

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 1. February, 2022



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.

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



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In 2021, thanks to Covid, we had to postpone our Interclub Quiz Night. We are now hosting the Interclub quiz night at our usual (Rose City Aquatic) clubrooms at our April 2022 club night. Tim and Linda will host the evening and would love to see as many club teams of 4-6 people as possible. There will be eight lots of twenty questions. There will be sweet treats for all, especially winners and tailenders!

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](http://www.doc.govt.nz)



John Brock – Mania Track Nov, 2021

REPORTS AND NOTICES

MTSC President: Tim Swale

president@mtsc.org.nz

A happy new year to all. I hope you had a wonderful Christmas and have been able to spend time with family as well as get out and explore our wonderful country. Judging by the emails that have been circulating, there have been plenty of club members making the most of the summer weather and getting together for tramps and bike rides.

Having been on Ken's recent trip to cycle the Old Coach Road and the Timber Trail in Pureora Forest, there seems to be quite a bit of enthusiasm for further bike trips so this could well become something of a regular feature in the coming year. It is also good to see the Lodge being used by members at this time of year. It is a wonderful resource year round, and with the planned work to upgrade the toilets, will be even better soon. The old adage, "use it or lose it" can appropriately be applied to our lodge as we have constant overheads that can only be paid for by people using the facility. With climate change and ski seasons becoming less reliable we will increasingly rely on year-round use, so if you are planning trips this year, how about considering using it as a base for a couple of days?

Finally, have a think about introducing others to tramping and the outdoor life that we all enjoy so much, but tend to take for granted. I have recently been working with Mauri Oho in Central Hawkes Bay, training workers in the "Jobs for Nature" scheme. Some of these people had never been tramping before and it was an absolute delight to see the enthusiasm for learning bushcraft skills and the joy of discovering the outdoors. They are building traps, setting up trap lines and getting involved with riparian planting so I am sure we will see some positive outcomes for nature. However, reconnecting people with nature and the land seems to me to be the big deal here. As club members we have discovered the great benefits to our mind, body and soul of spending time in the outdoors. How about making a new year's resolution to introduce some others to this wonderful world during the year?

In the meantime, enjoy the summer weather and stay safe in the hills.

We welcome the following new members to the club: Catherine Henderson and Roswitha Lentge.

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,



John Brock – Coastal Reserve, Nov 2021

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/>



| February Wednesday Tramps | | | February Thursday Tramps | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| 02 | Nicki Fielder | 022 515 3807 | 03 | John & Gillian Thornley | 06 356 9681 |
| 09 | Ewen Cameron | 022 034 1180 | 10 | John Brock | 06 329 4834 |
| 16 | Christine Finnigan | 027 230 5032 | 17 | Garry Grayson | 027 2695934 |
| 23 | Harold Pettersson | 021 047 2055 | 24 | Christine Scott | 021 724 098 |

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.

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.

TRIP REPORTS



Thursday 25th November, 2021: Daphne Hut

Trip Leader and Reporter: Norman Cooper

Photographer: John Brock

Daphne Hut can be accessed from Kashmir Road, Ashley Clinton. Eighteen degrees when 18 trampers were getting themselves ready as I handed out radios and checked on PLB's (6) and started my talk in a loud voice: "No turn around time. I would like 17 of you to get to Daphne today." Christmas comes early most thought. I will be doing a Donald Trump, leading from the rear and only up along the ridge on my own, armed with a PLB, fly and radio.



The tramp starts off over two streams, with flat land for ten minutes, then climbs up into bush with an open canopy for 20 minutes followed by another hour to reach the ridge. There is a great view out over Hawkes Bay: van at 600m, sign post on ridge at 1000m states one and a half hours to the hut. (Turning left at the sign post will take you to Longview Hut.)



The ridge faces west towards Daphne Ridge. You can hear the Tukituki River way down below. At gaps in the bush you can see very steep gullies which would lead to rapidly rising river levels, due to the large catchment area. The ridge drops down about 440 m to where the Tukituki River and North Branch of the Tukituki meet. Here you can decide whether to go 20 minutes up the North Branch of the Tukituki River to Daphne Hut. Three rested at this spot while 13 made the tramp to the hut. A note in the hut book mentioned rats were there and some of the party managed to dispatch a couple of small ones.

I had a sandwich at the sign post with the idea of another sandwich at each different view along the ridge: a five minute walk, then another sandwich looking up a different valley. On your own, knowing you had hours up your sleeve, made for leisurely eating. Then I saw a tramper heading back because they were not feeling well. Cell phone coverage was, the tramper told me, excellent at this height. They said Judith Collins had been rolled. Now I knew why the tramper was turning back. Politics and tramping are not a good combination! (This is only a rumour I have started.)



