

# beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North 4440 [www.mtsc.org.nz](http://www.mtsc.org.nz) <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>

Issue 10. November 2020

## CLUB MEETINGS

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

### 7.30pm Tuesday 3 November, 2020:

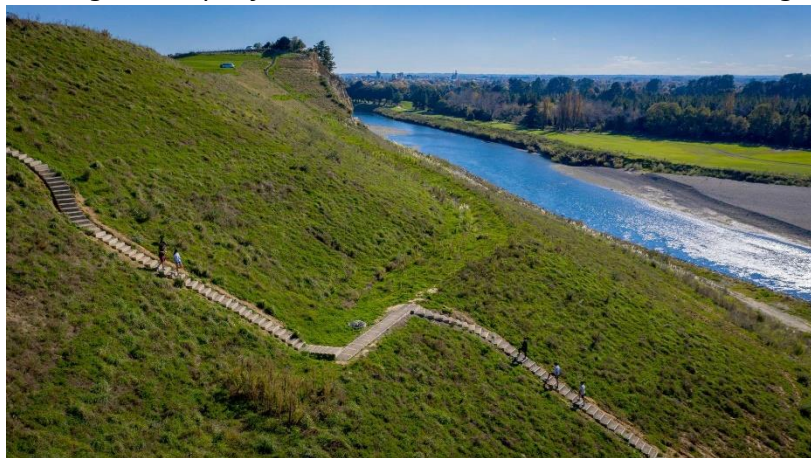
Howard Nicholson, Rob Pringle, Ken Mercer and Hazel Phillips on **Finding the Dapple: Ski Touring in Mount Cook National Park**

Seven club members headed into the heart of the Southern Alps for a guided ski touring trip in August. Their trip took them amongst some of the largest glaciers and mountains of New Zealand, where they spent each day climbing up and skiing down around 1200m of premium backcountry terrain, as they constantly searched for "the dapple".



### 7.30pm Tuesday 1 December, 2020: Walk and Dinner

Meeting at 6.00pm for the walk in ANZAC Park. Dinner at Angkor 7.30pm



The walk provides great views across Palmerston North and includes the stair case known as the Stairway of Tane. We will park our vehicles near the Fitzherbert Bridge and cross the bridge to get to start our walk on Cliff Road.

After our walk we will head to Angkor Restaurant, 4 Coleman Place, Palmerston North for a 7.30pm dinner. Vegetarian meals available. Mains range from around \$19 to \$28. 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 24 November** if you will be joining us for dinner. Phone/text 027 333 4493 or email [lindammc@xtra.co.nz](mailto:lindammc@xtra.co.nz)

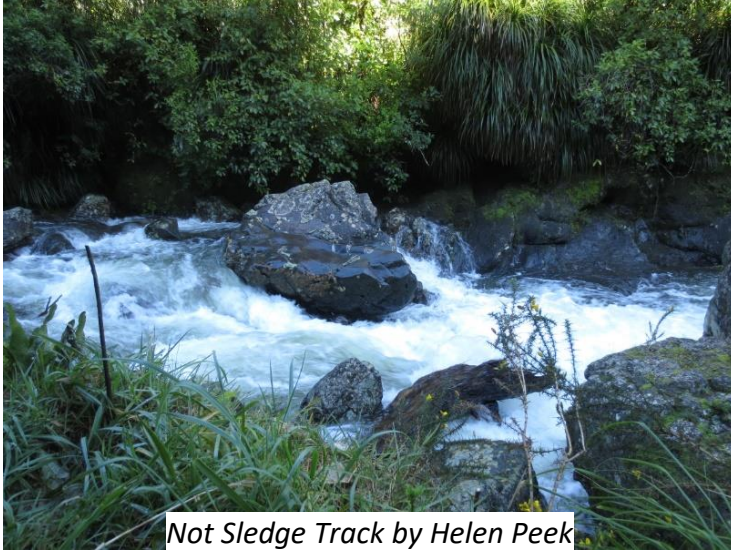
### 7.30pm Tuesday 2 February, 2021

# REPORTS AND NOTICES

## MTSC President: Rob Pringle

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

That's a wrap for the ski season at least. - For the keen skiers among the membership, there was a faint glimmer of hope that the season on Ruapehu would be extended until the middle of November. Despite the ski field's best efforts, the weather has had other things on its mind; as a result it was announced that both sides of the mountain will be shutting up shop for their winter operation at the end of Labour weekend. That doesn't mean to say that that's it for lodge life though— there are plenty of reasons to head there and enjoy all the environment has to offer.



