

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 4. May, 2022

CLUB MEETINGS

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 3 May, 2022- River Safety by Tim Swale

Drowning and hypothermia are the two major causes of tramping deaths in New Zealand. Our streams and rivers can rise quickly so it is important to know what to do and to use correct technique to cross to ensure the safety of all party members.

Tim will share an educational video used for both Search and Rescue training and Outdoor Training New Zealand. He will cover the questions: Do we need to cross? Where do we cross and how do we cross?

A must for everyone who ventures into the outdoors.



7.30 pm Tuesday 17 May, 2022: AGM

Time to come along and support your club and/or have your say at the Annual General Meeting.

7.30 pm 7 June, 2022: Skiing in the Time of Covid by Howard Nicholson, Peter Rawlins et al

A group of MTSC members headed to the Southern Alps last year, for a spot of ski touring amongst our highest mountains. Numerous factors conspired against us in the lead-up to, and during, the trip, but we eventually had four people with skis on and on the Mainland. Here is a story about "sunflowers" and our part in keeping tourism alive on the West Coast.

7.30 pm 5 July, 2022: South Island Adventures



Atene Skyline 24.03.22 by John Brock

7.30 pm Tuesday 2nd August 2022: MTSC Annual Photo Competition

Time to dust off your camera, troll through your photos and enter this year's competition. This year the best three images in each category will be chosen by an independent judging panel and the best image in each category will be chosen by popular vote on the night. There will be a prize for every photographer who enters an image as well as prizes for the best image in each category and the best image overall. Entries need to be in by Friday 22 July.

REPORTS AND NOTICES

MTSC President: Tim Swale

president@mtsc.org.nz

With autumn upon us, we are starting to get some cooler days which provide fine tramping weather, but it is also very noticeable how quickly it gets dark in the evening. There has been a flurry of SAR call-outs in the last few weeks, mainly due to an influx of hunters heading into the hills for the “roar”. They are usually resolved quickly by a beacon activation and helicopter extraction. However there are times when the helicopter has not been able to fly because of low cloud, strong wind or other events such as serious car crashes where they are otherwise engaged. It is always good to be prepared for unforeseen eventualities, even on a day walk, by taking enough gear to keep warm, dry and to be able to find your way in the dark if necessary. Being able to navigate in the hills, cross rivers safely, treat any injuries etc. are all great skills to have and reduce the chances of being at the receiving end of a SAR call-out. At our next club night we will have a session on river safety, with some videos and techniques demonstrated that could be a lifesaver, so please come along.

I read with interest the trip planning and reports circulated by Rod McKenzie for the Wednesday trampers and Syd Easton for the Thursday trampers that tell of an enthusiastic and resilient membership getting out into the hills and doing some impressive trips each week. It is truly inspiring to see members well into their seventies and even eighties participating so fully. As our membership has aged and retired, they have tended to move to midweek tramping. This has led to a noticeable lack of offerings for weekend trips. If you have the time and the inclination, please consider putting something onto the trip card for the weekend as it is a good way to develop our membership for the future and also provide a valued leisure opportunity for our district. Talk to our “Chief Guide” Ken Mercer who will be able to put your trip on the trip card.



Totara Flats trip 17.03.22 John Brock

We are very grateful for the many years of service that Liz and Hugh Wilde have devoted to the club by co-ordinating the lodge bookings. Their personal touch is highly valued but we hope to ease some of their load by establishing an online booking system. Howard Nicholson and other club members have put a lot of work into this. We hope to have the system running soon so that it is ready for this year’s ski season.

As you may know, the club’s AGM is on the 17th May at the Lido club room. All committee positions are up for election so if you have a desire to get involved or simply want to know more about how our club works, please come along. We would love to see you there.

Memberships Subs

Members should have received an “MTSC Subscriptions” email recently with a Subscription Invoice for renewal of Club membership. If you have not seen this, please check your Spam or Junk mail box. If it’s not there, please contact Sue Nicholson, the Membership Secretary, at membership@mtsc.org.nz

Auckland University Field Club Centenary

Calling anyone who was a member of the Auckland University Field Club at some time. The club’s centenary is coming up this year, and the organisers are wanting to contact ex-members to keep them informed. Please send an email to Bruce Hayward at bw.hayward1@gmail.com , expressing your interest.



