

beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North 4440 www.mtsc.nz <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>

Issue 11. December, 2021



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.

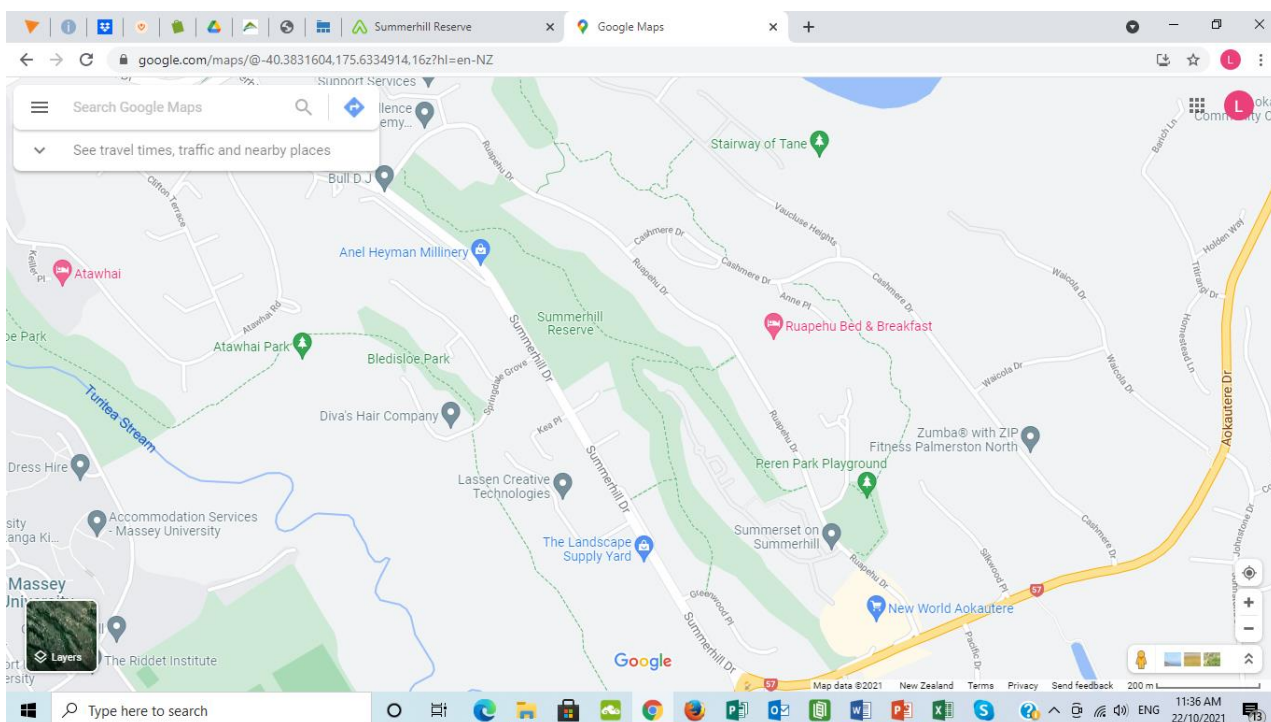
6 pm Tuesday 7 December, 2021: Walk and Dinner

Meeting at 6.00pm at Summerhill Car Park. Dinner at the Mekong Restaurant at 7.15pm.

Starting from the track near the car park we will enter Summerhill Reserve and walk down through the reserve to Ruapehu Drive. We will turn right and walk along Ruapehu Drive to reconnect with the track that will take us to Cashmere Drive and along to Peren Park Playground before coming back out onto Ruapehu Drive not far from the car park. (See map below.)

After our walk we will head to the Mekong Restaurant, 194/200 Ruapehu Drive, Summer Hill Shopping Centre.

Anyone wishing to go on the walk/dinner (either or both) on Tuesday 7 December needs to contact Linda (social@mtsc.org.nz) as soon as possible so she can confirm bookings at the Mekong Restaurant at Summerhill. Phone/text 027 333 4493 or email lindammc@xtra.co.nz



7.30 pm Tuesday 1 February, 2022: Summer Snippets

This is a bit of a social occasion and the opportunity for some to share their fun summer activities. Peter Rawlins will organise the programme of speakers. Please contact him at rawlins.hunt@gmail.com if you are willing to share your summer trips.

7.30 pm Tuesday 1 March, 2022: First Aid

In 2020 Mel Harper spoke to a group of us about first aid via Zoom, thanks to Covid. It was a very useful talk for all trampers. Mel will speak again, this time face to face, in March 2022 on First Aid for Trampers and age specific issues. It will be a great opportunity to hear words of wisdom which are useful for both the outdoors and everyday life.

7.30 pm Tuesday 5 April, 2022: Interclub Quiz

In 2021, thanks to Covid, we had to are now hosting the Interclub quiz night at our April 2022 club night. Tim and Linda see as many club teams of 4-6 people as questions. There will be sweet treats for



postpone our Interclub Quiz Night. We our usual (Rose City Aquatic) clubrooms at will host the evening and would love to possible. There will be eight lots of twenty all, especially winners and tailenders!

Inter-Tramping Club Photo Competition 2021

MTSC members, listed below, are to be congratulated on winning a number of section prizes. The overall results are on the [MTSC web site](#), along with a commentary on each section. These and other photos will feature in a 2022 MTSC calendar which should soon be available. To whet your appetite the photos are also included in this newsletter, numbered as shown in the list below.

- | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Above Bush No Human: | 1 st | Richard Lander 1 |
| | 3 rd | Royce Mills 2 |
| Above Bush with Human | 2 nd | Ken Mercer 3 |
| Below Bush No Human: | 1 st | Maria Lombard 4 |
| | 3 rd | Maria Lombard 5 |
| Below Bush with Human: | 2 nd | Louise Lahmert 6 |
| | 3 rd | Louise Lahmert 7 |
| Long Exposure: | 2 nd | Richard lander 8 |
| | 3 rd | Maria Lombard 9 |



Native Flora and Fauna: 1st Maria Lombard
and 3rd overall; 10

REPORTS AND NOTICES

MTSC President: Tim Swale

president@mtsc.org.nz

The unpredictability of our Spring weather was brought home to me recently as I explored the area around the Otangane and Toitōi Loops in preparation for a SAR (Search and Rescue) navigation exercise. The Thursday was perfect, with warm temperatures, no wind and clear views of Ruapehu to the north and the Tararua Range to the south. By Saturday when our SAR groups went in, the visibility was down to 150metres, it was blowing hard and raining, with one sudden downpour causing creeks to run brown as they gushed downhill. In all fairness the weather forecast was exactly right and these days, with the likes of Metservice, Metvuw, Yr.no and Windy, we have a good amount of knowledge before heading out. However, good wind and waterproof gear should always be carried, just in case.