*Not Sledge Track by Helen Peek*

I recently spent the day riding the Old Coach Rd walkway. With easy transport options being provided from Ohakune, we shuttled out to the start of the ride. From here it was a gentle incline towards the summit, before snack stops at the viaduct, and a gentle descent towards Ohakune. E-bikes are available to hire from the shuttle options for those who prefer. These make short work of the inclines, leaving those of us with more conventional bikes puffing our way up the hills. All in all, a great day out for people of all ages, with some impressive engineering feats, great scenery, and many laughs had along the way. There are other, more adventurous options for those that prefer, including T42, and Fishers track, both of which offer some stunning views of the area. Just keep an eye out for the river crossing in the middle of T42 – definitely one that'll wet your feet.

It's been really positive to see the increase in people joining in and getting out and about, after what was a bumpy start to the year, with lots of unknowns. The lodge use over winter has been slightly better than last year, and discussions are being held as to the interest around having a Tuesday tramping group (See Ewen's message below.) Great to see so many people who have got the time and availability to be enjoying the environment at our doorstep! With summer right around the corner, keep looking out for opportunities to get out and enjoy yourselves, as well as connecting with the community around us. Also enjoy the longer evenings and warmer weather!

Rob

## Chief Guide: Ken Mercer

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

I believe the most dangerous aspect to tramping is returning from the road end, particularly when it is a long distance home. Most NZ drivers can relate an experience of struggling to stay awake on a road trip. A cafe stop is justifiable on several levels 😊 but it's also a good opportunity to swap drivers.

One personal experience was at the end of a day skiing where I was tired so swapped to the passenger seat. I noticed the driver meander across the centre line, then back, then across again. There was a truck coming so stupidly I reached across and tweaked the wheel. The driver's reaction was to resist my input which didn't help!

Fortunately they also woke up and nothing bad happened.

I learned from that occasion then had another some years later with a different driver. In that case I woke them with a yell and, again, everything was fine. So, my message is, (some) passengers in any vehicle should remain alert just in case.



*Trying out a fly on Coppermine Creek Trip by John Brock*

## Tuesday Walks

There have been suggestions that some of you are interested in club-coordinated, shorter walks/tramps. To gauge demand, the first such tramp is scheduled for the morning of Tuesday November 10<sup>th</sup>. The trip will be to three reserves: [Sutherland's Puriri Reserve](#), [Sutherland's Mangahoe Reserve](#) and [Laird's Reserve](#). These reserves are run by Forest and Bird and contain good remnant forest.

The minibus will depart Memorial Park at 8:00am and will return by 1:30pm. Bring your lunch!

As this is a trial, I plan to accommodate just the minibus with participants, so there'd be eleven only on the first walk.

If you are interested in:

- a) Going on this walk;
- b) Short walks as this, but you can't make it on the 10<sup>th</sup>

please contact Ewen Cameron by email at [ewenacameron37@gmail.com](mailto:ewenacameron37@gmail.com) or phone/txt at 0220341180.

## Twin Needles Outdoor Equipment Repairs Ltd

Twin Needles do a fantastic job: My Earth Sea and Sky raincoat was washed, reproofed and had new seam sealing tape applied ten years ago for a cost of about \$80. It came back almost as good as new. After another ten years of use, Twin Needles have once again washed, reproofed and resealed that same raincoat. It now looks much like it did when I bought it new almost twenty years ago. Note: Twin Needles have not charged me for my raincoat's "10<sup>th</sup> birthday of rejuvenation" so I am, perhaps, a bit biased but I am delighted with their work and would have been more than happy to pay for it! Their address is Christchurch <http://www.twinneedle.co.nz/>

Mary

## Burton's Track

This booklet contains the story of both James Burton, the back-blocks farmer, who built the Tokomaru valley road extension in the early 1900s, and the more contemporary track work that has resulted in the through track now incorporated into the Te Araroa Trail.

Led by Ian Argyle, the reopening of Burton's Track was the first project of the Te Araroa Manawatu Trust. It's success owed much to work done by the New Zealand Army Engineers. In common with the track development many people and organisations contributed to the booklet. It makes an interesting read.

I have copies available at \$5 as fund raiser for the work of the Te Araroa Manawatu Trust: please order one! Bob Hodgson [rmsbhodgson@inspire.net.nz](mailto:rmsbhodgson@inspire.net.nz)

*We welcome the following new members to the club: Rachael Ashdown, Leroy Coburn, Hilary Heath-Caldwell and Jeff Woodyard, Lily Heathmore and Leroy and Otto Crawford-Flatt, and Anne Jolly*



November Wednesday Tramps			November Thursday Tramps		
04	Richard Lander	021 840 472	05	Chris Mercer	D 356 2635
11	Bob Hargreaves	357 0734	12	Royce Mills	021 055 2527
18	William Laing	358 4876	19	Glenn Pendergrast	356 7487
25	Christine Finnigan	329 7822	26	Tony Evans	D 027 829 3069