UPCOMING TRIPS

May Wednesday Tramps			May Thursday Tramps		
04	Robyn Laing	06 358 4876	05	Darleen Westrupp	021 167 8815
11	Catherine Henderson	021 939 604	12	Jinny Anderson	021 0220 9874
18	Tim Swale	022 134 8384	19	William Laing	022 099 7988
25	Bill Milham	06 356 8136	26	Alastair Hall	06 357 1832
May Weekend Trip					
08	Pohangina Walks	Linda Campbell 027 333 4493 or lindammc@xtra.co.nz			Easy

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.

Sunday 8th May, 2022: Pohangina Walks Easy

Linda Campbell Phone 027 3334493 or lindammc@xtra.co.nz

We will start with the Fern Walk which is in the Pohangina Valley about 30 minutes from Palmerston North. It is a lovely walk that has an abundance of bird life, fungi and mature native trees. Depending on how everyone feels we can also check out other walks in the area. The Fern walk is suitable for all ages and fitness levels. It is a great trip for those new to tramping or those who are keen to take the children or grandchildren out for a walk.



TRIP REPORTS

Thursday 17 March, 2022: Totara Flats

Trip Leader and Reporter: Syd Easton, Audrey Shepherd

Photographer: John Brock

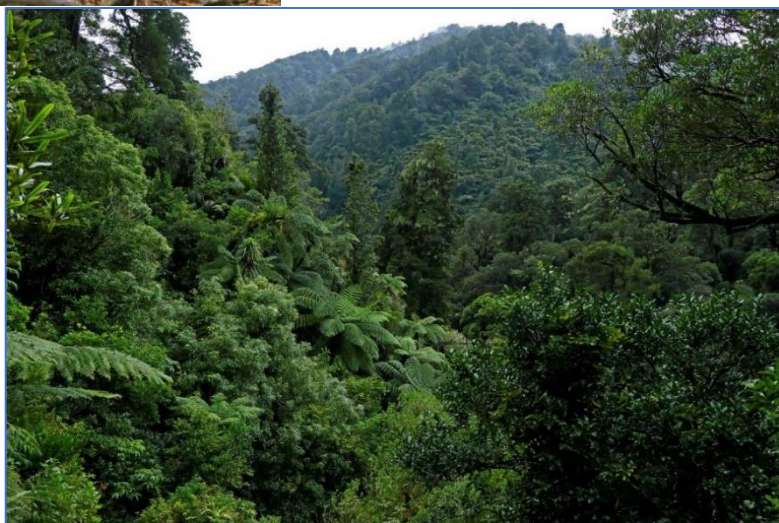
On Thursday 17 March, nine trampers headed from Summerhill Shopping Centre carpark, in three cars, for the long trip to the Waiohine Gorge road end, southwest of Carterton. The trip down was uneventful, even considering the poor condition of the last five kilometres into the gorge. All three vehicles were able to negotiate the numerous large potholes and loose gravel that Syd and I thought would have been much better, post the grader we witnessed working on the road two weeks earlier. The weather was cloudy with a little bit of drizzle. However, most of the tramp was completed without the need for raincoats. First, we crossed the long swing bridge over the Waiohine Gorge, turned right on the track to Totara hut. We did not expect to get to Totara Flats Hut but hoped to reach the Totara Flats. The track is not the sweet groomed path of those close to Mt Holdsworth, but is not challenging in the that there are no steep or long climbs.



There are just some tricky ups and downs, lots of tree roots to look out for which also become helpful hand holds on the tricky ups and downs. We stopped for our morning cup just beyond one of the swing bridges that crosses the tributaries running into the Waiohine river. Then we moved on but not at a very fast pace and only got down to the river where we had lunch and decided to return. We were a little disappointed that we had not been able to achieve our plan of reaching Totara Flats but had

all enjoyed our day out in some lush New Zealand forest. The ladder and kidney ferns were abundant; we even found numerous flowering rata, unfortunately with wasps feeding on them.

Trampers (shown above) were Margaret Horne, Audrey Shepherd, Ian August, Peter Speedy, John Salisbury, William Laing, Syd Easton, Judith Tonson, Geoff Jameson and photographer, John Brock.