John Lyttle, our Lodge Manager who is always working away behind the scenes, has recently had a great success in obtaining a grant of \$22,000 from Pub Charity to upgrade the toilets at the lodge. This is fantastic news and should make our lodge an even better place to stay. He will be purchasing materials over the next few weeks and then organising work parties to go in and do the hard labour required in order to get the job done. If you are able to help, even by way of carrying materials in, that would be greatly appreciated.

Our lodge is our greatest asset, but at the same time it has, in recent months, started to cause the committee concern due to a massive jump in insurance costs (from \$15,500 in 2019, and \$17,500 in 2020 to a quote of \$28,000 this year). Over the years, charges and compliance costs have steadily increased with some clubs sadly having to walk away from their lodges as income has not been able to keep up with costs. Our DOC license requires us, as a minimum, to insure for demolition and removal costs of \$250,000. If we can find an insurer who will cover demolition costs only, at a price we can afford, we may have to go down that route. The other option is to significantly increase income so that we can cover costs. Covid having disrupted the last two ski seasons and the prospect of ever shorter ski seasons due to climate change certainly don't help. If any of you have thoughts on the subject, we would be pleased to have your ideas.



At the November committee meeting we also discussed the Covid situation regarding the minibus. There is real concern amongst our members that they do not want to be put at additional risk by sharing a confined space, where social distancing is impossible, with people who could be carrying the virus. A resolution was therefore passed that, **from 3rd of December, minibus users need to be double vaccinated or have proof of a SARS-CoV2 negative test within the last three days.**

Also, in the minibus are some new information sheets for tramping group members that have a lot of useful information about the club including contact details, equipment list, overdue procedures etc. If you would like one, please help yourself. There are also incident report forms which we hope will not get used! They are to

record any accidents or injuries so that we can track any issues and take steps to avoid them in the future. Ken, as Chief Guide will monitor this.

As this is the last newsletter of the year, I wish you all a very happy Christmas and hope that you have a wonderful holiday visiting some of the amazing places around our beautiful country. Have fun but stay safe.

Request for Tramping Gear

Kia Ora MTSC members,

We are undertaking a Jobs for Nature project in the northern Ruahine range for wildlife recovery in both the backcountry and front country - along the forest park-farmland boundaries and streams that flow from Ruahine. Our vision is to further protect the wildlife. Expanding the traplines as juveniles fledge into unprotected stream catchment areas of the Ruahine range. A major part of our vision is to reconnect Māori, both hapū and rangitane whānau members back to the whenua.



Currently, we are in the process of recruiting eight kaimahi (field workers). We are targeting hapū and whānau who live in and around Omahū, Kererū, Waipukurau and Tamatea in Central Hawkes Bay. Traditionally hapū and whānau have not been involved in tramping, or even hunting, in the remote backcountry. Hence, they have little experience and knowledge of best gear for that wild tops weather.

We are in desperate need of a good supply of gear and wondered if club members have any old or unused tramping gear they would like to donate to our workers, including hapū and rangitane who want to get out there and experience the backcountry? The Mauri Oho budget covers a basic budget to buy a pack, boots, coat, PLB, and one layer of fleece. We are seeking gear - such as old thermals for a second layer, gaiters, old coats and packs, or any back up gear - in fact we'll accept any gear donations from club members.

To find out more about Mauri Oho go to our website here: <https://maurioho.nz/>
Our Mauri Oho HQ is at Ongaonga (the old DOC staff quarters), which we share with the Onga Historical Society. I live in Wellington and travel to the Ongaonga base and beyond, Mon - Wed weekly.

Ngā mihi

Lisa Whittle

021 022 75042

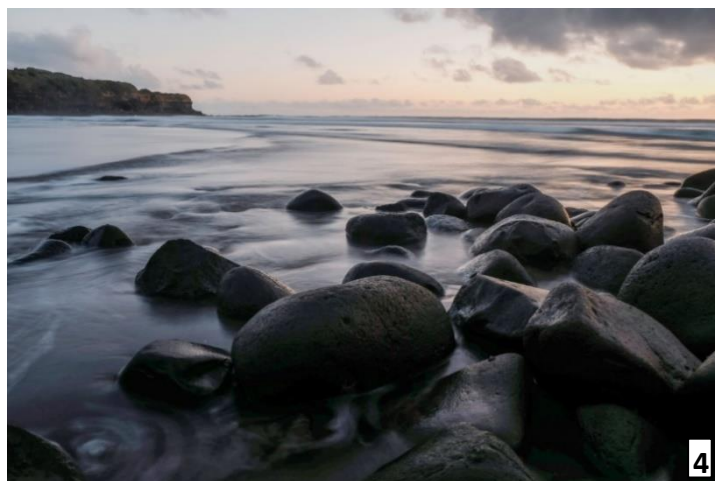
Maurioho.ruahine@gmail.com

Track Closure

A short section of the Wharite Peak Track is closed while repairs take place to the telecommunications tower. The section is at the top of the track near the tower. This closure means that there is no access from:

- Wharite road end onto Wharite Peak Track, or
- Coppermine Road to the Wharite road end using the Wharite Peak Track.

You can still access earlier sections of the Wharite Peak Track from Coppermine Road – it is just the first section of track at the Wharite road end that is closed.



Tower repairs are expected to take 2-5 months. We are also looking into alternatives. For updates please refer to the DOC website or contact dlow@doc.govt.nz <https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/manawatu-whanganui/places/ruahine-forest-park/things-to-do/tracks/coppermine-road-end-tramping-tracks/>

UPCOMING TRIPS

December Wednesday Tramps			December Thursday Tramps		
01	Margaret McKenzie	06 358 2535	02	Jenny McCarthy	021 215 2197
08	Bob Hodgson	06 356 2915	09	Darlene Westrupp	021 167 8815
January, 2022 Wednesday Tramps					
25-28	Ken Mercer	027 364 6475		Easy & Medium	

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.

25th - 28th January, 2022: MTSC Lodge, Mt Ruapehu

Ken Mercer Easy & Medium 027 3646475

This trip of four days will take advantage of our club's lodge to do a series of tramps a bit further from home. I'm hoping we get suitable weather to climb to the Crater Lake but less ambitious goals are the Waihohonu Ridge, a loop including Tama Lakes, and the Tongariro area (or crossing). The Whakapapaiti Valley track and Taranaki Falls loop are at a lower level and could run as separate day trips.