November Weekend Trips				
7-8	Mt Hikurangi	Medium Fit	Elliott O'Brien	021 941653
14-15	Howletts Hut	Medium Fit	Dave Mitchell	021 109 2924
14-15	Lodge Photographic Workshop	Technical	Richard Lander	021 840 472
<del>28</del>	<del>North Kawekas</del>	<del>Medium Fit</del>	<del>Elliott O'Brien</del>	<del>021 941653</del>

**Trip Intentions:** The email address for leaving trip intentions is [intentions@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:intentions@mtsc.org.nz). Intentions sent to this address will not be acted upon UNLESS a party is reported overdue (e.g. by a family member, flatmate, friend, etc). The email is sent to several MTSC members. This information will be provided to Land SAR/RCC only if the party is reported overdue or a 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.

### 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> November, 2020: Mt Hikurangi

**Elliott O'Brien Medium Fit 021 941653**

This will be the first weekend Maunga Hikurangi (1752m) will be open post-lambing. DOC describes it as a 6-8 hr hike each way. Plan is to drive to Gisborne (stay at a hostel or campsite) after work on Friday night, then climb on Saturday, summit Saturday at dusk or Sunday at dawn. Drive back no later than 1pm, arriving back in Palmerston North by 9:30pm on Sunday. More info here: <https://maungahikurangi.com/faq/>

### 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> November, 2020: Howletts Hut

**Dave Mitchell Technical 021 678 0747**

Recently Jean, Ivan, Jenny, Adam and I did a weekend trip into Howletts via Otumore. If there is some interest in going to Howletts Hut we can take a more direct route by going in via Daphne hut. Howletts hut is situated below the peak Tiraha and more information is available on DOCs web site. If the weather is fine we could consider traversing Sawtooth ridge and returning down Black ridge. Howletts Hut is managed by the Heretaunga tramping club so we will need to donate something to them.



*Sunrise Trip  
by John Brock*



# Beginner's Guide to Photography

*Weekend workshop at the MTSC Lodge, Mt Ruapehu  
13-15<sup>th</sup> November 2020*

A beginner's workshop and guide to composition, focus and exposure in a beautiful landscape.

This will be a fun weekend based at the MTSC lodge and it will be an opportunity to get to know your camera in a variety of locations around the Tongariro National Park including the mountains, lakes, rivers and bush. We will aim to share our best photos each day and share each other's knowledge and skills. Themes will include landscapes, flora, fauna, sunrise, sunset and astrophotography.

We will aim to travel to the lodge on Friday evening. Weather permitting, up early on Saturday morning to catch the sunrise. Spend the day exploring walks around the Whakapapa Village and environs. Catch the sunset in the evening and the stars after dinner in the evening. On Sunday morning we will be free to explore again before heading home in the afternoon.

## **What Camera Gear to Bring:**

In addition to the gear you would normally take to the lodge for a weekend:

### Essentials

- Camera (Full frame, APS-C or Micro 4/3 recommended) + standard lens
- Tripod

### Optional (but recommended)

- Spare battery & charger
- Spare memory cards
- Wide angle lens
- Telephoto lens
- Polaroid filter
- ND & graduated filters
- Remote shutter trigger
- Wet weather protection
- Computer & card reader
- camera manual **and** Camera bag/backpack to put everything and your lunch in.

## **If you are interested and for more information**

Contact: Richard Lander  
[r.lander@xtra.co.nz](mailto:r.lander@xtra.co.nz)  
021 840472



*Coppermine Creek Trip by John Brock*

# TRIP REPORTS



## Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2020: Kapakapanui

Trip Leader, Reporter and Photographer: John Brock

*(With apologies to John because this report was omitted from the October newsletter due to an oversight by the Editor.)*

Will we go; won't we go? With a doubtful weather forecast on the day before it appeared discretion might over-ride valour, but with local wisdom from those closer to the location, it was decided, late in the day, to go for it (with a Plan B backup of course).

In the event, the optimists were proved right, with good overhead conditions greeting the ten who congregated at the end of Ngatiawa Road the following morning at 9 a.m.

With the river up a bit, a wet foot start was the order of the day except for those prudent enough to bring extra foot wear. Throughout the morning, climbing anti-clockwise, alternating periods of sun and shadow provided the opportunity to see the range of changing vegetation in all moods, particularly those marvellous mossy



forests on the upper reaches. Cold under the bush, we were greeted with warm sunny conditions at the trig for a well-earned lunch and good views to the west of Kapiti Coast and Island, as well as the South Island. Downhill after lunch through the alpine tussock and shrubs with their splendid winter colours, on to the Kapakapanui Hut for afternoon tea, then out to the road end by 4 p.m. completed a very enjoyable day. Even the hailstorm in the last hour was seen as a bonus.