Wednesday 23 March, 2022: Arcus Dam

Trip Leaders: Anne West, Ewen Cameron, Rod McKenzie

Reporter: Ewen Cameron

Photographers: Ewen Cameron, Cheryl Dawson (flowers)

Twenty trampers met at the Otaki Forks Road end, at more or less the same time to tramp to the Arcus dam¹ on Roaring Meg stream. We met "more or less" at the same time because an advanced party comprising Bill, Carolyn, Evan and Rod departed to put ropes on some of the steepest parts of our ascent before the main part of the group's briefing was complete.

The day was one of contrasts, including that between the somewhat steep uphill through a Cypress forest (which we learnt is actually *Cupressus lusitanica*) and down, through native forest, and after that we enjoyed the much flatter track through native forest to the Arcus dam.

Following a trek through a scruffy track to the beginning of the Cypress forest, we all made our way up the track which is DOC's replacement route in to Otaki Forks. This forest has no understory and has little in the way of surface roots to provide footholds. The zigzag route up is a bit of a scramble in places. The ropes and helping hands on the steepest sections were appreciated by many of us. Morning tea, at the bulldozer track at the top of the forest section, provided both an opportunity to have a breather and a chance for the entire group to have a chat and work out the what's next for the rest of the morning.

¹ The Arcus dam was developed by Charlie Arcus, a well-known local farmer and politician, as part of the Pukeatua Power Scheme established to supply power to 21 sections in the area. The dam is all that remains of the scheme, active from 1993 to 1998, as the rest, including the powerhouse, was ruined in a flood. Because of the debts to a bank, the subdivision was sold in 2000 in a mortgagee sale. The land was purchased by the Deborah Charitable Trust.

Information extracted from a sign on the gate at the start of the road to the dam.

After a little more uphill on the bulldozer track, our route took us into the downhill section in beautiful and diverse native forest. The first contrast in terms of plant diversity.



This forest is in private land owned by the Deborah Charitable Trust and the track and pest traps through it are maintained by David and Kathleen Campbell, the Kaitiaki of the forest on the Trust's behalf. We are grateful for their efforts and for allowing us access to this area. The route descends gently initially but drops steeply over the last 200m or so. Descent is assisted by a permanent rope which provides a reassuring hand hold when there is no other.

Following this hilly part, we reached a road apparently cut into the forest to aid dam construction. We followed its gentle contour up the valley to the Arcus Dam spillway which has been hewn out of the rock adjacent to the Arcus Dam. Unlike the day in mid-February when the reccy for this trip was made, there was no water in the spillway. Behind the dam, the locally named "Lake of Remembrance" or Rotomahara was very low judging by the long muddy banks on its margins. We had an early lunch

before heading back along the same route towards the road end.

Seven of us took a slight detour on the way back to visit an old hut site...more rope to help with climbs on the track. The remains of the hut do not seem to be very old, but all that's left are the floor on its footings.

Some of us were able to manage the uphill through the Deborah Charitable



Trust's native forest without the rope, but the majority were very grateful for the reassurance it provided. In terms of reassurance, however, we were all very grateful to the members of the advance party for the ropes they put in on our way down through the Cypress trees. The descent through the forest was far more of a challenge than our ascent but we enjoyed it. Fortunately, there were no mishaps: we took it carefully and we all made it back to the carpark satisfied with our outing.

Thanks to:

Advance party members for putting in the ropes: Bill, Carolyn, Evan and Rod;

For the help provided to fellow trampers on both their ascent and descent: Evan;

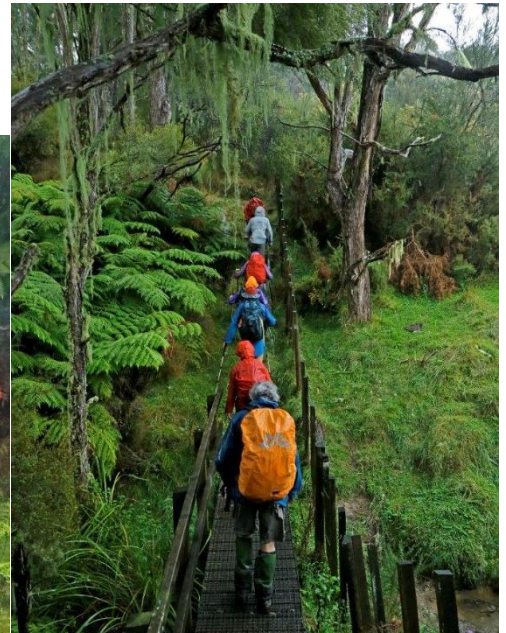
Drivers: Bill, Cheryl, Ewen, Marion, Robyn.

