will consist of finishing the firewall between the bedrooms and the central lounge, extending one of the bedrooms into the front foyer and a total upgrade of the toilets. We will also be finishing the work we started.

Given the amount of volunteer help needed for this work and based on last year's experience, we are looking to engage outside contractors to assist in getting the work done and remove the need for so much of members' time. Also, due to the amount of time traveling to attend weekend work parties we have decided to run week long work parties so people can attend for the whole work party or just one or two days. Any one that helps on these 'weekends' gets to stay and eat at the lodge for free. Help can be provided in the many forms such as cooking and cleaning and does not necessarily mean doing building work.

Work parties for this coming summer are as follows:

23 Nov to 1 Dec 2019

01 Feb to 9 Feb 2020

Easter 2020

Please put these dates in your diary and let me know if you are able to attend and help in any way.

John Lyttle

027 4336307

In the event of an emergency on Mt Ruapehu within the ski area boundary during operational hours the phone numbers to call are:

Turoa 06 385 8456

Whakapapa 07 892 4000

If you cannot reach us then dial 111 if you have an emergency.

Sunday 17th November, 2019: Toe Toe Loop

Ewen Cameron

Easy

022 034 1180

The trip will depart from Memorial Park at 8:00am and head towards the Kahuterawa car park. From the carpark, we'll head up the Sledge track and Elevation to the sign at the top of this section of track where, if it's a nice day, we'll get some good views. After a short break, we'll head up the track, towards the Otangane loop to the 550m point where the Toe Toe loop branches off to the left. We'll progress anticlockwise around the Toe Toe and the Platinum mine loops, allowing some time for those that want to and who bring a torch to have a look into the mines, before heading back up to the top of the Elevation. The return to the carpark will follow the same route as we took in. At an appropriate time and place we'll have a lunch break.



Wednesday 11th September, 2019: Towards Maharahara from the East

Trip Leader and Reporter: Ewen Cameron

Sixteen trampers left the shelter of the trees at the Kumeti road end to tramp up the stream before following the track upwards. The un-forecasted blast of cold wintry air down the valley did not provide the sort of start to the day we wished for, nor did the river's slightly higher level. It meant that instead of accomplishing the many river crossings with dry feet, as I had managed a week or so earlier during my recce, we all suffered some degree of wetness early in the day.

Most managed to keep this to just wet feet, but one of our group took a tumble and began the day rather wetter than is comfortable. While many of us wrapped up as warmly as we could and sheltered downstream in some scrub, a change of clothes was managed and we were able to head on and up the big climb to the ridge.

By the time all of us had got to a nice sheltered tree on the ridge, the "fast four" (William, Dennis, Peter and Evan) were ready to head off to see how far they could get. The rest of us stuck together. Rain seemed imminent and the wind was still cold, but the group wanted to see how far we could get. It remained cold and cloudy, but the rain held off. We got some views on the ridge as we headed up but once we began tramping through snow, it began to sleet and some people started feeling the effects of wet feet: this was not a tramp for cloth/light boots. We progressed up to the leatherwood, but with worsening weather, we decided to turn back. The "fast four" made it to the Kiritaki turn off but also found it tough going in the snow and turned round to head out. As is often the case, as soon as we turned round to head out, the weather began to improve. By the time we reached the tree where we'd had morning tea, it was sunny. We decided to stop and enjoy the best part of the weather the day had to offer before heading back down the ridge, back through the river, where the water seemed much warmer than it was in the morning, to get back to the cars to change and head home.



Note to self: just because the weather on the recce is great don't assume it will be OK on the day. Thanks to the drivers and photographers.

Sunday 15th September, 2019: Escarpment Walk

Trip Leader and Reporter: Jenny McCarthy

This was an easy walk with wonderful coastal views on a good day. Although not a brilliantly sunny day we did have views out to Kapiti Island. The sea was pounding on the shore and this was an added bonus as the waves drowned out the traffic noise from the road below. There was also a wonderful collecting of flowering weeds that we duly admired. The numbers of new native plantings are impressive though some of them had been browsed by animals. We did see some sheep in the area. We had an enjoyable walk to the train station at Pukerua Bay where we caught the train back to Paekakariki. There we had a late lunch at a café: a good way to spend a Sunday.

We were Jenny Steve Jean Adam and Tony

21st-22nd September, 2019: Rangipo Hut

Trip Leader, Reporter and Photographer: Adam Matich

A leisurely 2 3/4 hours was taken to sidle around the mountain from the Tukino ski field road, with some considerable complaint from the troops because there was almost no snow. The Whangaehu River was so low it was possible to cross with dry feet without the aid of the bridge.