Staying at the lodge will cost \$40/night. Transport will be about \$45 and if you want to ride the Sky Waka to avoid climbing 400m it costs about \$40.

Lodge Work Parties

We have been successful in obtaining funding from Pub Charity to undertake a full upgrade of the toilets this summer. All and any help would be appreciated; the work involves totally stripping out the room of linings, lifting the height of the floor and roof and creating four cubicles along the external wall plus new windows. Planned work parties are over extended weekends and we are open for your attendance on any or all days:

- 19-23 Feb, 2022
- 11-16 March, 2022
- 1-2 April, 2022.

For more information contact John Lyttle at john@bcsltd.co.nz or 027 433 6307.



26 Nov, 2021: Robbie Green, Ken Mercer & Bill Milham, after a mad dash to the lodge to beat the rain, storing materials for the upcoming work parties.

The Whanganui Summer Programme

has a series of interesting walks around the region planned for January, 2022 at modest cost. See <https://whanganuisummerprogram.weebly.com/2022-whanganui-summer-programme.html>

TRIP REPORTS



Thursday 21st October, 2021: Nine Go for a Walk in the Gorge

Trip Leader and Reporter: Royce Mills

A large group of Thursday trampers were away on an overnight trip to Tutuwai hut so a walk in the Gorge was arranged for those who couldn't make it.

It was a cool, breezy, showery day but, as usual, the Gorge was a pleasant, sheltered place to walk. The vegetation was very green after recent rain and the bird song was impressive. We had a morning tea stop at the picnic table and most of the group continued on to Windy Point before turning back to complete an enjoyable morning's walk.

We were Christine S, Anne R, Judy C, Chris M, Bev, Ian A, Jinny A and John T plus Royce (photographer).

Wednesday 27th October, 2021: Hemi Matenga

Trip Leader and Reporter: Robyn Laing

Photographer: Robyn Laing

After an absence of about 18 months we returned to Hemi Matenga. Some of us decided that the hills behind Waikanae had risen higher since last time we climbed them. Also the trees had grown and looked more beautiful.

Seventeen of us set off in the rain from Memorial Park fearing that we might be spending the day stomping along wet and muddy tracks, but, by the time we arrived in Waikanae there was no rain and the sun was breaking through. We split into two groups. Fifteen descended to the Huia Street entrance that led up to Hemi Matenga at the Northern end. That left me and Bob Hodgson, who rejoined us wearing an impressive knee brace, after being beaten up by some Massey infrastructure; we avoided the stiff 90 minute climb and took the slightly gentler route up to the lookout from the Tui Street entrance. We all met at the lookout with the main group arriving pink cheeked and glowing after their robust climb. We were afforded very pleasant views over to Kapiti and the salubrious Waikanae gardens below as we tucked into our lunches. Evan set off at a fast clip after lunch. I swear he was jogging rather than tramping. The rest of us walked at varying speeds. We were all out by 2.15 pm and set off to have a very pleasant afternoon tea at the Peka Peka Harrisons Nursery cafe. Good food and very good coffee. Some of us regaled each other with stories of the exploits we had observed at "The Fitz" in our younger student days. Our lips are now sealed so don't ask.



Wendy drove the van like a seasoned pro. Thanks Wendy. Also thank you Jenny and Bob for providing the extra transport.

Thursday 28th October, 2021: Pinnacle Ridge Circuit

Trip Leader and Reporter: William Laing

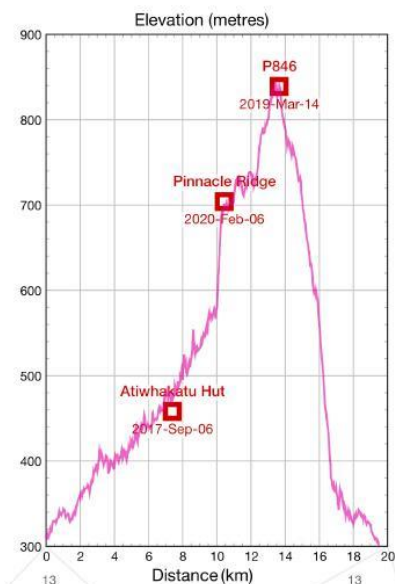
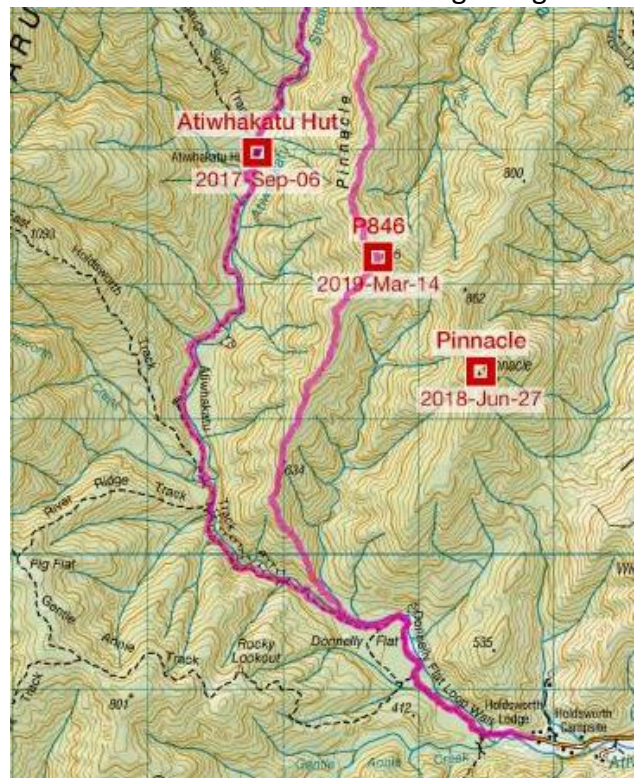
Photographer: John Brock