Commiserations to Jenny who missed out because her car wouldn't start.

Thursday 24 March, 2022: Atene Skyline

Trip Leader: Judy Swainson

Photographer: John Brock



26th-27th March, 2022: Mt Taranaki

Trip Leader, Reporter and Photographer: Linda Campbell



I have 'happy places' - places where I feel really good, where I have a strong sense of belonging. - One of my happy places is Mt Taranaki so it is always a pleasure to organise trips there. In November last year we were unable to complete the planned trip so this trip was to remedy that but...

Nine of us, ranging in age from 14 to 75, set off on the Saturday morning. After a lovely morning tea at the Ngati Ruanui Stratford Mountain House it was time to get walking. Meeting some friends from the Egmont Alpine Club as we were about to set off, and they were finishing their walk, just added to the smile on my face! Down the Curtis Falls Track we went.

There are steep steps going down into the Te Popo Stream followed by steps and ladders up before it drops steeply into the Manganui River gorge. We decided that we would just continue to Maketawa Hut rather than take the overgrown track up to the base of the Curtis Falls. After lunch close to the river we continued on upward through a boggy area back into the bush. There was a good breeze coming up the valley by then. The track continues to undulate with several unbridged stream crossings and several more ladders. There is a very steep downhill into the Maketawa Stream. At this point we noticed the wind was picking up a bit more. From the stream valley it is uphill again to the hut.



When we arrived, the wind was fair whipping around and we watched with interest just how fast the cloud was coming around the mountain.

After acknowledging a significant birthday along with the amazing recovery from an illness in 2021 of one of our group members, we shared nibbles before dinner time. The wind continued to increase in strength and we were all woken during the night with very strong winds roaring and shaking the hut to the degree it felt like strong earthquakes!

The wind was still very strong in the morning and rain was threatening so, after some discussion, the decision was made to abandon the rest of the planned walk as we had intended to walk up the exposed Puffer to Tahurangi Lodge and then around to the Stratford side and down the Enchanted walk back to the car park. Tim, Blair and Roman agreed to walk out the way we came to collect the minibus with the rest of the group taking the shorter, easier walk to North Egmont where we would meet. Fortunately, there were only a few spots of rain in the end and the weather cleared to give good views of the mountain. After a lovely coffee and kai at the café at the North Egmont Visitor Centre we set off home. In spite of not achieving what we set out to do it was a wonderful weekend with great company and plenty of laughter.

Joining me on this trip were Blair Peterson, Jill Stewart, Judith Tonson, Julie Smart, Karen Tutt, Maria Lombard, Roman Walker and Tim Swale. Thanks to our drivers Blair and Tim. Another Taranaki trip is being planned...

Wednesday 30 March, 2022: Waitahinga Trails

Trip Leader & Reporter: Wendy Williams

Photographers: Bill Milham (spiderweb),
Kevin Crawford

Nothing says it more than the smiles on fellow trampers faces, enjoying the sunshine and a lot of thank you's at the end of the day.

We set off nice and early (7.30am) from Memorial Park. What a great turn out! Twenty members in total. There was low cloud when we arrived, but it cleared by lunchtime at 11.30: time to relax and reflect!

We completed the loop track back to the Quarry carpark where a couple of trekking poles were left behind but quickly returned to owners.



But where is the spider???



Trees were not observed correctly resulting in a knock down, bump to head, and one member slipping over but all okay; overall it was a great day.

Thank you to the van driver, Margaret McKenzie, and the three drivers, Wendy, Jenny and Jill, for cars to make this trip possible.



Thursday 31 March, 2022: Beehive Creek and Branch Road

Trip Leader and Reporter: Wayne Lincoln

Photographer: John Brock

This tramp started in Pohangina and was up and along the Branch Road Walkway, Ridge Road, a farm track, down a long ridge, a short and steep bush bash into forest, and out to the road along the Beehive Creek Walkway: through bush, farmland, forest and stream. All done in perfect weather, bright sunshine with a faint hint of fall in the morning air and no clouds except for some lurking over the Ruahine Range in the far distance. Total distance was 15 km: 6km on the Branch Road and climbing 240 m, 2 km on Ridge Road, 3 km on farmland descending 120 m, 1 km in bush and forest descending 80 m, and 3 km along a track and sloshing in and out



of the Beehive Creek. There was a brief and partial view of Ruapehu in the distance.

