

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 10 December 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 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 4th February, 2020: Navigation

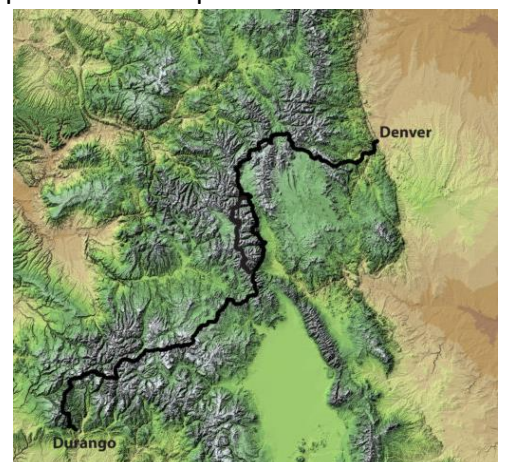


It is important to know where you are and where you are heading when you are out tramping.

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.

Tuesday 3rd March, 2020: Glenn on the Colorado Trail

In August of 2019 Glenn Pendergrast hiked the 800 km long Colorado Trail. From the mile high city of Denver to the town of Durango, the rugged trail travels through the Rocky Mountains with 27,000 m of climbing and an average elevation of over 3,000 m reaching a high point at over 4,000 m. An excellent adventure.



REPORTS AND NOTICES

MTSC President: Rob Pringle

president@mtsc.org.nz

As I write this, I've just finished up a week at work where the topic of conversation has turned to what date it's appropriate to put up your Christmas tree, which means the festive season is now upon us. By the time this is distributed, no doubt a few of you will have made the all important decision as to when to erect the tree.



Waitaewaewae Valley by Andrea Hall MTSC 2019 Interclub Photo Comp.

With Christmas fingers crossed, we will see some fine weather, what the majority of us can be assured of is a few days off. This no doubt presents an opportunity for getting out and about whatever shape or form that takes, be it tramping, camping, late season skiing, or mountain biking. It's been a super busy year personally, and am looking forward to taking some time to go and enjoy the beautiful country we are blessed

to call home. I trust that you also will be able to get out and give it a good thrashing too.

On a slight aside I've been across some of the trip reports that have been flowing in for inclusion on the Facebook page. It's quite awesome to get these. Whilst my contribution to society means that I should be at work on a Wednesday or Thursday, it's great to receive updates on what's going on out there. Some of you have some great flair for writing reports and the photographs are fantastic! If you'd like to get your trip report up on the club Facebook page to share with the wider community, can I encourage you to send mail to Facebook@mtsc.org.nz so that we can all enjoy what you've been up to. [Note from Editor: The Newsletter Editor would like a copy too!]

Till next month, have a safe and merry festive season, spend time with loved ones, and enjoy the break.
Rob

Lodge Manager John Lyttle 027 43363

lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz

Work parties for this coming summer are as follows:

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

Hut Tickets for Sale

Hut tickets can be purchased from Howard Nicholson (phone 027 294 1941 or ski@mtsc.org.nz) at club nights. \$5/ticket for adults and \$2.50 for youth (11-17 years). Information about Back Country Hut Passes, valid for 6 or 12 months, as well as the use of hut tickets is available on the [DOC web site](#).

We welcome Gareth Beckermann and family to the club.

Using a Personal Locator Beacon

At our club night on 5 November we heard a very interesting presentation from two Senior Search and Rescue Officers from the Rescue Coordination Centre NZ, John Ashby and Chris Henshaw. For those that weren't able to attend, these are some of the key points I thought were relevant to trampers in our club.