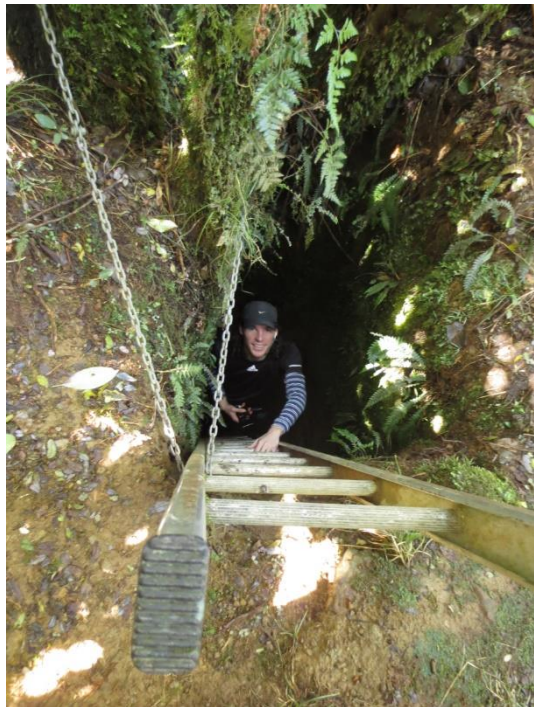
## Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2020: Not the Sledge to Naenae Crossing

Trip Leader, Reporter and Photographer: Helen Peek

Due to the low number of trampers (four) the logistics of the advertised trip made it unfeasible so, by consensus, it was changed to Sledge Track and Platinum Mines. However, trip leader Tim then chose to go helicopter- and police car-riding courtesy of a SAR callout so the trip became two old girls taking a young lad on a trip along the Sledge Track, Platinum Mines Loop, Toe Toe Loop, Arapuke Road and Back Track.

The day was stunning: sunny, basically windless, muddy but not as much as expected considering the 44mm rain, at least in town, in the 48 hours prior. We started out with the intention of doing version two of the

trip and, although having visited a couple of the mines in the past, I had never been right around the loop and we all thoroughly enjoying exploring the mine shafts.



With the day being so lovely and getting back to the new swing bridge by 2.40 p.m. we decided to cross it and go up and around Arapuke Road and down the Back Track to add an extension to the trip. Interesting to see all the extensive work done on the BMX tracks in the last couple of years since I was up there - most impressive and a useful asset for the region.

Trip bonuses: after the rain the extra water flow in the stream and



waterfalls, clean and glistening foliage, bumping into Bev, Gary and the dogs, and finding a Powelliphanta snail shell, though, sadly, it had been eaten.

Many thanks to Jinny and Matthew, for being great company making it a great day out in great weather. The stats = 18.3 kms in 7:40 hours.

## Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2020: Atiwhakatu/Mountain House

Trip Leader and Reporter: Jill Faulkner

Photographer: William Laing

It's always difficult to predict the weather weeks out from taking a tramp. The leader needs to be on speaking terms with the weather gods and put in a good word to keep everyone safe and on track. Most of the time it works. However Wednesday 23 September meant we left behind a far better day in the Manawatu and travelled towards a deteriorating morning the closer we came to our destination in the Wairarapa. Rain and windy squalls kept us amused even before we arrived at the Mt Holdsworth carpark.

Still, trampers are a hardy collection of individuals and there were many smiles and good cheer as we talked about the day's options. The leader welcomed two new faces. One group set off for the Mountain House Loop walk, moving through silver beech stands but meeting low lying mist, restricting more expansive views. They met a school party at Rocky Lookout displaying youth and exuberance. This group was on their way to test out Powell Hut in the high winds.

The second group, with Elke the dog, strode off along Atiwhakatu River, following the valley track to have lunch at the hut. This walk is very picturesque with grand rimu, kahikatea, and beech sections. A great day out especially for the leader who enjoyed her longest day in months. We learnt many worthwhile bits of information from our knowledgeable companions. I appreciated



being gently reminded how to turn on a radio to help keep the groups connected. Also, I learnt one cannot get away with anything!

Thanks to Robbie for driving the van. Evan, Anne R, Robyn, Cheryl, Jenny W, and Bernard for their cars.

## Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2020: Coppermine Creek Loop (not Stanfield Hut)

Trip Leader and Reporter: Suzanne Clark

Photographer: John Brock

The weather forecast for our proposed trip to Stanfield Hut looked promising but when we arrived at the Tamaki West road end it was anything but. It was hosing down and no one was keen to get out of the van. Royce and her carload suggested we go to the Coppermine Road end instead and tramp the loop track which all thought an excellent idea. As it turned out it was a very good backup plan as it was not raining (much) by the time we got there and we saw native *Corybus* and *Pterostylus* orchids flowering; the clematis and bush



*Corybus* orchid

lawyer were also flowering. We had lunch at a beautiful mossy glade under very impressive Rimu trees half way down the Billy Goat track. A coffee stop at Woodville on the way home was enjoyed by all. Thanks to the van driver Syd and car drivers, Ken and Royce.



## Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2020: Rangiwahia Reserve

Trip Leader and Reporter: Jenny Williamson

Photographer: Cheryl Dawson

It was a fine, sunny day after a wild weekend when 25 trampers met at the road end and prepared to walk the Rangiwahia Reserve and new extension. This recent addition has not yet been opened to the public so we were privileged to be one of the first groups to explore it. Steve Bielski, a local farmer, who has, with his wife Mary, invested many hours in building this track, gave us a brief introduction. The area is 130 acres of native virgin bush just behind Rangwahia village. These trees were left as it was considered an ideal water catchment area



for the planned town. We set off along a muddy roadway which skirted the bush, until we reached a newly erected stile and entered the Reserve. The distance from start to finish was 4 kms so much shorter than our usual tramp. However, with Steve in the lead, stopping to point out things of interest along the way and a few steep challenging sections, it took us 4 hours.

We were entranced by the range of beautiful native trees including Rimu, Totara, Miro, Matai, Black and Red Beech, Maire, Rewa Rewa and Northern Rata. Seventy of these trees were labeled to show the variety, courtesy of the Fonterra Grass Roots Fund which provided the money for these. It certainly added to the educational aspect of the walk. We also learned some interesting facts about NZ's largest moth, the Puriri moth. We saw the tunnel holes in a number of trees where the Puriri caterpillar had bored through the bark into the wood. They live 5-6 years as a grub in the tree and graze on the tissue that develops around the opening of the tunnel, before pupating and then becoming a moth. The moths may be eaten by Morepork. Host trees include Puriri, Beech and Titoki.

We lunched at Red Beech cafe, a sunny spot, surrounded by, yes, beech trees.



There were marvellous views of the surrounding countryside from time to time, until eventually we emerged. Most

made their way back to the car park. Four keen people climbed "Mt Rangiwahia," a hill directly opposite the exit from the bush. It was worth it for the view which was extensive in all directions. Two trampers crossed the road and clambered up into the Cemetery Reserve where a large number of native fuschia can be found.

Eventually everyone set off for our coffee stop. Hansens cafe was a welcome sight where we enjoyed coffee, tea and cake!



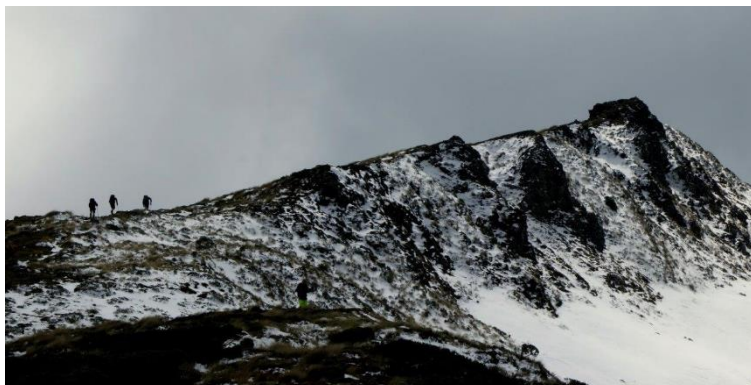
## Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2020: Sunrise Hut

Trip Leader: Norm Cooper

Photographer: John Brock

As we were coming out of Woodville, we could see the snow. No clouds, 4 degrees and my Sunies were going great guns. Some were hoping to make it to the top, so my advice to them was "don't wait for us at the morning tea stop; bury the boot but stick together as different groups, both up and down, with a turn-around time of 1300 hrs."

Not a breath of wind and the car temp. was 6 degrees. We could not have asked for better tramping conditions. We saw a bit snow off the track just before the seat where we had morning tea. A photo of Judith Collins on the cover of Vogue magazine was a highlight at this break. "How long do you think it is to go Leader?" (John Doolan very good value for funnies). "About a 1 ¼ hours" said I, standing in front of the DoC Sign that said 1 ¾ hrs. We are



all going to make it. The picture tells the story of the rest of the tramp to the hut. The smiles were enormous all round. Seventeen went beyond the hut in all directions. The last three were up before 1300 hrs to much pole waving and cheering. They went straight out the back to have a look at the others in the very far distance, where there was a slight breeze.