The Branch Road Walkway was originally a Māori route known as the Ahimaramara track. It was used by the missionary William Colenso in 1848 to travel from Clive onto this track to Rangitikei and then on to Lake Taupo. It was also used by early settlers and widened to enable drays. It formed the road between Kiwitea and Pohangina. In the 1920's the Finnis Bridle track was formed and, being relatively more stable, was an alternative route. In the 1960's the Branch Road track was closed to vehicular traffic after a number of slips. Volunteers have worked on this track to

maintain the walkway.

My thanks to the drivers and to John Brock for providing a car shuttle between the walkways, an interesting commentary on the Branch Road Walkway, and for a sumptuous afternoon tea at his residence in Pohangina.

Wednesday 6 April, 2022: Stanfield Hut / Cattle Creek Hut

Trip Leaders and Reporters: Marilyn Hewitt & Cheryl Dawson

Photographer: Ken Mercer

A group of 22 set off up the zig zag farm track, thanks to Doug Timmins who allowed us to walk through his farm. This saved us getting wet feet at the very start. The weather was a real mixture of gusty winds and periods of rain which meant a coats-on coats-off sort of day. Most reached the hut and, after having a break, eight people headed up the ridge towards Cattle Creek hut. They got as far as the high point at 908m. Another group ventured up the Tamaki River from the hut for a while before heading back. We met



Evan hanging on after an unexpectedly rapid descent

a couple of hunters at Stanfield. They had had no luck so far but we heard plenty of roaring so their luck may have changed. Back at the cars around 2.30 pm.

Hopefully everyone enjoyed their day amongst the lovely bush of the Ruahines. It was interesting to see how much the river had changed after recent rains. Trees were down and the river bed scoured out.

Thanks to Ken for driving the bus and also for the people who made their cars available on the day. Thanks also to Rod who is such a good communicator.

Thursday 7 April, 2022: Castle Rock

Trip Leader and Photographer: Syd Easton, standing in for William Laing

Reporter: Audrey Shepherd

A southerly wind had raced across New Zealand the night before, but this did not deter a group of trampers setting off for the central plateau to check out Castle Rock. For most it was a trip down memory lane to a place we enjoy. The trip to the carpark was uneventful, but included a stop at the Taihape BP for coffee, a pie &/or cookies. We met Chris at the carpark, he was returning from his bach by Lake Taupo, and we started tramping at 0945.

Angry dark clouds covered the big volcanic mountains, and it was very cold as we were exposed to the southerly wind. We all rugged up with more layers, hats, gloves, and coats. We made our way along the sandy track beside the boundary between the Defence Force land and the Park, up over the first climb and down to the edge of the bush area, where we stopped for a drink and a bite to eat – morning tea number two. The walk through the forest here is magical. The trees, mostly mountain beech, are close together, straight but stunted and covered with moss and lichen, halfway up the trunks. The track is covered with beech leaves and winds its way down and up again to a short clearing then more forest.



From one forest to the next

Someone, many moons ago, has laid chain-link netting on the steep pinches but it has become more of a risk than an aid, disintegrating, with sharp edges protruding onto the track. It is wonderful to come out of the forest and up over the final climb to see our destination, Castle Rock on the horizon and as we come closer to see, what I call, Aslan's table – a flat rock lying on top of another one. We found shelter from the southerly wind and a cosy spot to sit, to eat our lunch and take in the view of the Kaimanawa Ranges.



There followed a discussion on the peaks and ranges we could see on the horizon. Where were the Waipahihi Stream and Waipakihi river, was the Waipakihi hut one or two ranges over? Some ranges appear distinctly closer or further away, but others meld into each other. The walk back was uneventful and pleasant as was the trip home, with another stop at Taihape for coffee.

William Laing proposed this tramp but could not come; best wishes for a quick recovery William!