- In an emergency situation, if you have cell phone coverage use your phone first and dial 111. You will then be advised if you should activate a PLB. The PLB will work even under dense canopy.
- Only set off one PLB. Setting off more than one causes all sorts of confusion. Where there are multiple PLBs in a group, best to set off one MTSC registered PLB as this will clearly identify it as a club trip and they will start calling the club contacts who have access to the intentions emails.
- Stay in the same location that the PLB was set off. As well as the 406 Mhz signal that goes to the satellites, the PLB also emits a 121.5 Mhz homing signal so that the pilot in the helicopter can home into the exact location of the PLB.
- If you are setting the PLB off because of a medical event, it is better, within reason, not to move the patient unless you are in imminent danger. The patient may suffer more injuries if they move, and you may move away from possible winch sites. While you may feel that the helicopter won't be able to winch you from where you are, the pilot is in the best position to see where a possible winch site might be. This may be to the left or right of the track, rather than directly on the track, and so you may not be aware of it. In this situation they will probably winch down a crewman to help guide you to a possible winch site nearby, possibly using the stretcher that they carry on the helicopter. At club night we were shown a video of an injured person being safely winched up to a helicopter through dense forest canopy - that was impressive!
- Make yourself visible to an arriving helicopter. Blue is a good colour e.g. a pack liner. Light a fire for smoke or night visibility. Shine a torch, but towards the ground - don't dazzle a pilot using night vision goggles. Even a cell phone screen can be seen from an amazing distance at night with night vision goggles.
- Best to wear your PLB on yourself, not in your pack. Accidents have happened when not wearing a pack, e.g. a fall when walking to a toilet in the dark.
- Make sure your PLB registration is up to date. Are all your emergency contact details current? (This talk prompted me to email corrections - Royce). Email: 406registry@maritimenz.govt.nz
- For every tramp, make sure an intentions list is sent to our club team who will be first point of contact made by the Rescue Coordination Centre. If a PLB is set off the RCC will always send a helicopter if weather permits. But knowing how many people are on the trip and the route is very useful information, and may well speed up a rescue, especially if they need to send in a ground SAR team. Send email to: intentions@mtsc.org.nz

John and Chris welcome any club members to come and visit the Rescue Coordination Centre to meet staff and see what is going on, and the technology they use. It is always open! The Centre is in the Avalon Tower building in Lower Hutt.

Written by Royce Mills, with thanks to Peter Rawlins for checking my notes for accuracy and adding extra information from his Search and Rescue experience.

Notes from MTSC Committee meeting by Ewen Cameron

Each month, a week after club night, your committee meets to attend to organisational matters to keep the club running. This report aims to let you know what we discuss and what we are working on.

October Committee update:

Trip reports and leadership: People to send trip reports to both the newsletter editor and to Facebook. The suggestion was made that a "newsletter helper" is required to remind people to write and send their reports

[Jenny McCarthy has taken on this role]. Discussion moved to trip leadership in general. The use of the intentions process and the responsibilities trip leaders have in terms of organising and reporting on their trips was discussed at length in that it is understood that some “club” trips are being undertaken without using the processes outlined on the club’s website. As the trip card was in its final stages of proofing before printing, there was some discussion around the specificity of information about tramps provided for the trip card between weekend trips (which provide destinations) vs that for weekday tramps (which list trip leaders).

Late membership payments: Three sets of reminders were sent to people who have not paid their subs for the 2019-2020 years and had not notified the club they wished to resign. Several memberships were cancelled when the subs remained unpaid. Some discussion about how to prompt late payers to pay sooner.

New Minibus: Although the club has been awarded a \$10,000 contribution towards the purchase of the new minibus, the actual purchase is to be deferred until the outcome of a second funding application to the Eastern and Central Community Trust is known. [We have been advised we’ll know the outcome by the end of November].

Lodge project: A Lodge sub-committee has been formed and members of this reported that the first stage of the Lodge refurbishment project is more or less complete but to make further progress external funding is again being sought. In November, further work is expected to finish off this stage. A Health and Safety plan is being drawn up.

Club nights: Committee members were told about the speakers for November 5th and the reminded about the walk and dinner (at Angkor café, 4 Coleman Mall Place) on December 3rd and were asked to think of speakers for 2020.

Notes from the Ruahine User Group meeting: 20th October, 2019

by Jean Garman

Huts

Iron Gate Hut: The old hut has been demolished and the new 10 bunk hut is in the process of being built thanks to the NZ army. Expected completion date is the 24th of November although delays may occur due to weather.

A-frame Hut: A community maintenance agreement has been signed for A-frame Hut and a bid has been put into the back country huts trust. Besides tidying up the aim is to install new windows and a fire. Support is welcome.

Sparrowhawk and Toka Bivs: Rob Brown is organizing the refurbishment of these bivvies. Toka Biv will get an over roof treatment which has worked well for similar bivvies in the south island.