The good weather all day with no wind and no turn around time, with 13 tramping to the hut, made me look like a good leader. The trampers did all the work and should be proud of what they did. This will be my last tramp with the club. I can go all day but very slowly with me only looking at my feet. I still aim to do another marathon walk next year. Seven years has just flown by with the club. Report writing is the very hardest thing I find to do with the club but it is what makes the club. So many members just doing a little bit. Thanks to you all.

Norman

Wednesday 1st December, 2021: Makahika Track

Trip Leader and Reporter: Margaret McKenzie

Photographer: Richard Hunter

33 trampers, 33 stream crossings - ONE WAY!

Rain in the Manawatu and Horowhenua in the previous two days caused some concern about our ability to



make the many stream crossings, which are such a feature of this slice of the Te Araroa Trail. The expected showers for the day never eventuated and our tramping conditions were good. The stream levels were certainly up higher than usual but were no problem for our group. In fact, it was more fun not having to stress about keeping our feet dry as that was impossible from the very start.

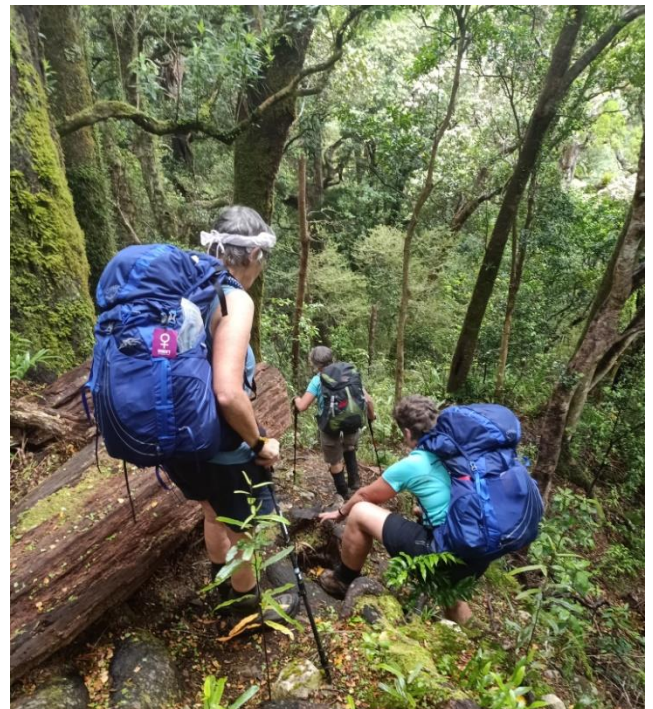
The tramp follows the Makahika stream over farmland and then follows an old bush-felling tramline before the climb up through the bush to about 650 meters. Some of the group arrived at the viewing platform at the top for lunch, some stopped near the top for their lunch and turn around and the rest of the group went as far as they wished before turning around. Everyone, except Ken, finished with waterlogged boots after 66 stream crossings!

Our cafe stop was the convenient Masonic Café, Levin, near the new road works. My thanks to the drivers including van driver, Robbie.

2nd-3rd December, 2021: Mitre Flats Hut

Trip Leader & Photographer: Jenny McCarthy

A relaxing overnight trip. We were Adam Matich, Judith Tonson, Judy Swainson, Christine Scott, Suzanne Clark and Jenny McCarthy.



Wednesday 8th December, 2021: Awapikopiko* Reserve Tramp and Christmas Lunch

Trip Leader and Reporter: Bob Hodgson

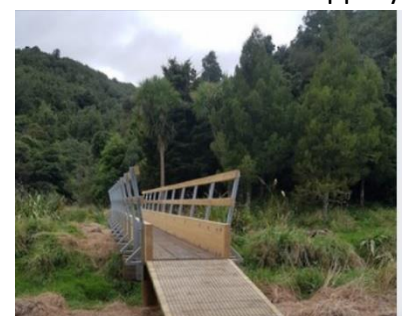
Photographer: William Laing

It is always a special pleasure to find new tracks and



reserves. This reserve is beautiful and well worth a visit

though, it has to be said, the tracks are tramping tracks and need to be treated with respect. Last December, almost 40 MTSC Wednesday Trampers including Elke, a small and suitably intrepid dog, converged on the Awapikopiko Reserve. It was wet and slippery in the reserve but thankfully it was not raining on us! After several days of torrential rain west of the ranges, we were surprised to find that east of the ranges, the Manawatu River was uncoloured and that the further we



travelled away from Palmerston North the drier it became!