Eating my lunch outside I thought I heard children talking and next they came charging up the track. I was



expecting teenagers but the first three looked about 8. In all there were five adults, a 12-year-old and about ten between 5 and 8. Inside the hut were two of our finest trampers 75 years older than the 5-year olds. This, to me, was the highlight of the trip: the next generation of trampers. Had a talk to one of the adults; none of them had been up before but they had been told they would make it in one day. They only stayed for about 40 minutes, but all went around the back of the hut to have a look. I asked them to fill in hut book which they did. I met them again at the seat stop where they had a rest, and the car park where they were sitting in a nice group. The 5-year olds were still talking and laughing. It bodes well for the future of tramping.

Coming down we must have passed at least 15 who were going to overnight at the hut. The farmer said no for my first choice of a trip for this day so I looked at weather for different huts and came up with Sunrise. The sun was shining there, (patchy cloud after we started tramping), no wind, snow, and a Team of 24 made me really look good. (Team: Buzz word this year)

Thanks, Wayne, for driving van, Judy Callesen and Naomi Thompson for driving their cars.

## Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2020: Zekes Hut

Trip Leader and Reporter: Marion Beadle

Photographer: Cheryl Dawson

Although it rained all of our drive up past Taihape, it had nearly stopped at the car park and coats were off when we reached the bush. There was mud in the usual places but not too deep and the lower half of the track has had some undergrowth cleared. There was a trio of DOC staff on the track who told us administration of the Hihitahi Forest Park has changed from Turangi to their Ohakune office. They were doing a plant survey.

Most of our group lunched in a nicely sheltered area at the clearing while five went down to the hut. Mist cleared and the Mountain appeared before we headed home via refreshments at Telephonique.



## Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October, 2020: Crashed Aircraft, Akatarawa Forest

Trip Leader: Royce Mills

Photographer: John Brock

Our destination was the site of a tragic plane crash in the Akatarawa Forest. Two young trainee Air Force pilots



lost their lives here in bad weather in November 1941. Despite extensive searching it wasn't until April 1943 that the wreckage was discovered by hunters, and the bodies were recovered later that month. Although the main fuselage of the Airspeed Oxford Mk II has been removed there is still considerable wreckage to view.



It took me two visits during this year to find the crash site, and I appreciate the company of my tramping companions who came along to help. On 8 October, now armed with GPS track files and waypoints, plus experience of previous visits, fifteen Thursday trampers set off in fine, cool weather to find the crash site. Our tramp started inland from Paraparaumu on Maungakotukutuku



Road. We climbed on a well-graded and well-formed track to our highest point, Maunganui (708m). Just before the top we stopped for morning tea at one of the few open lookout points. From here we enjoyed good views of the Kapiti coast and Kapiti Island. There are many tracks in this forest and careful navigation was required, particularly for the last hour from Maunganui to the crash site. This track was quite faint and low hanging branches were a hazard to watch out for: one or two taller members of our group had more than one head knock. The track each side of Maunganui was muddy - squelchy challenging mud! - Our team

displayed some tricky footwork and dance moves through here. We started to spot the first of the wreckage at 12.30 pm and stopped here for lunch. We spent about an hour eating and exploring the many pieces of wreckage scattered about with some enthusiasts widening their search successfully.

We retraced our steps on our return until reaching an alternative track out. It was a long downhill spur taking an hour, but the forest was open and attractive as it had been all day. This route took us out to a crossing of the Maungakotukutuku stream, a welcome opportunity to wash our boots and gaiters, followed by a 15 minute road walk back to our vehicles. It had been a seven hour day including stops.

Thanks to all who took part in this tramp; you were a keen and good-humoured group who put up with mud in places and scratches, tumbles, bruises and blood here and there. Thank you to Ken for driving the van. Maungakotukutuku road is very winding and narrow! Also thanks to Ken for the new charging set-up for the radios in the van. A great idea, and the five radios were much appreciated on this tramp where navigation was tricky.

## Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2020: Palmy Walk

Trip Leader and Reporter: Mary Mercer

Charles Little and I set off from JFK Drive at 8 am in overcast conditions with a slight breeze and a maximum of 17°C forecast so perfect for a city circumnavigation. There were surprisingly few people on the Mangaone track as we walked between the stream and back yards. A novelty for me was that, just after we had gone under the railway line near Tremaine Avenue, a train pulling many wagons crossed. The next highlights were green paddocks with a few cattle, the trotting track and then, across Pioneer Highway, the race course. Since we had plenty of time, we continued alongside the Mangaone stream till past the race course where we had a short break. Then on past the sewage works (not too smelly) and onto the river path. By the time we got to the Esplanade the numbers out enjoying the lovely day had increased. Here we saw a second train, somewhat smaller than the first. We also satisfied Charles' criterion of a good walk by enjoying a very pleasant, rather early lunch at the Esplanade café.