Waikamaka: The iconic Waikamaka loo is going to be relocated. The formation of a new hole will be a big job but I have been assured that the original loo will be retained.

Access

The Kashmir Road was last graded in June, if you have any issues please let DOC PN know.

Mokai Station - best to ring or email for permission.

Wakarara Road - permission required for 4WD access; no issue with walking access. Park at the top and walk down the road.

Kawhatau - there is a possible option of a walking track to give all weather access to the Kauwhatau Base, about a 3 hour walk that would go around the bush block. If you think this would be a good idea please let DOC PN know.

Biodiversity DOC

Northern Ruahine 1080 operation: A pre-feed drop followed by a 1080 drop will occur in the Northern Ruahine Ranges when the weather allows. More information on why the drop is required can be found here: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/media-releases/2019/protecting-at-risk-nests-from-a-predator-plague-in-the-northern-ruahine-ranges/> Keep an eye on the DOC website or contact DOC PN for up to date information.

Ongoing work:

Darwins Barberry across from the mill site, Whakarara

Goat control NE Ruahines (No-mans - Sentry Box) and hot spots round Coppermine, Wharite and No 4 Line Pinus Contorta - work Feb/March around No-mans and Tiruarau Ridge.

Biodiversity HBRC

Darwins Barberry in the Guavas Old Mans Beard - trying to maintain a buffer zone on Eastern side of range. A small area in the Mockerton Reserve, Wakarara is known about but if any is spotted on the park boundary please let the HBRC know.

Ruahine Whio Protectors

<http://www.rwp.org.nz/>

Please report Blue Duck sighting to ruahinewhioprotectors@gmail.com Include information on location and sex (males whistle, females croak); photos also useful.



Wednesday & Thursday Trampers at Ruahine Corner Hut Pukeokahu School fundraiser walk, 16 November, 2019



Wednesday Trampers at Sunrise Hut 23 October, 2019 by William Laing



UPCOMING TRIPS

December & January Wednesday Tramps			December Thursday Tramps		
04	Bill Milham	356 8136	05	Royce Mills	021 055 2527
11	Margaret McKenzie	358 2535	12	Glenn Pendergrast	356 7487
29 Jan	Marion Beadle	323 3246			
December & January Weekend Trips					
7-8	Sawtooth Ridge-postponed	Medium Fit	Dave Mitchell	06 329 2803	
14-15	Lodge Ruapehu/Tongariro Climb	Medium Fit	Adam Matich	022 358 8062	
12 Jan	TBC 'An Explore'	Medium	Ewen Cameron	022 034 1180	
25-26	Waterfall Hut	Medium Fit	Jean Garman	021 176 0209	
Sun 26	Atiwhakatu Gorge	Easy	Tim Swale	06 376 6556	

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.

14th-15th December, 2019: Lodge Ruapehu/Tongariro Climb

Adam Matich Medium Fit 022 358 8062

The Intention on this good-weather trip is to go up to the Lodge on Friday afternoon, because I hate rushing up there on Friday night. On either of the next two days we will look at climbing Ruapehu by the most appropriate route, and on the other day doing something off-track further down the mountain. At the moment my thoughts on that one are heading easterly from the lodge to Wairere Stream and following it down to the Taranaki Falls Track, then onto the Silica Rapids Track which we leave, at the rapids, to continue off-track up hill to the lodge, or something similarly frivolous. Of course people can really do as they please as long as I am not called on to rescue them if it all goes wrong. There could well still be quite a bit of snow on the mountain so the use of ice axes and crampons will need to be considered.

Sunday 12th January, 2020: An Explore

Ewen Cameron Medium 022 034 1180

Get into a club tramp in the New Year by coming out on this tramp to parts unknown. Depending on the weather, I plan to explore either the Raparawai Stream and tracks off it that may go to Kiritaki hut or just the supposed routes up the ridge to Kiritaki Hut. (I have some maps with routes that used to exist but may be over grown). Both options will head up from the end of Loveday Road. (Loveday Road is

off Top Grass Road near Maharahara West, just North of Coppermine Road). This tramp could involve boulder hopping, river crossings and some bush bashing but is intended to be just a bit of fun while exploring. There is no plan to get to Kiritaki Hut, and no specific destination. I would like to find if there are routes to Kiritaki Hut from Loveday road. I (I have not yet sought permission for access, but will do so in the near future...)." "

25th – 26th January, 2020: Waterfall Hut

Jean Garman

Medium Fit

021 176 0209

A classic forest service hut in the heart of the Ruahines. There are many ways to get to Waterfall Hut so the exact route will be dictated by the weather and levels of enthusiasm. Some river travel and wet feet are guaranteed.