We arrived at the hut early afternoon and, out of desperation, went for an hour's walk up above the hut to be able to honestly claim we walked in the snow. There were quite a lot of other people there, from WTMC and some from Tauranga, who were more energetic than us and had done a day climb of the mountain from the



hut. Fortunately we got back from our walk in time for a proper afternoon tea and to spy on the activities of the army down below and report them to our masters in Indonesia and China. Our return to the car park the next day was only marred by a little bit too much sun and not enough breeze to keep us cool.

We were Bernadette Heaphy, Jenny Mccarthy, Helen Peek, and Adam Matich

Wednesday 2nd October, 2019: Toka –Deerford/Shorts/Knights Tracks

Trip Leader and Reporter Carole Kennerley

Photos: Leanne Davidson

On a wet and cold "spring day", 22 gallant trampers headed off in the direction of Deerford Loop, Shorts/Knights tracks. Conditions were such that any aspirations to get to the trig at Toka were soon canned! With rain in our faces we set off from the carpark across farmland to the first river crossing. This proved tricky for those trying to keep their feet dry, with slippery surfaces, rising river levels and saw one walking pole go floating downstream in a torrent never to be seen again!

The majority of the group completed the Deerford Loop in an anti-clockwise direction, and nine trampers headed up the Shorts Track in two groups, into the





snow until the 'fresh breezes' took the wind chill factor down a few notches, especially on the open ridges above the bushline, and decisions were made to turn around and have lunch at the junction.

A quick phone call to the Apiti pub from the carpark, resulted in a fresh batch of cheese scones being made, and a warm welcome from the hosts with the home fire roaring and good coffee to offset the tramping chills. Thanks to Ewen for doing the recee with me and for driving the van, also to other drivers, Chris and Marion.

Hope to repeat this tramp in better conditions for my Feb 2020 lead.

Thursday 3rd October, 2019: Pukeatua Track

Trip Leader: Syd Easton

Photos: John Brock



Saturday 5th October, 2019: Poutaki Hut

Trip Leader: Adam Matich

Reporter and photographer: Nicola Wallace

Adam wisely changed the day of this trip from Sunday to Saturday as a good dump of rain was predicted late Saturday, which would mean a high Makaroro River on Sunday.

We arrived at the end of Mill Road, with a few raindrops on the windscreen, and black cloud over the Ruahine and Whakarara Ranges. That was the last of the rain for this tramp though. Since there was no actual carpark, we parked at the start of the poled track, which led down a grassy hill, with nice scratchy blackberry, and easily crossed the Makaroro River. A stint in the bush led to Howard giving me an arm pull up a bank, when I couldn't get a foot hold. Soon we came to a lovely little track that took us up the hill to Makaroro Road. It was a very pleasant cruise up the road, with its long straights, very gentle uphill gradient, with the wind hissing through the pine trees and the occasional songs of Tomtits and Grey Warblers. At one point we came across a broken walking pole slap bang in the middle of the road. Soon we got to Leatherwood Rd turnoff, a large DOC sign pointing the way to Poutaki Hut. A short morning tea, a conversational climb up Leatherwood Road, and we arrived at road's end and the start of the track. 1hr 30mins to the hut according to the DOC sign here.

After a very short, steep descent we crossed a tiny stream, then oh boy was it steep! The hardest kind of steep too, with no tree roots to form natural steps. So it was like a very steep ramp, with occasional rocky bits to go up. Woe betide me with my inflexible ankles. But the track was in very good condition, and dry. This area reminded me very much of the Kawekas. After close to 200m of nearly vertical climb, there were some flatter bits, where a great view of the Ruahines to the left could be enjoyed if you could stay upright. The NW wind was very strong, as Adam had predicted.

After sidling round a hill, and more climbing we reached the aerial and solar panel studded Poutaki Peak (1020m ASL). From here the track dropped steeply to the hut – a lovely orange little Forest Service 4 bunker



in a grassy clearing. We were well sheltered from the wind down here, and lunched outside the hut on the grass. Inside the hut, a sleeping bag hung from the rafters, along with a bag of freeze dried and other food. The hut book indicated that no one had visited since 22 September.

It had taken nearly 3 hours to get to the hut (mostly due to me being slow), but the walk back was much quicker. I found getting down the track's steep bits tricky, and it was hard on the knees even with 2 poles. The wind was stronger than it had been on the way up. It was good to get down to the stream, up the hill and back onto the road. Once down to the bottom end of

Makaroro Road, we found the good little track we'd come upon that morning, and by following it unfailingly we were led back to the mighty Makaroro. By now it was very warm out in the sun, and a little humid too. Black rain clouds hung over the Ruahines. The water was warm, and soon we were back at the car, after collecting more blackberry scratches on the way up the hill.