Twelve of us set out in the van to complete an ambitious tramp in the Holdsworth area. The route was up the Atiwhakatu River to the hut, then further up to a bridge and a steep climb to the Baldy-Mitre Flats track, then back along Pinnacle ridge to peak 846, down a long ridge to Donnelly Flat and back to the car park (see map below). The trip to the Atiwhakatu Hut was fast, taking about half the posted time on the DOC signs. We had morning tea there before continuing up river. This was new to many of the party, and an extremely rough tramp, with rocky clammers and bluffs to climb over. The second half of this section before the bridge improved a bit but only a bit. We



crossed the bridge, one at a time as is typical for an older DOC bridge, then climbed steeply about 100 vertical metres to the Baldy-Mitre Flats hut for lunch. After a brief lunch we set out for about 100 m in the direction of Mitre Flats until we came to a large fallen log with a ribbon. This marked the beginning of the long trail down the Pinnacle Ridge on an obvious, occasionally informally, marked trail

that was a pleasure to walk on, given its gentle ups and downs and underlying leaf mould below. On reaching peak 846 we set off down the ridge along an easy-ish track to the river, again at Donnelly Flat. The banks of the river were steep and bit slippery, given that a gentle sprinkling of rain was falling, but we made it across the river and up the other side with the help of ropes. We then followed the old track along the side of the river. This was badly degraded in places with slips and logs, but we soon joined the main 'highway' track and arrived back at the car park after seven hours and 19.4 km of tramping. The profile on the left shows the steep ascents and descents in contrast to the gentle walk to the hut.



The walk was a long one, but enjoyed by all (I hope) through a range of bush types, open areas and a river crossing. The weather held out magnificently, only starting to pour down once we drove off in the van. Thanks to Robbie Green for driving.



Saturday 30th October, 2021: Whanganui- Ūpokongaro bike and Hike

Trip Leader: Linda Campbell

Trip Reporters: Tim Swale (cycling) and Linda Campbell (walking)

Photographer: Ken Mercer

It is some time since MTSC has seen so many people out for a weekend activity, so it was something of a surprise that 20 people put their hands up for a bike ride. The event was meticulously organised by Linda who, in the end, decided to lead the walking option whilst the majority of us did the ride. We met at Taupo Quay in Whanganui, got bikes organised and then set off en masse down the riverside track to the river mouth at North Mole. Recent rain in the headwaters had turned the Whanganui River a dirty brown colour, creating



a wild and scenic seascape as it spilled out into a churning ocean. After a short break we were ready to continue on our journey so re-mounted and rode back to the city centre with a helpful tailwind. From there it was a mix of cycle paths and roads upstream through an emerald green landscape to the new footbridge over the river at Ūpokongaro, a total distance of 19km from the sea. Linda had booked us a table at the “Behind the Door on 4 Café” which turned out to have great food, quick service and a lovely outdoor seating area. The walkers joined us for a leisurely lunch in the sun, so pleasant that nobody seemed to be in any great rush to get back on the track. The final leg of the journey took us back over the bridge and downstream the way we had come to Whanganui. It really was a delightful day out with plans already being hatched for more biking in the future.

Along with the twenty cyclists we had two walkers. After some discussion the decision was made by the walkers to use Mapy.cz and take the old route that leads up State Highway 4 to Ūpokongaro and make a round trip of it. This was beautiful to start with, with many amazing gardens to admire as we walked. Entering the 100 km area, with a few areas of little road verge, wasn't quite so great but the lovely scenery made up for it. It was wonderful to arrive at the café and meet the cyclists who were already there. The bridge is really lovely and the walkers returned to their collection point after crossing the bridge and walking back along the cycle path admiring exotic plants as we went.

Wednesday 3rd November, 2021: Bottle Track

Trip leader and Reporter: Christine Finnegan

Photographer: Evan Davies

A group of 18 trampers met at the end of Putara Rd under cold, south easterly conditions. We headed off up



the track that leads to Herepai Hut. About five minutes after crossing the first swing bridge an obscure track heads up to the right. Our destination was pt 655m. The first part is steep and not well defined but we soon found the route, marked with tape and orange tin lids (in places). This made for an excellent opportunity to practice some compass and route-finding skills under the guidance of Ken.

As we gained height the track eased and was flat to undulating for a time after 655m. We then gently dropped about 100m down into the upper reaches of the Mangatainoka River. Drizzle had set in but we found a sheltered campsite under some trees for lunch. Upstream leads to Ruapae falls. However we followed the stream down to the first side-stream on our right, crossing it, and heading up a ridge to intersect with the Herepai hut track about 15minutes below the hut. Three keen trampers headed up to the hut while the rest of us returned to the carpark down the main track. It was an interesting day, with

some steep bits, some stream crossings, swing bridges, compass reading and good and rougher tracks. Many thanks to the drivers of cars and van and to the team who stayed together route finding.

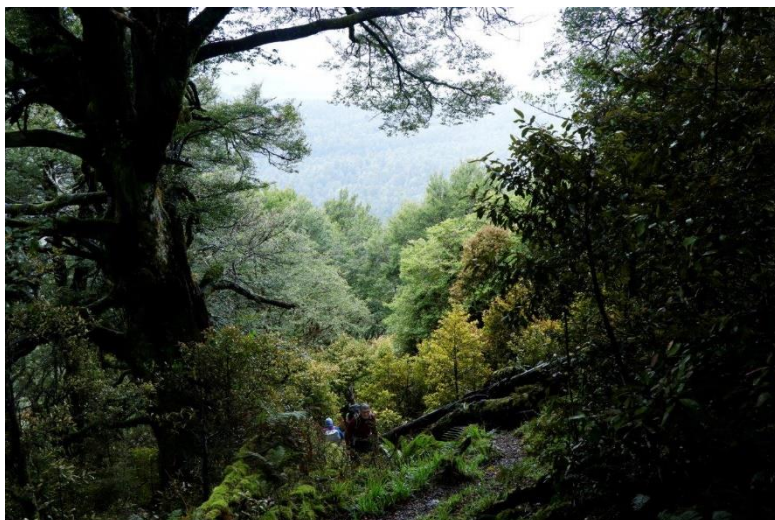
Thursday 4th November, 2021: Mania Track

Trip Leaders: Audrey Shepherd & Syd Easton

Trip Reporter: Audrey Shepherd

Photographer: John Brock

Ten intrepid trampers headed in two cars for the Mania Track, just north of Rangiwahia. Syd's dream was to walk to the tussock and catch the splendid views from the top of the Ruahine range, but the day was a mixture of cloud, drizzle, a little bit of sun and lots of wind.



Unfortunately, one car did not have enough petrol to get there and back, so had to take a trip to Mangaweka for a top up, shortening the tramping day for those five.