Sunday 26th January, 2020: Atiwhakatu Gorge

Tim Swale

Easy

06 376 6556 / 022 134 8384

We did this trip during a hot spell last summer and enjoyed this awesome little gorge so much that I thought it was worth a return trip. It is a bit over an hour's walk from the Holdsworth Road end up to the Mountain House turn off where there is good access into the river. From there we follow the river back to Donelly Flat where we can get back onto the track. There is lots of wading, up to waist deep in a few places, and two short swims. A day pack with a dry bag inside to provide flotation is needed. The water is always chilly so dress appropriately. More information can be found at the kiwicanyons link below:

<http://www.kiwicanyons.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Atiwhakatu-Gorge-Tararua-FP.pdf>



Thursday 3rd October, 2019: Pukeatua Track

Trip Leader and Reporter: Syd Easton

Photo: John Brock

Our group has several times walked the Pukeatua Track from Otaki Forks to the high point, had lunch and walked back out. This time, three drivers volunteered to let 15 of us walk right through. The through walk is of course a part of the Te Araroa Trail, leading from Otaki Forks to Waikanae.

We enjoyed a fine day, and the bush was enhanced by sprays of clematis in flower. From the high point, Pukeatua (812m), there were good views across onto the high ridges of the Tararuas, and looking west, out to the sea and Kapiti. We had lunch there.

From the high point, the track is a bit rougher, but the forest is varied and interesting. The track emerges abruptly into plantation forest country, which has very recently been clear-felled. It is a different view, and not as attractive! But there is a longer view to the coast and the sea. The milling track has had significant recent work. We walked for an hour after emerging from the forest until we reached the carpark.

The usual trip from the north end and returning to it remains a good day tramp. Walking right through offers a different dimension; we enjoyed it and we were all glad to have been able to do it.

It was also our semi-annual opportunity to catch up with Phil Hoskin on his way between northern summer overseas and our summer working for DOC in Fiordland. Good to see you Phil.



Our three drivers had spent some of their time exploring the Mangaone Track north from the road end. Our special thanks to them, Bryce Buddle, Wayne Lincoln and Wendy Williams, for making a good day possible for the rest of us.

Thursday 17th October, 2019: Kaiparoro Trig & 1952 Plane Crash site

Trip Leader: Geraldine Fovakis

Reporter and Photographer: William Laing

With a 7:30 start 20 trampers arrived at the Kaiparoro road end by 9:00 ready to start tramping. Our first hurdle was a river crossing with some debate over whether or not to wear boots and change after the crossing. My belief was that a sturdy pair of boots with tight gaiters kept enough water out not to be too uncomfortable. Others disagreed.



The view over the river from the bottom of the valley was one of devastation with the valley sides denuded of pine trees and a steep rough bulldozed track (~20% slope) leading up the left hand (southern) hillside to the start of the bush track. This so-called road was covered in debris and in poor condition. Once we were off the forestry track the bush track followed a much older track, probably an old farm road used to access the back-country.

At a junction, we then detoured off this 'road' onto a normal bush track, not significantly muddy or rooty: a pretty good tramping track. This led up to the bush line and the Kaiparoro trig at about 808m, a 450 m climb. Morning tea was had here, with some exploring further out from the trig looking for tarns harbouring crustaceans. None were found. However the views from the top were magnificent, overlooking the Waiarapa and the Tararuas. The sky was blue, the clouds white, little wind and so much sun that Caroline insisted on people wearing sun hats. The vegetation was spectacularly coloured, with red *Dracophyllum*, green leatherwood and flax and red/yellowish tussock grass. Plus lots of brown divaricating shrubs. If you want to know more about the botany of this clearing follow this link [botany](#), written by G Rogers and Matt McGlone.