Today's trampers were Ian August, Jinny Anderson, Carolyn Brodie, Margaret Horne, Adam Matich, Tony Evans, Chris Mercer, John Thornley, Syd Easton, and Audrey Shepherd. Thanks to drivers, Syd Easton, Adam Matich and Tony Evans.

Sunday 10 April, 2022: Rangiwahia Hut

Trip Leader and Reporter: Linda Campbell

Four of us set off on what was a stunning autumn Sunday morning for Rangiwahia Hut. The bird life was amazing – proof that the stoat traps are making a difference. - The views of Ruapehu and Ngauruhoe were stunning and the light on the hills between them and us made everything look even more beautiful. After lunch on the deck at the hut we had, for three of us, a real surprise, when Angela's husband flew over us in his aircraft. This also entertained others having lunch outside the hut. Before heading down we wandered around the area a bit and checked out the lookouts by the hut. As always, the great company just added to a beautiful autumn day. Joining me on this trip were Angela Cameron, Jill Stewart and Karen Tutt.



Wednesday 13 April, 2022: Te Apiti (Manawatu Gorge)

Trip Leader and Reporter: Jenny Williamson

On a day that proved more windy than wet, despite the weather forecast, 16 trampers set out from the Ashhurst end of the Te Apiti track. We left earlier than usual, at 8.30am, giving us plenty of time to walk the 22 kms and get back by 2.30pm, with a planned cafe visit to look forward to. There was plenty of action taking place on the new bridge being built across the Manawatu River with several cranes and workmen on site.

The group soon broke up into smaller groups with one keen soul leaving the rest in his wake, getting back to the van for lunch. This gave him time to then do the Tawa loop meeting up with the two at the back of the group, who were enjoying a slow amble over the 4 km track.

There were some great (if windy!) views along the Gorge track. The windmills were going for broke in the gusty conditions. Most of the time we were sheltered from the weather (not a drop of rain!) but occasionally the wind lashed out at us in an exposed area. Morning tea was at the windmill lookout, which was brief as we soon cooled off, and lunch at the Ballance bridge end in the Domain.

The return took us across the old bridge and along the now unused Gorge Road where there were numerous



John Brock 31.03.22

small rock falls. The slip is now very overgrown with weeds and shrubbery but, in general, the old road is still very accessible. At times the wind came up behind us and almost blew us over. It was good to get to the end and the shelter of the vehicles. Finally, a well-earned coffee and cake at an Ashhurst cafe.

Many thanks to Margaret for driving the van, and car drivers, Bernard, Jenny plus Marilyn, who unexpectedly joined us from Dannevirke.

Thanks, guys, for another enjoyable day out.

Thursday 14 April, 2022: Otangane Loop

Trip Leader and Reporter: Tony Evans

Photographer: Syd Easton

With Omicron creating a gap in the leadership roster, I decided to take the opportunity to take a trip to Toka, before winter sets in. However, a dodgy weather forecast caused a rethink and Plan B was put into place. With 13 trampers not being an unlucky number, the weather was perfect: sunny but not too hot with no wind and dry underfoot. Leaving the Kahuterawa Road carpark at 8.15 am, we gathered at the picnic table at the top of the Sledge tack for a leisurely morning tea before heading around the Otangane Loop Track, in a clockwise direction as ordered by the leader.



A relaxed lunch break was taken on top of The Nipple where everyone found a comfortable spot and enjoyed the novelty of a view with no wind or cloud. Continuing on back to the carpark, the last of the group arrived shortly before 4 pm and all with clean and dry boots.