The track starts off over a farmer's paddock with ewes with lambs at foot. We were all grateful for this farmer's generosity. Then into the forest park along a muddy track for the first half an hour. Then we climbed slowly among, predominately, beech forest with a carpet of ferns on the forest floor. We could not help but notice the wind damage – leaves and twigs all over the path and some large trees, branches and widow-makers tossed aside by the wind that had blown over the previous week or so. We stopped for a cuppa at the hunter's campsite, a short way up the steep climb of the Mania track.

This site played tricks on us: it is so easy to choose the wrong path to exit this ferny glade.

We continued our steep climb hoping to get to the tussock but, just before lunch, we popped out of the bush, saw one clump of tussock, and a spaniard but were driven back by a strong, cold, and gusty wind. Diving back into the horopito, we stopped for lunch in a sheltered spot with a view under the clouds to the valley below. Not long after lunch, our group of five met the other carload of trampers, who had also stopped for lunch. On the way out we had a wee botanical session. Syd wanted to know the name of a white flowering shrub - it was the NZ native tree daisy or heketara or *Olearia rani*. - Suzanne also wanted to show us some flowering orchids – pterosylis - she had seen.

Since our trip was shortened by the wind, we arrived in Kimbolton in time for coffee and cake before returning to Palmerston North. The day's trampers were John Brock, John Thornley, Jinny Anderson, Tony Evans, Margaret Mathieson, Chris Mercer, Suzanne Clark, William Laing, Syd Easton, and Audrey Shepherd.



The orchid, *pterosylis*

4th-7th November, 2021: Mt Taranaki

Trip leader and Reporter: Linda Campbell

Photographers: Maria Lombard, Ken Mercer

Dawson Falls Café is closed and is being demolished to make room for a new build so we took the advice of Mt Egmont Alpine Club (MEAC) members and stopped at the Kaponga Hotel Café for a really nice lunch before heading up the mountain.

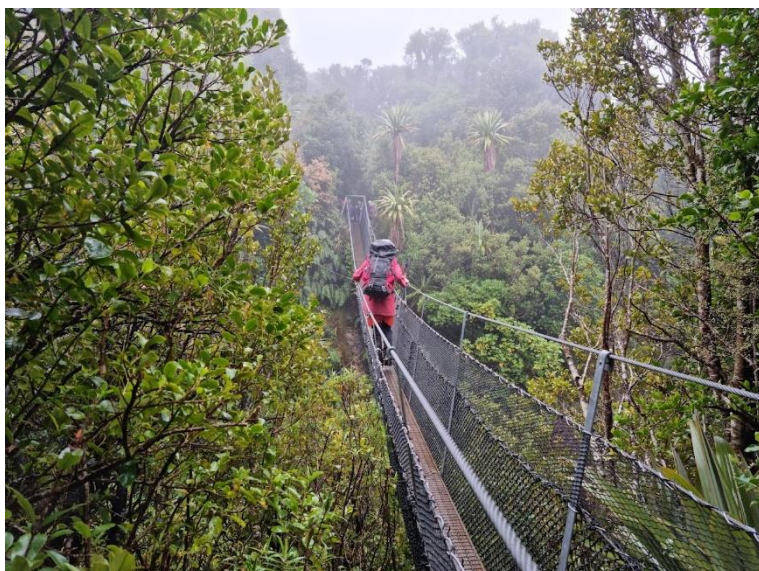
Kapuni Lodge, on the side of Fanthams Peak, was our destination for the night. Situated at about 1400m on the slopes of Fanthams Peak, it is approximately a 1½ hour walk up the Summit Track from Dawson Falls. On the way up we stopped at the Hillary Seat which was constructed in 1956 by the MEAC as a tribute to Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay. The bush was lovely on the way up with a thick understory and dangling lichens. Above the Hillary Seat visibility was limited and our next stop at Hooker Shelter revealed little of what was to come. By the time we got to the lodge it was rather cold so lighting the fire was a priority. The Lodge belongs to the MEAC, is very well maintained and has gas, a great wood /coal burner and solar lighting.

We woke early on the Friday morning and were rewarded with views of the mountain and a lovely sunrise. Once ready we set off up the wooden stairs toward Fanthams Peak and the turn off to the Upper Lake Dive Track (1500m). As always, the stairs were a bit off a slog so the turn off was a welcome sight. From there the

track sidles around through the tussock providing great views both up and down Mt Taranaki. Legend has it that Mt Taranaki was once near Tongariro, Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe. All four were in love with the beautiful Pihanga. During a violent quarrel with Tongariro, Taranaki was cast out. He fled, carving out the Whanganui River valley and turned westward. Certainly with the clear skies there are great views of the central plateau mountains and, as the crow flies, they do not seem do far away. There were many photo opportunities along the way and glimpses of Lake Dive and the Beehives, which are Cumulo domes formed about 7000 years ago. It is believed that Lake Dive was first seen by Bradshaw Dive when climbing with Thomas Dawson and Fanny Fantham, all names well known on the mountain. It is quite a long downhill from the junction with the Brames Track to Lake Dive and the site of the burnt down hut.

The Lower Lake Dive track was a bit more challenging with its many ups and downs and several stream crossings, some of which are an orange ochre colour. At one point there was a distinct sulphur smell! There are many ladders and stair cases on the track and places where the vegetation encroaches onto the track and fallen trees needed to be negotiated. Perhaps not as much maintenance is being done at the moment due the hut being burnt down and a good section of the round the mountain track being closed. Once we got back to Dawson Falls, we collected more food from the minibus, and headed to Waingongoro Hut (900m), approximately an hour away, for the night. By this stage we were once again in thick mist and visibility was very low. We had been going for ten hours and were pleased to get to the hut!

The next morning it was agreed that we would have a shorter day and just go to the Stratford Plateau via the Enchanted Walk. About 10 minutes from the hut we needed to cross the highest swing bridge in Egmont National Park, sited 24m above the Waingongoro Stream. The Enchanted Walk Track has many very big and/or washed out steps and it goes up quite steeply from where it turns off the track to the Stratford Mountain House. The beauty of the thick Goblin Forest is no doubt where the track got its name.



On reaching the Stratford Plateau car park we could just make out two vehicles through the mist and there was absolutely no view at all. After a toilet stop and, for some, a quick trip to the lookout just in case, we headed down the Ridge Track to the turn off and returned to Waingongoro Hut for the night. A short while later a woman and five children arrived to stay the night. They were all delightful and, although the children were young, they already had a good understanding of hut etiquette. They kept themselves busy all afternoon and there was a huge pile of kindling cut thanks to the older girls in the group.