The Awapikopiko Reserve is 28 hectares of bush that was gifted by the Druce family to the QEII National Trust in 1966. Access is from Druce road, over a bridge that was built in 2017 to give access over a minor tributary of the Manawatu River. Just over the bridge there is short section of pushchair friendly track to a picnic area next to a very green pond.

The Reserve has two connected loop tracks, both best described as agile tramping grade. The short loop track, (900 metres) goes through Tawa forest with occasional tall Kahikatea plus a tall northern Rata and a large, very old Hinau tree. The longer Druce track (2.1km) goes through Tawa forest that includes a range of native trees. It is steep with a 100 m+ climb and, on our visit, very slippery demanding concentration. Near to the top the bush becomes very open with mainly small Kanuka trees perhaps evidence of having been cleared years ago. At the top of the track there is a beautiful, calming view. One trumper said that on a previous solo visit she had sat for about an hour absorbing the peaceful tranquillity of the scene. On a damp day and in company we did not linger for long.

After about two hours we all emerged safely with only muddy boots and a few muddied bums and legs as evidence of our visit. We then travelled back over the Saddle Road in rain and cloud to the rainy Ashhurst Domain where we were joined by a few others for a shared Christmas Lunch, held in the public shelter. Here



we presented the Beach Leaves Trophy award for services to the club to Ewen Cameron. In addition to serving as Club Treasurer he has pioneered a number of tracks and tramps, some rediscovered by study of old annotated maps donated to the club by John Hunt, a tramping legend of the club, now retired. We also sang "Happy Birthday" to two beaming trampers. The event was enlivened by the presence of Mother Christmas and the Elf in Chief, rumoured to be

Cheryl and Marilyn!

As one of our newer members remarked, our tramp and lunch had brought to a pleasant finale a year in which, against the odds, we had enjoyed many good tramps together to the benefit of all. Thanks to all our drivers especially Ken who drove the minibus.

**This little known and visited scenic reserve is reached via SH2 north of Woodville, then right onto Hopelands Road, left onto Kumeroa Road and finally leaving the seal, right onto Duce Road to 268. Once off SH2, the ~30km drive-in is very pleasant, on good roads with negligible traffic.*

Thursday 9th December, 2021: Weather & Road Closures 3; Burn Hut 0

Trip Leader and Reporter: Darlene Westrupp

Photographer: John Brock

Twice already this year Burn hut had been on the trip list and was cancelled because of weather conditions. On 9 December I had planned to do the loop from dam no. 2, coming out at dam no. 1 via College Creek. The weather had been fine and warm for weeks – perfect! Then the weather bomb hit – torrential rain in Horowhenua (and many other places too). I cancelled the loop idea and, after checking the weather report, decided that the up and back to the hut option would still work.....Wednesday night and Thursday morning the Horowhenua District Council Facebook page said that all roads were open – great!



Kahuterawa Valley Road was, however, closed by a slip about 1km before Alistair's house, so he walked through it and we made a slight detour on the way to Shannon to pick him up on the Palmerston North side of the slip. Then.... we get to the power station on Mangahao Road - ROAD CLOSED. Now what!!



A quick call to farmer Ian August in Shannon, who had another engagement and wasn't tramping with us today, "put the coffee pot on please". We bought all the available muffins from the local café and adjourned to Ian's to enjoy real coffee and decide on plan B.

Plan B by process of elimination was Kohitere Forest. About 30 minutes in on the walking/mountain bike track from Denton Road, we met with a massive, impassable slip so back tracked and headed up a different route, finally deciding to take the road. The road was extremely busy with traffic because, we realized, it was now the main route out of Gladstone Road to Levin. Gladstone Road was closed with more slips and flooded causeway, so locals were being detoured via the forest roads. We did however continue up the road to the summit

then headed down to Gladstone Road near the Makahika Outdoor Centre where we stopped for lunch before heading back the way we came.

All in all, it ended up a very pleasant day, hot and muggy, but no rain, 19 km and 5 hours including lunch and morning tea stops and as always, excellent company. Big thanks to Alistair H, van driver Syd E, Jinny A, Leonie L, Darlene W (trip leader), Tony E, John B (photographer), and not forgetting barista, Ian (hope you made your meeting on time).