Many thanks to Adam and Howard for the convivial company, and Adam for leading the trip and driving.

Wednesday 9th October, 2019: Waihohonu Hut

Trip leader & Reporter: Bev Akers

Photos: Bev Akers

Wow what a glorious day !!

We were a bus load of ten from PN, carload of five from Feilding, carload of five starting from Summerhill & two keen ladies from Dannevirke.



Thanks to the drivers coz it was about a 2.5 hr drive with a meet up at Waiouru, some relieving themselves, some refueling from the local store.

Come on guys, less talking. Let's go tramping. The view of Mt Ruapahu was glistening as far back as Linton when I left home at 7am. We were in for a perfect day temperature wise as the high at Waiouru was going to be 17 degrees. The car park was full. Yes, it's school holidays. As it was,



Old Waihohonu Hut



we followed a large group going in ahead of us. We had various options for the day. Some went beyond the Hut, up on the track that takes you towards Oturere Hut. That's where they had their lunch in the sunshine, looking across at Tongariro. Some had lunch at Waihohonu Hut, then visited the old Historic Hut then on to the fresh water springs. Others decided to have their lunch at the Historic Hut then onto the Springs. Very lucky day with the weather and as a leader, I managed to get 100% back at the car park before 4pm. Thanks guys for a great day out.

Thursday 10th October, 2019: Arawaru or Aruwaru?

Trip Leader: Suzanne Clark

Reporter: Royce Mills

Photos: Royce Mills, Allan Hardacre

Fourteen Thursday trampers set off in pleasant weather from Naenae Road with the goal of reaching Aruwaru trig (767m). The first task was to cross a wide stream. Our leader, Suzanne Clark, had reminded us to wear spare sandals or shoes, then change into dry boots on the other side. One of our group was fortunate enough to be piggy-backed across by her gallant husband to keep her boots dry. Suitably changed into boots we set off tramping at 8.30 am. We took a morning tea stop along



the way on the track and by-passed the turn-off to Pukenaenae (aka "The Nipple"). We reached the trig in three hours and enjoyed the views as we climbed. From here there is quite a unique view - along the spine of the Tararuas looking north and on to Wharite peak and the snow capped Ruahines. As well there are views both sides of the hills, looking both west and east. Just as we had finished lunch and taking photos it started to drizzle. Raincoats went on but it was still very mild. This meant that raincoats went on and off during our return. We took a stop at the Pukenaenae junction on the way out. Some clambered up for a drizzly view, others took a snack stop on the track. The passing drizzle made the downhill back to Naenae



road rather slippery but we were all back to our vehicles at 3pm with smiles, having achieved a very good day's walk.

We are fortunate to have such a good day tramp with this challenging destination so close to Palmerston North. Much appreciation goes to the team of volunteers who have put a huge amount of work into opening up these access tracks. Thanks to our leader, Suzanne Clark, and to Allan Hardacre for driving the van.

Footnote

In writing this report I noticed some confusion about the spelling of this trig point. Most of us (including me) have traditionally spelled it Arawaru. I recalled Merv Matthews telling us a while back that the spelling had been changed to "Aruwaru". In further conversation he tells me it corrected a historical spelling error. A quick internet search found a listing in the National Library of a topographical map by F.W. Knowles dated 1880, "with triangulations, of the area from Aruwaru to Palmerston which is part of the Tararua ranges." The latest NZ topographic map series now uses the spelling "Aruwaru" as does the latest version of Freshmap (v10).

Wednesday 16th October, 2019: Community Day

Trip Leader and Reporter: Ewen Cameron

Photos: Bev, Anne, Maureen, Abi

Thirty members of the Wednesday trampers group helped Department of Conservation (DoC) by weeding out [Pink Ragwort](#) at Tawhiriho Reserve (near Tangimoana) and releasing plantings at the Himatangi Bush Scientific Reserve. In between these activities we visited a property owned by one of the group where water birds are being encouraged to nest.

At Tangimoana, after our briefing, donning of high vis jackets, signing in and general safety talk (all required to ensure we met DoC volunteer protocols), provided by Department of Conservation Community Ranger, Abi Wightman, we got stuck in doing our bit by pulling out "Pink Ragwort". While many of us thought the various shades of pink flowers were rather nice, we learned these are produced by two closely related species, [Senecio glastifolius](#) and [S.elegans](#) which are both very invasive. These plants are spreading quickly across the Manawatu – if you see them pull them out.