On Sunday morning we headed along the loop track to Wilkies Pools in fine clear weather with wonderful views of the mountain. Wilkies Pools are a series of pools formed, in what is believed to be 20,000 year old lava, by the action of water borne sand and gravel. Just near Wilkies Pools the Kapuni Stream was bridged in 2016 and board walk put in place. This means there is a very good quality, wide baby buggy/wheelchair friendly path from Dawson Falls to Wilkies Pools making for easy travel.

After a chat with the DOC Ranger we drove a short way down the road to where there is a steep track leading down to the base of the 18m Dawson Falls. There was a good amount of water coming over and we enjoyed a lovely break there before heading back up to the minibus. We returned to the Kaponga Hotel Café for lunch before heading to Lake Rotokare, 12km from Eltham. The Rotokare Scenic Reserve has a predator proof fence and features a 17.8ha natural lake and extensive wetlands. A pontoon allows for observation of water birds and a place to sit and enjoy the surroundings. The reserve is now home a variety of bird species including kiwi, ruru, kārearea, tūī, korimako, kereru, grey warbler, tomtit, saddleback, whitehead and North Island robin and fern birds. At the lake edge there is raupō, flax, and pukatea/kahikatea swamp forest. There are eels and banded kōkopu in the streams and lake. This reserve that is well worth a visit when you are in the Taranaki and there is limited freedom camping with a donation box should you decide to stay.

All in all, it was a fantastic trip and I thank Maria Lombard, Judith Tonson, Mary and Ken Mercer, Ian August, Blair Petersen, Helen Peek, Linda Campbell (Leader), Tim Swale (front) for their great company.

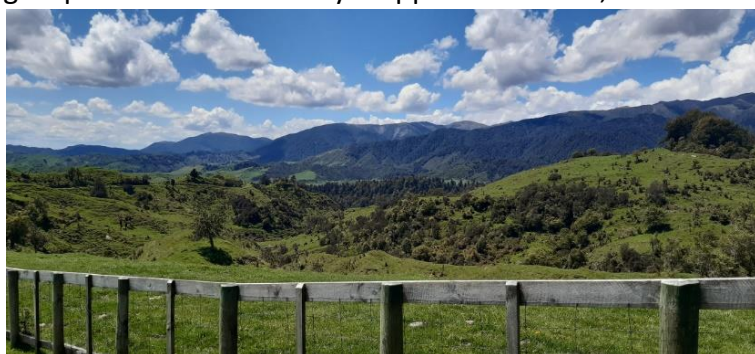


Wednesday 10th November, 2021: Mania Ridge

Trip Leader and Reporter: Rod McKenzie

Photographers: Kevin Crawford, Rod McKenzie

The Club Van and six cars containing thirty-one trampers arrived at the Mania Road end to a brilliantly clear day, which was sunny and warm, with no wind. The tramp for the day was 'in and out' on the same track. The trampers quickly formed into three groups, a fast group with goal of the bush line and tussocks, a medium group with the goal of second hunter's camp and a slower group who were wanting a comfortable walk in the bush. The fast and medium group were around the same size while slower group was four. Each group was given a radio. This enabled the leader who tramped with the medium group, to monitor the progress of each group and hear when they stopped for breaks, lunch made a start on the return.



Mania track commences with a short walk across farmland before entering the bush. Once in the bush the track skirts around the base of a spur then starts to climb first to small hunter's camp (near access to water). It then continues to climb to a second, larger hunter's camp on a level piece of ground about two hours from the road end.

After the second camp the track rises very steeply for about half an hour before easing off past the top of a large slip and on to the bush line. Underfoot the track was in good condition, reasonably dry and clear.

Members of the fast group made the tussock and were able to get clear views towards the coast, up country to Mt Ruapehu and along the Ruahine Range. The medium group made the second hunter's camp and were able to have a leisurely lunch with lots of chat. On the way back to the road end some of the group stopped for a break just before climbing the stile back onto the farmland and were surprised to find themselves sitting amongst several flowering NZ native orchids. Photos were taken to record the sight (R). The slower group made the first hunter's camp for lunch and were first back to the cars.



All trampers were back to the carpark by 3.30 after a marvellous early summer day in some wonderful bush. Thanks to the seven drivers for safely ferrying the trampers for the day from Palmerston North to the Mania Road end and return.

Thursday 11th November, 2021: Coastal Reserves

Trip Leader: Carol Exton

Trip Reporter: Audrey Shepherd

Photographer: John Brock

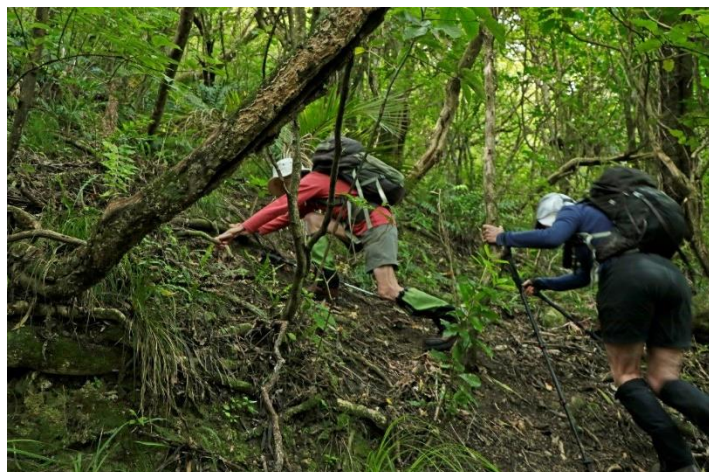
Eighteen people travelled from Palmerston North to Paraparaumu to meet Carol Exton and her dog Max, to go on an adventure in the local bush reserves. The group, Riki Allison, Jinny Anderson, Ian August, John Brock, Suzanne Clark, Syd Easton, Tony Evans, Garry Grayson, Alistair Hall, Allan Hardacre, Chris Mercer, Royce and Owen Mills, Audrey Shepherd, Judy Swainson, Gillian and John Thornley, and Judith Tonson, drove in two cars and the van to a rest area just south of the Southwood car museum turn off, where we met Carol and Max.

Firstly, we visited the Field Reserve, an area on the eastern side of the old main road, a little north of our meeting place. This three-hectare reserve is managed by Forest and Bird. It has no tracks, but it is easy to walk through the abundant kohekohe and nikau forest, up the hill to a point where we were able to cross over to the Paraparaumu Scenic Reserve.