Dracophyllum, green leatherwood and flax and red/yellowish tussock grass. Plus lots of brown divaricating shrubs. If you want to know more about the botany of this clearing follow this link [botany](#), written by G Rogers and Matt McGlone.



We then returned down the track to the branch point just below the bush line to the site of the 1952 plane crash. This track is a steep clamber down a reasonably marked track to about half way down the ridge where bits of wreckage including the engines, cockpit seat and fuel tanks can be seen. A cross is mounted at the site and Merv cleaned the cross and writing, being prepared with brasso and cleaning cloths.

We then made our way back to a clearing for lunch, before continuing down to the junction and rejoining the farm/forestry road walking to the north face of the valley (all in all an

anticlockwise loop). Here the roads were in much better condition, smooth although overgrown and narrowed with vegetation including bush lawyer, until we came to a clearing with felled trees, debris and overgrowth blocking our way. There was a side path to our left which led nowhere which we had to avoid. We scrambled and tightrope walked along the logs until we reached a much better road obviously in use for forestry.

Then down a very steep road back to the start, the river crossing and back to the vehicles.

The tramp was about 9 km long climbing about 650 m and using 3682 kCal.

Thanks to the drivers and trip leader Geraldine



Wednesday 23rd October, 2019: Sunrise Hut

Trip Leader and Reporter: Allan Rae

Photos: D M West, William Laing,



Our morning began with a dire forecast for strong wind, rain and hail, snow and thunder, before with some trepidation 25 trampers set off. Nothing much had improved when we regrouped just off Highway 50. Marion, a survivor of an earlier club trip to Sunrise that came to an abrupt stop at the farm ford due to flooding, gave us a ray of hope by recalling that there was much more surface water on the paddocks that last trip so we agreed to go on to assess the ford. We were pleased to find that it was well above the level of the stream so it was all on.

There were a few drops of light rain when we set off, but absolutely no wind. As we climbed the hill the weather showed definite signs of improvement – still none of the forecast winds and long breaks between the drizzle patches. On arrival at the junction for morning tea

we wondered about the location of one of our members – the club's radios were put to good use and it was quickly determined that this merry tramp and one other had headed off to Triplex before noting their error. However that dashed all hope of them having time to reach the hut, but most other members of the party did. And what a pleasure it was. Nearer to the hut we came across fresh snow clothing the trees and lying on the track, still no wind, and the sun came out as we crossed this wonderland. A DOC staffer in the hut reported that the snow had fallen around midnight. After lunch conditions were perfect for a look cross to the Armstrong Saddle and some great photos were taken of the snowy mountain landscape.

All returned safely to base and a coffee was enjoyed at BP Dannevirke.



Thanks to Ewen for driving the van and to Bev, Marion, Bill and Cheryl for their cars.

Thursday 24th October, 2019: Carrington Ridge

Trip Leader and Reporter: Royce Mills

Photos: John Brock

Where to go when the forecast more than a week out is for high winds, very cold and wet over all the lower North Island? A good suggestion came from our group: Carrington ridge, a sheltered and dry track apart from one small stream to cross near the start, that shouldn't be a problem. Thirteen hardy Thursday trampers signed up and this was a new route for some of our group. There was even some weak sunshine at the Holdsworth car park but this quickly turned to a shower and raincoats went on, and stayed on for the morning. Different options were taken to cross the Gentle Annie stream and most kept their boots dry. It is a short, steep climb up to Holdsworth Lookout and then the terrain



becomes easier along to the Gentle Annie saddle. The wind was often roaring above us, and keeping the temperatures down, but it was a good track to be on. Lunch was taken on the track while steadily climbing to spot height 801m. Here the bush becomes more open and particularly beautiful. From the old signs at 801m we continued NW to join the main Gentle Annie track close to the junction with the Totara Creek track. The rain had stopped and sun was

breaking out. Still windy though. As we walked down the familiar track several took a side trip from the Rocky Knob seating and viewpoint to visit "Old Rocky Knob". Here there were views of new snow on the high Tararuas. It was good to arrive back at our vehicles and change in sunshine. The tramp took 5 1/2 hours, which included many stops. Thanks to our drivers Allan Hardacre and Jean Garman.