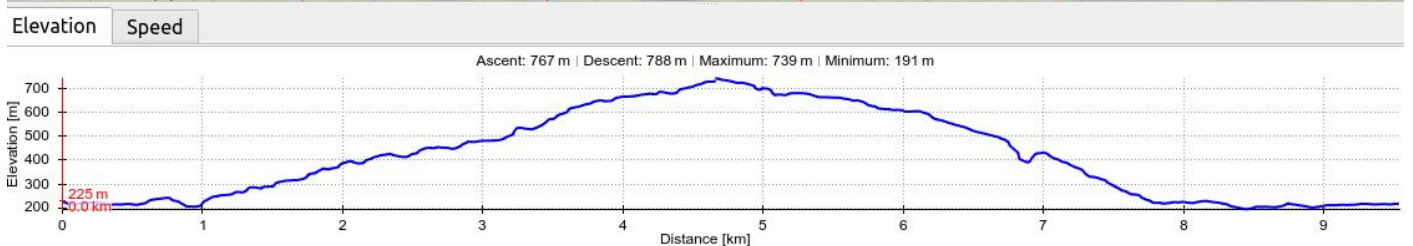
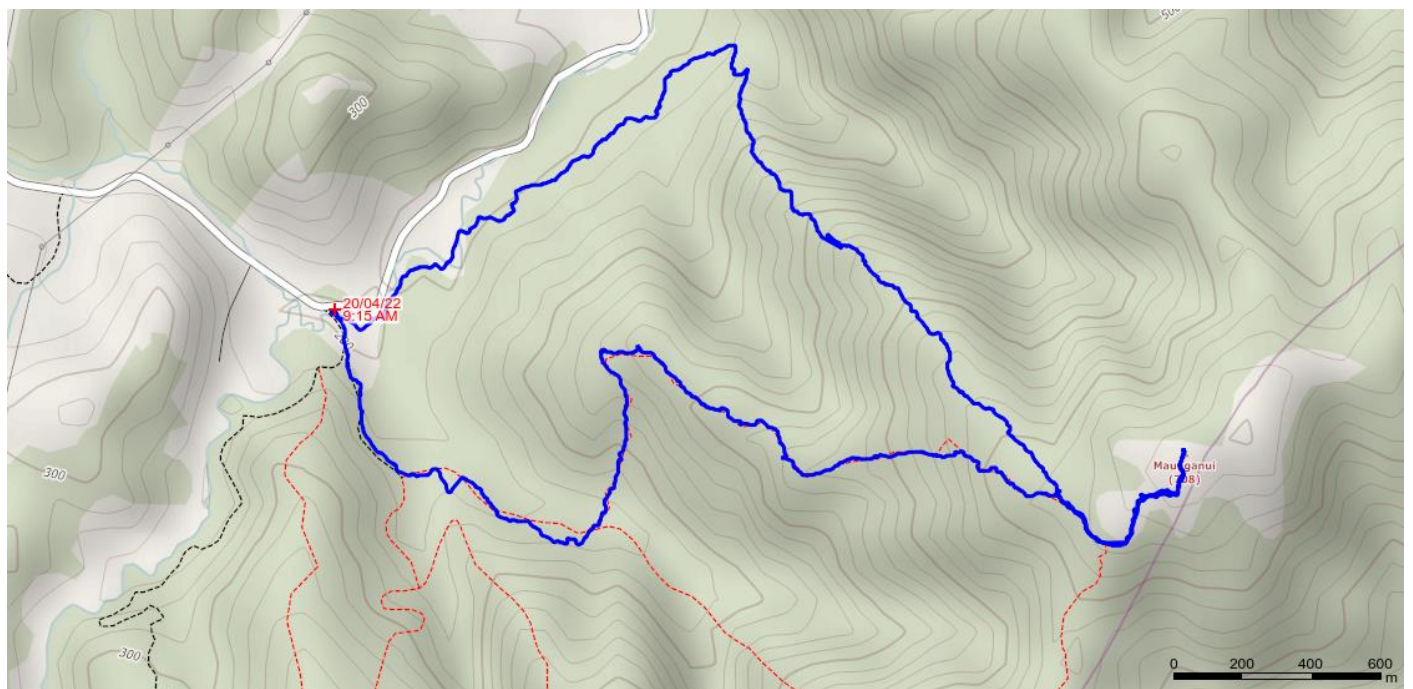
Wednesday 20 April, 2022: Maunganui Peak

Trip Leader: Rod McKenzie

Trip Reporter: Mary Mercer

Track: Ken Mercer

Seventeen trampers in the club minibus plus two cars rendezvoused on Valley Road, south of Paraparumu, before heading up the steep, winding Maungakotukutuku Rd to the car park where several other Wednesday tramps have begun recently. We assembled once across the very shallow Maungakotukutuku Stream for an



outline of the day's plan from Rod. There are lots of tracks leading off in all directions in this area and Rod emphasized the need to stay together because it is all too easy to take the wrong turn. Fortunately for us, Ewen, Christine and Rod had tracked the route to Maunganui Peak on one of their earlier explorations of this area.