Here we started our *real* tramp: up a steep climb, over rough and sometimes dry but slippery ground through predominately kohekohe and nikau forest with a few podocarps, ferns and even some flowering pterosylis orchids. But most of us were concentrating on the climb rather than the flora. At the top we came to a clear area with pylons overhead where we recharged with a cuppa, looking out over to Kapiti Island and the beaches below.



Up through Field Reserve among Nikau Palms



Scrambling up the steep section

Next, we went back into the bush and down to a small creek, past some large rimu, miro, kahikatea and other podocarps in among the kohekohe and nikau. Over the stream we had another climb, but not as challenging as the first. We met Carol's friend, Ian, who joined us to the edge of the forest then out on to farmland and up to the trig. Here we stopped for lunch in a grassy paddock (See over page). Once again, there were magnificent views over the coastline and many grand new homes.

We took a different return route, following Ian and Carol's lead, down a gentle ridge which turned into a not so gentle descent, bush bashing our way through supplejack and other vegetation with a couple of us taking nasty falls. Eventually, we came to the edge of the reserve and walked down a grassed fence line to Ian's car. Ian kindly drove drivers and worn out trampers back to our vehicles. The rest of us took a road walk to the top of the Barry Hadfield Nikau reserve and walked down to another car park where our vehicles were waiting.

It was almost 4pm when we arrived at the Waikanae coffee shop, Joe & Joy Eatery, and we were grateful the proprietors, on the point of closing, provided us with coffee and yummy cake. Thanks to drivers Syd Easton, Owen Mills, and Garry Grayson. Thanks to Carol and her friend, Ian, for showing us a unique area of New Zealand coastal forest, so different to our usual trips in the ranges.



Wednesday 17th November, 2021: Pinnacle Ridge

Trip Leader, Reporter and Photographer: Leonie Lowndes
A group of nine headed down to Mount Holdsworth intending to tramp up to Pinnacle Ridge, then loop back around, coming back down the ridge to Donnelly flat. However, when we got there, although the sun was shining, the weather was definitely against us, with strong winds and the Atiwhakatu stream was roaring. This made it too difficult to do the stream crossing so we decided to just walk up to Pinnacle Ridge. For the first half hour the track took us along the side of the river; it was quite muddy with lots of surface water and numerous large tree roots to navigate. Then it was a steep 90 minute up, where we went around a large slip that was opposite Donnelly Flat. The gradient levelled off slightly for the last half hour, at which point we stepped out of the bush at 877 metres and looked out over to the Powell and Jumbo Huts and that was where we sat and had lunch. The bush was lush and there



were many large Rimu, Beech and Matai trees. We came back the same way we went up and were back at the minibus by three o'clock.



Alternative Tramp on Wednesday 17th November, 2021: Maungakotukutuku Stream

Trip Leader: Ewen Cameron

Trip Reporter and Plotter: Bob Hodgson

Photographers: Robyn Laing, Rod McKenzie

It is always nice to discover and then explore new tramping locations. This account describes a tramp in such a location in the Kapiti Coast Region and readily accessed by the narrow, sealed Maungakotukutuku Road. Located in a scenic reserve on public land, it is recommended to anyone with moderate tramping and navigation skills.

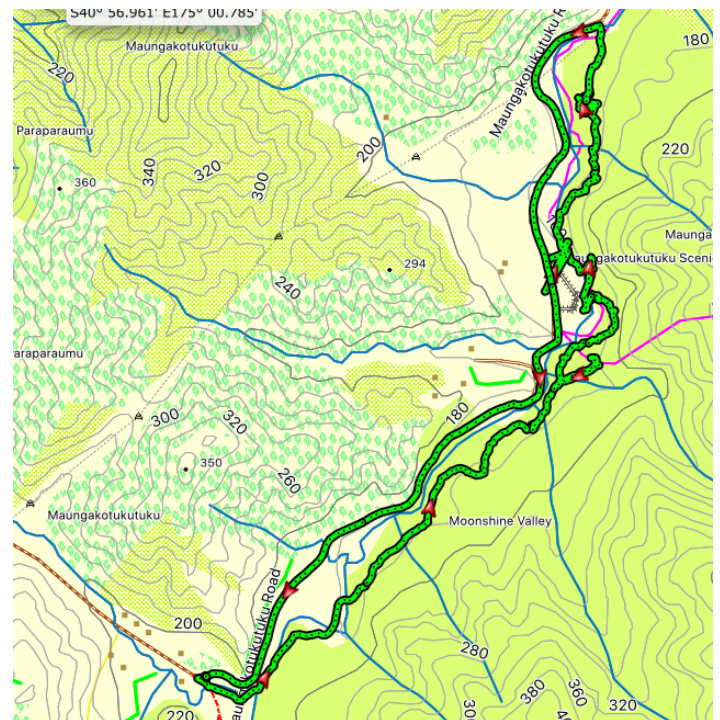
After a rendezvous in Paraparaumu, seven vehicles carrying a total of 23 trampers travelled in a convoy, led by Ewen, to park on the road side near a convenient entrance to the Maungakotukutuku Scenic Reserve. This forms part of the Greater Wellington Regional Council's North West Akatarawa Forest Reserve. For all most of us this was virgin territory. Here is a quote from Ewen, prior to the tramp.



A hanging orchid

"We will follow one of two tracks that traverse the ridges here and which follow the Maungakotukutuku stream down the valley towards the end of the road. Apart from being a pretty level track, it is good condition. The track, and the one on a different contour that runs parallel to it, pass through a conservation area with some fine trees. I have been to this area recently but took various tracks up and down ridges while exploring. The ridge tracks are steep and will be avoided on the tramp that I propose."

With a 9.50 am start to the tramp, our bold(!) adventurers crossed the stream for the first time of several and entered the reserve. It is a beautiful example of low country bush, with an exceptionally high canopy and many very tall, rather spindly, trees and a relatively sparse under bush. About two thirds of the track corresponded to Ewen's description of "pretty level and good condition" with the remainder in the central section slippery and slow going. We took a few false turns as there are numerous unmarked and more or



less identical tracks. It was enjoyable with plenty of laughter and banter as evidence. The weather was good as the forecast morning showers did not eventuate.

After lunch was enjoyed in the bush near the road end, we all tramped about halfway back to the cars on the road then returned to the bush, so avoiding

the gnarly section of the walked tracks. Two trampers chose to remain on the road. Once again, the radios were helpful in marshalling a relatively large group of trampers. We were all back at the cars by 2pm then travelled to Waikanae for coffee, slices and conversation.

Special thanks and credit to Trip Leader, Ewen, for a different and enjoyable day spent breaking new ground. Thanks also to Trip Convener Bob H and our several drivers.