Saturday 26th October, 2019:

Mukamuka-Papatahi Loop

Trip Leader and Photographer:
Adam Matich

We travelled 3 km SW along the coast from the DoC Corner Creek Campsite to the mouth of Mukamuka Stream. Travel up this waterway was very easy, it being wide and shingly. There are no track markers



Lake Onoke and the coast from Mt Matthews



Climbing up to Papataki Peak

as it is a route in the lower section, but further up when the route finally enters the forest, there are track markers and so finding our way up to the south saddle was trouble free, it taking us 3 hours from the ocean to the Mt Matthews track. We had a rest at the South Saddle and watched the goats gambling on the opposite face. At the track junction we left our packs and made the 2 1/2 hr return trip to Mt Matthews from where we had good views down to Lake Onoke and the coast. There is an informal track heading off the Mt Matthews summit towards the north saddle. Another trip perhaps. Another 90 minutes saw us down in the Orongorongo River via the very wide, shingly Matthews stream. We entertained ourselves on the way counting the dead rats as there were lots of them by the compressed-air

powered possum/rat killers. Our best count for a single device was six up near the South Saddle. We camped for the night in the trees next to Baine iti which is on the true right next to the confluence with the main river (7 1/2 hr day). The Mt Matthews track used to go all the way to this rather rustic hut, but that was before Matthews Stream started to take itself seriously and change things. We hung our food up overnight as there were rats around. However, no one was molested in the night. *To be continued in next newsletter.*

Two more paragraphs just discovered by editor. Hope you can stand the suspense!



Baine iti in the Orongorongo

Wednesday 30th Oct, 2019: Hemi Matenga Scenic Reserve: Te Au Track & Parata Track

Trip Leader and Reporter: Richard Hunter

Photos: Cheryl Dawson

Thirty-one trampers set off for this perennial tramp situated on the slopes of the Tararuas, east of Waikanae in the Hemi Matenga Scenic Reserve. We all met at Tui Crescent around 9.15am, had a short briefing regarding the track, timings, phones, etc, and a warm welcome was given to newcomer, Alistair Hall. Doing the loop clockwise involved a steady climb through the native forest for about 90mins, then along the undulating top to the Lookout where many took their lunch break admiring the views across the Waikanae Estuary and Kapiti Island. A small group opted to start with the more-gentle Parata Track up to the Lookout continuing along the Te Au Track as far as the end of the undulating top before turning around. The native forest in this Reserve encompassed large areas of the kohekohe tree, which unlike many other trees, sprouted its flowers directly from the trunk and branches.

I think the tramp through the native forest was enjoyed by all, with some trampers' pedometers reading a modest 10,000 steps for completing the loop, whilst one or two very keen trampers (who doubled back from the Lookout) managed over 19,000! We were all back at the vehicles soon after 2.00pm., and on the return journey we enjoyed a social break at The Quarter Acre Café.

Due to the nature of the tracks, the group split into a few smaller groups,

and I found the three handheld radio phones very helpful. I would like to thank Evan for driving the van along



with those that provided transport: Anne R., Jenny, Cheryl, William, and Bob Ho. Thanks to the Met Office too as the weather was pretty good!

Thursday 31st October, 2019: A Perfect Day on Toka

Trip leader: Wayne Lincoln

Reporter: Royce Mills

Photos: John Brock

A tramp up Shorts Track, along the ridge to Toka and down Knight's track is a popular Thursday tramp. We are used to high winds, rain, white-out, no views ... but today was perfection. We enjoyed sunshine, blue sky and excellent views both to the east and west.



There were ten in our group and we set off at 9am. After a morning tea stop at our usual place, the Deerford track junction, we continued up to the tussock tops to spot height 1380m and had an early "first lunch" (our leader was keen to keep going and insisted on "keep it brief"). Travel was good along the ridge to Toka, taking only 30 minutes. A gentle cooling breeze was welcome. It was one of those rare days where we could

enjoy a leisurely "second lunch" and enjoy the views from Toka (1519m). We continued on down Knights Track and took two leisurely stops, one of them at Coal Creek where we met up with one in our group who had chosen to walk the Deerford track. Such an attractive clearing and stream to relax at on a fine day. We were back to our van at 3.45pm, all smiles. Thanks to our leader (and van driver), Wayne Lincoln.