The day was surprisingly hot and humid, with a forecast maximum of 25°C, so the shade afforded by bush was most welcome as we set off along a dry creek bed, initially wending our way through dense regrowth of spindly trees. Ewen and his assistants tied pink tape to branches at various junctions along the way to reduce the risk of people getting lost should they decide to return early. After a while the climb began in earnest as we ascended towards Maunganui Peak, which Ewen assured me is 715 m high and not 708 m as shown on the maps. We paused for a morning tea break surrounded by beautiful bush including some bigger trees. Then it was onwards and upwards with the occasional dip down before we came to several breaks in the bush where we could see the surrounding hills as well as the South Island, Kapiti Island and the Kapiti coast. To everyone's surprise we were rained on while admiring the view near the top and some were rash enough to don raincoats, a move they soon regretted because the shower was brief and it was still warm. The final push to the top was quite literally a push because the track is quite overgrown and also boggy in places.

We returned to our viewing spot for lunch and then headed back down a different track, as shown on the gpx image above, now led by Christine. Meantime Ewen bolted back down the way we had come up to retrieve his pink tape. Once down the ridge, we met up with Rod and Ian who had started their descent at the junction. Then it was back across the stream a couple of times as we made our way to the van through patches of quite large trees interspersed with grassy flats. All in all a very enjoyable day on a track new to most of us, which afforded us a good work out as we climbed about 500 m in two and a half hours. There was even time for a coffee stop at Joe & Joys in Waikanae on our way home.

Thanks to our trip leader, Rod, his assistants Ewen and Christine, and also our drivers, Margaret, Ewen and Marion.

Thursday 21 April, 2022: Awatere Hut & Two Hill Climbs

Trip Leader: Jenny McCarthy

Reporter, mapper & photographer: Royce Mills

Our trip leader, Jenny McCarthy took us on a very enjoyable tramp with a difference. Our three cars met at the Longview car park at the end of Kashmir Road, but instead of heading to Longview hut as usual, we took the track to Awatere hut. Twelve of us set off on this easy ridge top track with excellent views, then a drop down to the North Branch of the Makaretu River to the hut for morning tea.

A short stretch followed downstream along the river then we had a go at entering the bush to locate Black Stag hut. It was soon found - a derelict hunters' corrugated iron shelter - not very inviting, but still might be appreciated for shelter in bad weather. We then worked our way uphill through the bush following a faint trail which became much clearer as we climbed out of the bush to once again enjoy views in many directions. Longview hut could be spotted in the distance.



We took an early lunch and relaxed in the sunshine, beginning to think about the rather imposing climb up



to spot height 923m that was rising above us. Quite a bit of group problem-solving took place as to how best to climb this untracked, steep hill, avoiding patches of thick, probably impenetrable bush, and some steep, rocky faces. There were plenty of open-ground opportunities but which was best? With a bit of trial and error we ended up in three separated groups (probably to our leader's distress) but the weather was perfect and we could often see the other groups working their way up. The climb took our three groups between 45 minutes and 1 1/2 hours. Each group believed they had picked the

best/easiest route! After all that effort it was great to relax and once again enjoy the extensive views in all directions, picking out the peaks of Tunupo and Toka on the horizon.

Then it was on to the next hill "B1PT" 877m. This summit, although lower than the previous one, had a survey peg, pipe and three waratahs marking the location. A shorter break was taken here as we were now on the last leg. Next, a long downhill on a steep, bare scree slope which had to be taken carefully with its rather sharp rocks. Then a way was found to push through vegetation to reach the main track we had started on, now heading this time out to the car park.

Our distance was 8km and the tramp took us 5 1/2 hours which included generous stops, enjoyed by all in such perfect, sunny, calm weather.

A highlight of the tramp was that it was a new tramp for nine of us; only Adam, Jean and Jenny had tramped here before. We were very glad of their expertise. The suggestion for the trip came from Adam - thanks! It was also enjoyable exploring off-track, and being on open tops for much of the day.



And have I mentioned the views?

We were Jenny McCarthy, Jinny Anderson, Ian August, John Brock, Tony Evans, Jean Garman, Margaret Horne, Geoff Jameson, Adam Matich, Malcolm Thomas, Judith Tonson and Royce Mills. Special thanks to our three car drivers, Tony, Geoff and Adam.



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 027 294 1941 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.