Note: Kotukutuku means tree fuchsia.

Thursday 18th November, 2021: Zekes Hut

Trip Leader, Reporter and Photographer: Chris Mercer

Last time I changed clothes at the park beside SH1, I was tooted at by passing motorists. So, for this tramp, I



phoned the land owner who gave us permission to park inside the gate giving us privacy. We set off as a snug group of 18 but were soon spread out by having to wait at the one-person-at-a-time bridge over the Hautapu Stream. The track is muddy in the early stages and for the steep section, we used a rope sensibly loaned by Audrey. We all made it to the hut for lunch at about 12.30 pm, enjoying the sunshine and views over the Hihitahi Reserve. This reserve is known for an unusual dominance of the mountain cedar trees; Suzanne spotted a large black maire tree but I missed it so it's now on my wish list for next time. Royce and new member, Pete Wood, found a couple of geocaches. We had a fine, warm day and

enjoyed coffee and a snack at Taihape on the way home.

Wednesday 24th November, 2021: Karapoti Rata

Trip Leader: Anne West

Photographers: Ken Mercer, Helen Peek

This all began a few months ago, on reading an article about a giant Rata in the Akatarawa Forest. A small group of trampers set out to find this tree and explore the surrounding forest. With the location coordinates of the tree loaded on our maps, several routes were investigated. There was a trail up the Little Akatarawa River leading to a wash-out with a vertical rock face and a drop of about 4 metres with a rope suspended; we did not fancy this route. There were routes which looked promising on a map but the density of the supple-jack made for slow progress. Eventually we found better routes along old logging tramways and a variety of foot-trails. After three explorations the best routes were chosen, Wednesday trampers were invited, and 21 signed up for the adventure.

The journey to Karapoti Road was an adventure in itself, 30 km along the very narrow and very windy Akatarawa Hill Road: very scenic for the passengers. (One was heard to comment "This is like tramping in a car"), but quite a mission for the drivers.



At the road-end car-park we split into two groups; 13 chose the River Valley route, 8 chose the Ridge route.



All set off together up a steep hill but, within an hour, we parted ways to follow different, ancient tramways. The River group descended to a picturesque valley, with numerous stream crossings, some clambering around large boulders, and one of the group enjoyed a refreshing swim. Meanwhile the Ridge people made their way through beautiful native forest with some impressively large fallen trees. All trampers followed the leaders' instruction to keep together in their group and follow their guide. This was important in an area with multiple trails where, in order to reach our destination, there were several points where we left one trail and headed onto

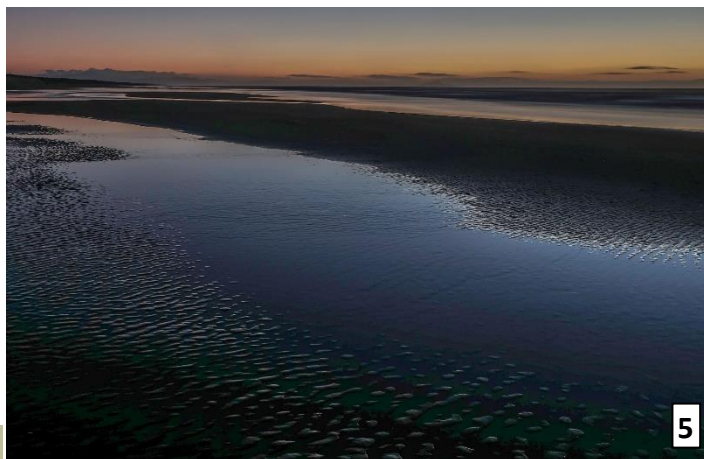
another (less obvious) trail. It was good to have radio communication. The River group were first to report their arrival at the Rata, later joined by the Ridge group. We were lucky to have perfect weather conditions, to sit and relax and enjoy the surroundings.

The Karapoti Rata is impressive, with multiple trunks: it has a diameter of 4.9m and age estimated between 1000 and 1500 years. Its location was discovered in 2008 by Gerald Arthur. Well hidden in the forest, this giant tree is not visible until you are almost upon it.

After lunch the two groups followed the same route around the ridges to return to the car-park. All seemed very satisfied with their day; this area was new territory for our group. A huge vote of thanks to drivers Margaret, Ken, Marion, Rod and Bill. We couldn't have done it without Rod, Ewen, Marion and Royce who assisted in the explorations and guided the groups; thank you all.

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 Passes, valid for 6 or 12 months, as well as the use of hut tickets is available on the [DOC web site](#)



Ruahine Whio Protection Trust Calendar

The Ruahine Whio Protection Trust, with the help of designer, Anthony Behrens, have produced a calendar as our annual public fundraising effort. We would greatly appreciate your support. Cost is \$20 and available by emailing Janet at jwilson@inspire.net.nz. Also available for cash sales at Bivouac Palmerston North and, possibly, at MTSC club nights. Get in quickly for early Xmas – numbers are limited.



Contact Details

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

Committee 2021 - 2022

President	Tim Swale	president@mtsc.org.nz	022 134 8384
Secretary	Howard Nicholson	secretary@mtsc.org.nz	027 294 1941
Treasurer	William Laing	treasurer@mtsc.org.nz	022 099 7988
Chief Guide	Ken Mercer	chief.guide@mtsc.org.nz	027 364 6475
Membership	Sue Nicholson	membership@mtsc.org.nz	
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: Bev Akers, Linda Campbell, Richard Lander, Blair Petersen, Rob Pringle, Peter Rawlins

Appointees

Lodge Bookings	Hugh & Liz Wilde	lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz	021 054 2560
Gear Custodian	Rob Pringle	gear@mtsc.org.nz	020 426 2176
Ski Captain	Peter Rawlins	ski@mtsc.org.nz	027 678 0747
Social Convenor	Linda Campbell	social@mtsc.org.nz	027 333 4493
Wednesday Trips	Bev Akers	bevakers@xtra.co.nz	027 274 6265
Thursday Trips	Syd Easton	eastonps@inspire.net.nz	06 356 7462
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 and two bivvy bags. Ice axes, crampons, and helmets are also available. We have three personal locator beacons (PLB) for which there is no charge. Contact the Gear Custodian: Rob Pringle on 020 426 2176.

Website <https://www.mtsc.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 internet payment (please email to confirm before depositing) Westpac account number 03 1521 022035300 or by cash to 179 Cook St Palmerston North 4410 in person.

	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.