We left the Manawatu River at Ruamhanga Crescent around 1pm and took the River Link Path back to our start point. The [River Link Path](#) (page 24) ambles along roads and through a number of parks and grassed areas, some including streams or drainage ditches, which were new to both Charles and me. We arrived back at our vehicles at 2.45pm so took about six hours to walk the 28 km.

## 10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 Snow Caving, Mt Ruapehu

Trip Leader and Reporter: Ken Mercer

Photographers: Ken Mercer, Jean Garman

Jean and I thought we had a good plan when, on Saturday morning, we headed to Turoa. The trip was proposed by Hazel and the intent was to camp on the Summit Plateau, above Whakapapa. However Hazel pulled out but we thought a snowcave was worth the effort as it's warmer than a tent. So our intention was to skin across to and up the Mangaturuturu glacier then past the lake to the Plateau. The forecast was clear weather until later Sunday when a front with associated wind was expected. What could go wrong?

Fortunately on the way up we called into the ski patrol so alarms wouldn't be raised at the end of the day when our car was still in the carpark. They'd been watching the weather closely and the wind was now arriving at midnight. Oops; time for plan B which I had checked out a week earlier, namely The Triangle at the top of the ski field (2300m) and 300m lower than our planned route. Still exposed but much less so.

So we enjoyed one run on the field, back up the lift, then sidled across to a small gully known as The Couch



where snow had accumulated during the season without any ice layers (which form when it rains). Plenty of snow too as my avalanche probe failed to touch any rocks. To speed things up we started with two tunnels, connecting them inside then blocking one off as the cave expanded. As a cave grows snow can be moved faster and after 2 ½ hours we had a most respectable abode in which we laid out our groundsheets, bivy bags and sleeping mats. As it was (just)

below freezing the bivy bags weren't really necessary but they did provide a level of insurance in case the walls became wet.



Modern gas cookers are wonderful but it takes more than twice the energy to first melt ice then boil it compared to simply heating cold water. In addition, gas cylinder pressure is lower so we were using a liquid fuel cooker. We set it up on a snow shelf, first for a re hydration brew, then our dinner which, thanks to Jean, had lots of dehydrated veggies as well as mince and flavour. By the time we climbed into our bags the wind had picked up.

Next morning we congratulated ourselves for staying low as the wind was blowing vigorously straight down the mountain. After breakfast we put crampons on our boots and our skis on our packs to traverse back to the piste which was

slightly sheltered from the wind and had a marginally better surface. We had the field to ourselves as none of the lifts were operating so we skied down to Clarry's track, where the snow ran out, then again carried our skis to the carpark.

### **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2020: Castle Rock**

Trip Leader and Reporter: Carolyn Brodie

Photographer: Rod McKenzie

21 people; 7.30 start ; 2 1/2 hours driving to the parking spot on the right of the desert road just past the Tukino ski Field turnoff. A welcome stop at Waiuru on the way there. Two to 2 1/2 hours tramping to the rock up and down and up and down and up..... The weather looked a bit doubtful but I put my faith in [yr.no](http://yr.no) and saw a possible window of ok weather for our day. As the photos show we had brilliant weather and wonderful views, despite a very chilly breeze, but got really warm in the dip where the mountain beech grows.



Many of us got to the outcrop of volcanic rock that gives the trip its name, but I think we all enjoyed being on the volcanic plateau on a fine day. Most of the tramping was through tussock but the tall thin mountain beech trees in the gully made a beautiful contrast to the rest of the tramp.

Thankyou drivers: Robbie, Bev and Jenny Williamson.

### **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2020: Rangiwahia and Mania**

Trip Leader and Reporter: Syd Easton

Photographers: William Laing and John Brock

The aim had been to complete a loop from the Rangiwahia Hut car park, past the hut taking the turn onto the track leading to Triangle Hut, then leaving that track to go down the ridge leading to the Mania Track A smaller

party, not wanting to complete the loop, would drive the vehicles to the Mania carpark and walk up the Mania Track to meet those coming around.



The weather was not promising, and we could see snow lying on the trees just above the upper limits of pasture, but we decided to try. Accordingly, eight of us were let off at the Rangiwahia carpark, and five others drove around to Mania.

For the last half hour approaching the hut, the feature of the walk was the snow on the vegetation. There was a good snow cover but no ice. We reached the Rangiwahia Hut in 75 minutes. The hut had people in it overnight; the fire was still going in the box and the hut was nice and warm. Outside there was a strong cold wind and snow on the ground. Visibility was not too bad. We decided to push on.

The radios came into their own. The group that had gone around to Mania were able to make contact with us and we told them of our intention. We pushed up from the hut for about 35 minutes. The snow was not really deep, but in places had bridged across the deeply rutted track, so that it was not obvious where the track was and we sometimes found our feet crashing through to ground up to 50 cm lower than we had thought it was. The track became progressively more difficult, and the wind gusts stronger.