In the sand dune system, Pink Ragwort chokes out native plants. Our job was to pull the plants out by their roots to stop the flowers producing seed. While the ragwort plants were small our job was easy, but some of the older specimens, with trunks as thick as my walking pole proved hard work to remove... instead of sore legs, trampers will have sore arms from the different effort today.



After morning tea, we had a brief walk down towards Himatangi into a stiff breeze and wind-blown sand before we returned to the vehicles to head out to our lunch spot. The conditions on the beach were bad enough that some thought they'd rather be weeding than out walking in the sand blast.

Thanks to the hospitality of one of our members and her husband (Anne and Dave West), we were able to eat lunch in much more civilised surroundings than we usually enjoy. We spent a little more time chatting than usual and then went for a walk around the lake Dave and Anne are developing as a nesting site for water birds. Although some of us brought binoculars, the birds seemed to move well away from us as we walked round lake looking for them... perhaps our chatter scared off or was it our Hi-Vis jackets?



After lunch we headed a short distance down Himatangi Block road to the Himatangi Bush Scientific Reserve. This is a remnant of the dune/swamp forest that existed all over the Manawatu plains in the past and which contains some fine specimen Kanuka and Tawa. As we walked a couple of hundred metres along Paranui Road from our easy

car park to the reserve gate we picked up rubbish from the roadside... For people that claim to be environmentally friendly, we have some grubs in our community who don't do their bit. Our bit here was to release some of the plants reintroduced to the margins of the reserve. In the valley, where the plants were established, out of the wind, it seemed unseasonally hot. Trampers were dressed up ready for forecast cold wind and showers – after even a little physical effort, it became hot going. Enthusiasm waned quickly, so the group headed up through the plants on the dune to follow a bait line back to the cars. We found an interesting forest comprising plants we see less often.

Thanks to:

The Department of Conservation's Abi Wightman for setting this up for us and being there to guide us; Anne and Dave West for enabling us to visit their property; to our drivers who got us round our sites and the Manawatu back roads many of us had never visited; our photographers; Bev, Anne and especially Maureen and Abi whose shots I have used; Coffee Stop for opening especially for us and finally, thanks to the Wednesday trampers who had a go at something new and gave their time and energy to these activities....what a team!

19th-20th October, 2019: Herepai Off Track

Trip Leader, Reporter
and Photographer: Tim Swale

With a pretty dire weather forecast for Saturday morning the decision was made to start our trip late and hopefully miss the worst of the rain. I had been keeping an eye on the Horizons Regional Council web site to see what was happening to the Mangatainoka river level at Larsen's Road at Putara. It had gone from 600mm deep on Friday morning to a bit over 2.4 metres at mid-day on Saturday. When we arrived, the river was breaking its banks over paddocks and water was flowing across the road. There was some



concern about the safety of crossing the first swing bridge but although the raging river was quite a sight to see our group of 8 intrepid trampers were happy to cross.



Our original plan had been to go cross country over 655m and up the Bottles Track but the creek crossing would have been out of the question. Our route up the main track was wet but uneventful and we arrived at Herepai Hut at about 4-30pm. The door was wide open and the rain blowing in but nobody in residence. We soon had a warming fire going to dry things out and hot drinks on the go. Later we were joined by a young couple who were not deterred by the weather either, to give us a full hut for the night.

On Sunday morning there was low cloud and drizzle so no point in heading up to Herepai summit. A quick check of the Horizons river level data courtesy of good cell-phone reception at the hut, persuaded us that the rivers had gone down enough to wade the creek at the bottom of the Bottles track. On arrival, not only did the sun come out but we were also pleased to find that the waters had indeed gone down and were starting to run clear again. To avoid multiple crossings of the river we took a compass bearing and headed straight up the hill on the other side of the creek to join the track that goes to 655m. After a lunch break at the top we headed downhill following another compass bearing and a good amount of pink flagging tape until we arrived back at the Mangatainoka river shortly before the first swing bridge. We were back the van about 3pm after a very enjoyable weekend despite the variable weather.



We were Linda Campbell, Louise Lahmert, Maria Lombard, Mary and Ken Mercer, Jaekob Jolly, Harley Parker and Tim Swale.





Contact Details

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Committee 2019 - 2020

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New Members

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

Club Equipment

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

Website www.mtsc.org.nz

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

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

Accommodation at the MTSC lodge on Mount Ruapehu

The lodge is close to Iwikau Village, has power, heating, hot showers and is stocked with food. Members and their guests are welcome. For Lodge bookings email Liz and Hugh Wilde lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz or phone 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.