Wednesday 6th November, 2019: Castle Rock Hill

Trip Leader and Reporter: Dennis Jensen

Photos: Andrea Hall and Linda Darbyshire

Last Wednesday, 31 avid Trampers and one guest, namely 'Elke' the dog, departed from Palmerston North at 7.30am to venture off the Desert Road onto the Southern Access Corridor. For some this was the first time that they had experienced this walk, so with the Weather God's smiling on us, we set off at 9.45am with a 2 1/2 hour tramp ahead of us. This tramp is very up and down and the terrain is almost identical going in and coming out so it was important that everyone stopped at midday for their usual break so that they had plenty of time to return at the allocated time. Most managed to get to the 'Castle' and although very windy it was a magnificent view and well worth the effort.



We were all out by 3.15pm and stopped for our usual coffee break in Waiouru before heading home. My thanks to the Drivers - Chris for driving the Van, Bill, William, Bev and Rita for providing their vehicles.

P.S - The photos of William on the highest rock in the Castle had a response from Robyn that both Anne and I heard: 'William, get down you silly old fool before you break your neck' or words to that effect.



Thursday 7th November, 2019: Zeke's Hut

Trip Leader, Reporter and Photographer: Syd Easton

A party of 18 set out, reassembled at Taihape and drove on to the point a few km south of Waiouru where a DOC sign announces access to the Hihitahi Forest Sanctuary. There was room for the van and two cars to park comfortably enough by SH1, we got our packs ready, went through the gate, across a couple of paddocks, over the footbridge, through another paddock and we were into the bush. Once in the bush, there were the usual boggy patches in the track, but these were not as bad as they've sometimes been.



Across the stream and into the forest proper, the track was frankly dry. The initial steep pull was easily negotiated and then it was a comfortable walk on to the trig. The forest looked as though it could do with some rain. We enjoyed really good views from the trig (1116m), and then 15 of us headed on down to the hut where we had lunch. On the way we noted a really fine mountain cabbage tree. Three of us chose to remain at the trig and continue to enjoy the view and the warm day. We had the usual inconclusive discussion of why so many of the pahautea (kaikawaka, cedar) are dying. There remain many good, apparently healthy, specimens, larger and straighter than they usually are in the Ruahines, but there are a lot of skeletons, and many others with only sparse remnant

foliage. Hall's totara is the other species that distinguishes the area. Again, many specimens are larger than is typical elsewhere.

The climb back from the hut wasn't hard but, on a warm humid day, caused a lot of sweat. The walk back out from the trig was easy and pleasant. The car park is above 700m, so the extra elevation of the trig is not great. We enjoyed coffee and/or icecreams at Taihape.

Question: Does anyone know why that particular reserve is called a forest "Sanctuary"?

Saturday 9th November, 2019: Otangane Loop

Trip Leader, Reporter and Photographer: Tim Swale

This was my first foray into this area, despite having lived just 25 minutes away from the Naenae Road end for the last twenty odd years. And what a neat little loop this is, with panoramic views across the northern Wairarapa and into the Manawatu. Clearly, somebody has put a lot of effort into marking the track and building steps up the steep approach route which follows a stream for a solid climb of almost 400 metres. Apart from a dead and bloated cow sending its stink up the valley in the warm and near windless conditions,



the climb was uneventful and we were soon sat at the top by the track junction for morning tea.

We did the loop itself in an anti-clockwise direction following a good marked trail through low forest and scrub with tantalising views towards the mountain bike park and all along the Northern Tararuas. At the northernmost extent of the loop we again crossed the Otangane stream before heading south towards Pukanaenae, also known as “the Nipple” for obvious reasons. Rain flurries had us stopping to put on raincoats; but they were gone again by the time we were

ready to move off - so off they came again. It really was too hot to cover up. Pukanaenae is up a short side track and provides probably the best views of the whole trip. Shortly after standing on the summit we were finishing off the loop and heading down the escarpment and back to the vehicles.

The whole walk is 10.5 km and took us about six hours, although the GPS recorded only three and a half hours of actual moving time. Ken spent a fair amount of time with secateurs cutting away bush lawyer that was overhanging the track and dealing to a few thicker obstructions with his folding saw. There was also quite a bit of sitting around eating, relaxing and chatting which is of course why club trips are first and foremost a social occasion. So thanks for the great company, Linda, Adam, Mary and Ken.