9th-11th January, 2022: Old Coach Road and Timber Trail Cycle

Trip Leader: Ken Mercer

Reporter: Mary Mercer

Ken spent most of Saturday tying bikes on the canoe trailer so we could set off reasonably close to 8 am on Sunday for John Doolan's place. John had very kindly agreed to drive the van and do the shuttles for us. Another four (Pam, Judy, Nicki and Robbie) went straight to Ohakune to cycle the 11km Old Coach Road in both directions. After a pleasant coffee stop in Taihape, the eight 'one way' cyclists set off from the Ohakune



car park about 10.15 am in overcast but fine conditions. We were soon bumping our way over the setts or cobblestones laid between 1904 and 1906 for the coaches that transported passengers over the 39 km separating the North Island railheads, at Ohakune and Erua. (The cobblestones were an upgrade to the original bridle track completed in 1886, when the Northern Line only went as far south as Te Awamutu.) There are two railway viaducts en route because the Old Coach Road traverses part of the original railway line, now unused by trains due to track realignment. Both are impressive and it is still possible to ride or walk across the Hapuawhenua Viaduct. After a lunch stop near the Horopito end, we met the two-way cyclists and, not long after that, saw John with

the minibus near Crash Palace. Securing the bikes was much speedier this time and we arrived at the MTSC lodge on Mt Ruapehu by 4.30 pm.

Everyone was up bright and early the next morning so ready to leave at 8 am for the drive to Pureora. We arrived at the camp site about 10.15 am. After a flurry of activity and photos taken on multiple devices by the ever patient John, we finally set off at 11 am. Again, it was a perfect day for cycling through the beautiful bush accompanied by a symphony of bird song. Although there was the occasional root this track was much smoother than the Old Coach Road and much dryer than on previous trips. First stop was the Crawler, a tractor dating back to the 1920s when it was used to haul out totara logs to make fence posts. Then it is a fairly steady climb first through forest, then regrowth and then zig zagging up the slopes of Mt Pureora. There is now a picnic table and toilet at the start of the fairly steep walking track up to the top of Mt Pureora (1165 m). Most of the group chose to ascend the peak while five of us enjoyed a leisurely lunch (80 minutes) beside the bikes. The group then split when six set off again while the other half stopped for their lunch.



The highest point on the cycle trail (917 m) is reached after some more, mostly upwards, undulations. From there “the Timber trail flows downhill for the next 8 km with glimpses of Lake Taupo appearing though the forest to the east.” The first of the eight suspension bridges is 115 m long and high above a stream mostly hidden by dense bush. It proved to be a challenge to ride across because the wind and, possibly the motion of the bikes in front, caused the far side to sway in a somewhat disconcerting manner. A bit further on there is a second side track to Bog Inn, a historic hut, but the front riders kept going til we had a drink stop near a stream. Here we were joined by Judy who had also chosen not to visit Bog Inn. From there we forged on along some surprisingly dusty tracks through pumice fields to reach Piropiro campsite about 5 pm where John was waiting with the van and all our camping gear. It was a beautiful evening for tenting though, admittedly, the stream we ‘bathed’ in was rather more than refreshing i.e. freezing! Six had booked accommodation with hot showers - 3 at Black Fern Lodge and another 3 at CampEpic, a glampers’ paradise 600 m further on.

Tuesday dawned clear and bright so we stashed our dew-wetted tents and gear back in the van, farewelled John and set off again at a good pace along the relatively straight gravel road. There was a bit of a climb after we crossed the Maramataha Bridge (141 m long; 53 m high) up to the Terminus where the trail joins the logging tramway. From there it is mostly downhill, passing through many beautiful, moss-covered, rock-lined cuttings. Despite two morning tea stops, we were through the Ongarue Spiral (bridge and tunnel) and on to Ongarue itself by 12.45pm. We were Maree Taylor, Alan Hawkins, Mary Mercer, Bill Milham, Nicki Fielder, Robbie Green, Judy Swainson, Pam Dransfield, Trevor Bain, Raewyn Brookie, Tim Swale, Ken Mercer & driver, John Doolan.

Wednesday 12th January, 2022: Pinnacles

Trip Leader and Reporter: John Salisbury

Four members, Leonie, Tony, William and myself, finally made it to help me recce the route over the Pinnacles and down to the river. We made good time up the grunty climb, stopping for morning tea when it flattened out a bit, and taking an early lunch on the top, with plenty of low scrub to keep out the wind. The weather was good and the shelter of the bush was most welcome as the sun was strong. The views made the effort worthwhile.

After the top, we found the unmarked junction to cut down off the ridge, and tracked along the path with lots of tree roots to negotiate. The next junction had proper signage, the track was steep and it seemed further down than we'd climbed up! Eventually, we heard the river and made use of the ropes on both sides to negotiate the steep banks onto the main valley track. The crossing was straightforward, but caution would be needed during wet weather.

Some of the company forded the river, shunning the bridge, and we arrived in good time to partake of ice creams on the way back, though we spotted locals with larger portions, so may have to investigate the other shop next time.



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.