Eventually we agreed we should turn back. For those who know the track, we had got to the first of the marker poles. The difficulties with the track were likely to be worse on the Mania side where the track is not really marked at all up in the tussock zone.

We returned to the hut and completed eating the lunches we had half-consumed on the way up. We could not immediately contact the other group but eventually they were in a space where radio contact worked. We told them we were turning back, and they gave us an estimated time for their return to the Rangiwahia car park. That was over 3 hours away, so we settled down in the hut for another hour. On our return down it was snowing quite heavily, but the remnant snow had disappeared from the lower levels.

In the meantime, the smaller group had enjoyed a good walk to the upper forested levels of the Mania Track. They experienced light snow fall but there was none on the ground. They enjoyed the forest, though noted that it seems to be more open than in the past. So, a shout out for the radios. They really are worth taking.



## Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2020: Dave Grant's Farm

Trip Leader: Dave Grant

Reporter: Mary Mercer

Photographer: John Brock

In spite of Dave's very clear directions, we overshot his gate off Ridge Road on our first pass. However, Ken managed to turn the van around a bit further up the road and, when we returned, Dave and the other carload of four from PN were waiting in the paddock. John Brock turned up soon after to make seventeen

in all. Dave, armed with his piece of alkathene pipe, made an excellent host as he walked us around his and two of his neighbour's farms. Among other interesting things, he told us was that the water in his dam is a couple of metres below its usual level for spring although the grass looked lush. Not long after I discovered that, as well as functioning as a walking pole and a pointer, Dave's alkathene pipe was also very useful for holding down electrified wires so the rest of us could clamber through various fences.



*Ken, on right, sprinting across the Oroua River in a futile effort to avoid wet feet*

We soon left the paddocks and headed down a dry stream bed in a gully with regrowing native bush. After a stop in the sunshine for morning tea we continued on to the Oroua River. Luckily it had dropped a bit after recent rains so we could safely cross it multiple times as we made our way along the valley. At this stage, Syd and Alistair chose to walk across the paddocks til we got to our lunch stop where, in order to reach us, they were obliged to re-cross the

river. While the rest of us relaxed on the bank, Judy stripped off and went for a swim, not something anyone else was tempted to do in spite of the sunshine! We were all a bit warmer though by the time we had walked up the steep farm track that led back to the top of the cliff. From there we ambled up and down across the paddocks and alongside a pine plantation, til we reached Dave's house where his wife, Gaewyn, supplied us with hot drinks and delicious scones with jam and cream. We all relaxed on their verandah enjoying the fabulous views across the river to the terraces beyond. Then it was a short walk back across the paddocks, past some rather curious young heifers, to the vehicles. A big thank you to Dave and Gaewyn for a most enjoyable and interesting day.



## Hut Tickets for Sale

Hut tickets can be purchased from Howard Nicholson 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](#).



## Contact Details

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

### Committee 2019 - 2020

President	Rob Pringle	<a href="mailto:president@mtsc.org.nz">president@mtsc.org.nz</a>	020 426 2176
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Lodge Manager	John Lyttle	<a href="mailto:lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz">lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 433 6307
Mini-Bus Manager	Ken Mercer	<a href="mailto:minibus@mtsc.org.nz">minibus@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 364 6475

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

### Appointees

Lodge Bookings	Hugh & Liz Wilde	<a href="mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz">lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz</a>	021 054 2560
Gear Custodian	Peter Rawlins	<a href="mailto:gear@mtsc.org.nz">gear@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 678 0747
Ski Captain	Howard Nicholson	<a href="mailto:ski@mtsc.org.nz">ski@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 294 1941
Social Convenor	Linda Campbell	<a href="mailto:social@mtsc.org.nz">social@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 333 4493
Wednesday Trips	Bev Akers	<a href="mailto:bevakers@xtra.co.nz">bevakers@xtra.co.nz</a>	06 325 8879
Thursday Trips	Syd Easton	<a href="mailto:eastonps@inspire.net.nz">eastonps@inspire.net.nz</a>	06 356 7462
Facebook	Ivan Rienks, Rob Pringle, Karen Tutt, Howard Nicholson <a href="mailto:facebook@mtsc.org.nz">facebook@mtsc.org.nz</a>		

### New Members

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

### Club Equipment

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

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

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

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

### Accommodation at the MTSC lodge on Mount Ruapehu

The lodge is close to Iwikau Village, has power, heating, hot showers and is stocked with food. Members and their guests are welcome. For Lodge bookings email Liz and Hugh Wilde [lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz) or phone 021 054 2560. To confirm your booking, payment must be made by 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.