Wednesday 13th November, 2019: Rangī Hut, Deadmans Track or the Loop

Reporters: Bob, Marion and Dennis

Photos: Rod, Bob and Judith

The first verse of the most famous song from The Sound of Music goes: “The hills are alive,

With the sound of music
With songs they have sung
For a thousand years”



About half of the MTSC contingent chose to tramp up to the hut with some making a foray into the tussock. A group of five chose to do a tramp in and out on the Deadmans track with three lunching at the route marker at the start of the tussock. In addition seven trampers, that is six ladies and one brave gentleman, went up the Deadmans track and down via Rangī Hut. They met three gentlemen of our group on the top section, who were going round the other way, along with a number of Whanganui folk. It was too chilly to stand on the top ridge but pleasant enough to eat lunch just over on the eastern side. A Long

Tailed Cuckoo was heard about 15 minutes above the car park on way up Deadmans. This annoying bird, was never seen.

Chris and Dennis had decided they would walk through to the Rangī Hut but, when they got to just above the bridge, Chris remarked he would probably have preferred to walk Deadman's. With this in mind they decided to explore an alternative route.....In Dennis's own words "This wasn't upright tramping and was more like crawling on our hands and knees to get through the LeatherJacket. However we did stumble across a couple of nice clearings on our journey. We were pleased to see an Orange Triangle telling us we had reached Deadman's track."

In summary it was a beautiful sunny 10 degree day, ideal for tramping, warm in the sun out of the breeze. With a nine AM start to the tramp all groups were safely out by shortly after three PM. The fast looper group took about six and a half hours while the lone young female runner completed the loop in **three hours and ten minutes!** Oh to be young and so fit! Thanks to trip organiser Jill, trip leader Marion and to our drivers Chris, Bob, Richard, Caroline, Christine and Marion.

P.S. The penultimate line of Julie Andrews song evokes the sight and sound of the waterfall on the hut track, it goes:

To laugh like a brook
When it trips and falls
Over stones on its way
To sing through the night
Like a lark
Who is learning to pray.



Thursday 14th November, 2019: North Manakau Road

Trip Leader and Reporter: Merv Matthews

Photo: William Laing

My original intention was to have Royce show us the way to Square Knob in the Tararua Range because we haven't been there since she last guided us there nine years ago. However, the weather outlook for Thursday wasn't good, with heavy overnight rain predicted for Makahika, and the trip would have involved some river walking, so I chose an easier, lower-level track accessed from



North Manakau Road. We set out for the old mill site, but noticed on the way that several culverts were pouring a good deal of water into the Waikawa Stream. Obviously there had been heavy rain in the hills overnight. When we came to a much larger side stream flowing into the Waikawa we decided that it was a little too deep and swift for comfort and abandoned the visit to the mill site. We needed to cross the Waikawa stream to start the second part of our intended trip, but again the stream was far too deep and wild for safe crossing. We decided to return to the bus and head for the Waikawa shelter where we chose instead to climb the forest road through the pine

plantation up to the junction where our original intended route would have taken us. We had a leisurely lunch and then strolled back down the road to the shelter. The day was mostly overcast with the occasional burst of sunshine, but not a single drop of rain fell during the tramp. On the way home we stopped at a very pleasant coffee shop in the centre of Ohau, on the corner of Muhunoa East Road, a new one to most of us, but likely to be a regular stop in future. We were 12 Thursday Trampers.



Contact Details

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

Committee 2019 - 2020

President	Rob Pringle	president@mtsc.org.nz	020 426 2176
Secretary	Tim Swale	secretary@mtsc.org.nz	06 376 6556
Treasurer	Ewen Cameron	treasurer@mtsc.org.nz	0220341180
Chief Guide	Ken Mercer	chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz	027 364 6475
Membership	Sue Nicholson	membership@mtsc.org.nz	06 357 6325
Newsletter Editor	Mary Mercer	editor@mtsc.org.nz	027 372 5375
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: 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	027 678 0747
Ski Captain	Howard Nicholson	ski@mtsc.org.nz	027 294 1941
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.

DoC Hut Tickets are usually available for sale from Howard Nicholson at club nights or ski@mtsc.org.nz or 027 294 1941.