

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 02. March, 2023

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 Tuesday 7 March, 2023: Outdoor First Aid by Mel Harper

No matter our age or experience there are times when things can and do go wrong. Knowing what to do when a medical event or injury strikes could be the thing that saves someone from further deterioration or increased injury. It could save a life. Obviously you will want as many people as possible to know what to do if you are the injured or unwell person. Mel is an experienced outdoor first aider and will share tips on how to help and look after a person while waiting for help to arrive. This could be in the form of a helicopter but, in poor weather conditions, it may be many hours waiting for SAR personnel to arrive on foot. Please get a group together and attend this important club night, postponed from 2022.

7.30pm Tuesday 4 April 2023: Seven Days in the Wilderness

by Ken Mercer and Howard Nicholson

The southern part of Nelson Lakes National Park is one of the more remote areas of New Zealand. Howie Nicholson, Peter Bowker and Ken Mercer will report on a recent trip which included four alpine passes, snow, bush bashing and few tracks.



Castle Rock 8 Feb, 2022 by Geoff McKay

REPORTS AND NOTICES

MTSC President: Tim Swale

president@mtsc.org.nz

It is with great sadness that I have to report the passing of Syd Easton, a stalwart of the club, who died suddenly in early February. Syd was the go-to person for our club's Thursday group. He co-ordinated the tramping rota, kept everyone informed and ensured that the programme always ran smoothly. During trips, Syd was one of those people whose great knowledge always inspired confidence. However, it was his caring attitude to others that struck me most about Syd. He was very capable in all terrain and weather but would ensure that others were shepherded safely to the end of every tramp rather than seek to knock off a peak or goal himself. His quiet, approachable manner and wise counsel will be greatly missed. My deepest sympathy to Audrey and family at this difficult time.

February's cyclone over the North Island has clearly caused massive damage. My thoughts are with those members personally affected, but importantly, we need to be aware that track and hut conditions may have changed. It is worth checking the DoC website before heading out. Hopefully the weather will be more settled heading into autumn.

Lodge Work Parties

Last year we secured funding to purchase the materials to upgrade the toilets that are now at the lodge and this coming Feb 2023 we will be starting the work. We need help and you don't need to have a trade background as we just need help to do the work, clean up and cater for the workers.

Weekends are free and if there are enough people coming from Palmerston North then we will run the club van for helpers. Please let me know if you can make it and whether you have a trade that you can assist with, in particular, building, plumbing, electrical, plastering, painting and of course cooking.

Work parties will run over 2-5 days on an extended weekend and come for all or one day.

The dates are:

2nd weekend: 3 – 5 March– install gib and cavity slider and plaster and paint (spray gun).

3rd weekend: 17 – 19 March – install panels between toilets and trim and fit out electrical and plumbing minus toilets.

Lino laid on floor by separate contractor.

4th weekend: 1-2 April - Final trip to install toilets and complete any minor items.

Contact – John Lyttle – Lodge Manager 0274336307 email

lodge.manager@mtsc.org.nz

Syd Easton

by Royce Mills

The news of Syd Easton's sudden and tragic death on the morning of Saturday 4 February has brought overwhelming sadness to everyone in our club who knew him. Typically of Syd it happened while he and Audrey were doing some community and environmental service in the Summerhill area close to their home. It was a Saturday morning working bee with the Green Corridors group.

Syd joined our Thursday tramping group during 2012 and has been a very regular, enthusiastic and loyal member since then. When Merv Matthews retired from his leadership of the



Thursday group Syd stepped up to manage our tramping roster and weekly emails, always ensuring things were running smoothly. He became our leader but, if anyone should suggest that title to him, he would have modestly demurred. He was also very attentive to keeping our annual Christmas get-together going and he and Audrey hosted some of these at their house and lovely garden.

Syd was one of the fittest and strongest in our group but he was also very caring. He would often stay back with any tail enders that might be slower or struggling with injury. He was very inclusive, making sure that anyone who wanted to join in on a day's tramp felt welcomed and looked after.

Our thoughts are very much with Audrey, also a club member and a regular and supportive Thursday trumper. We are devastated for her loss. Back on a Thursday tramp in February 2016, during a tramp to Waiopahu hut, Syd and Audrey announced their engagement. This had been a well-kept secret and was a huge surprise to us all. Syd brought out his special whiskey fruit cake to celebrate. It must have been heavy! The marriage that followed was such a happy one. The Thursday trampers were all invited and those that attended still reminisce about the laughter and stories told. We all have noticed the joy their marriage brought to them both in the following years.

Syd, our Thursday tramping group, and all who knew you, are going to miss you immensely. Again our thoughts, love and sympathy are with Audrey and both their families.



March Wednesday Tramps			March Thursday Tramps		
01	Evan Davies	022 164 4789	02	Anja Scholz	027 749 5811
08	Jenny Williamson	06 328 6857	09	To Be Advised	
15	Anne West	021 0266 6860	16	Helen Peek	021 065 0754
22	Cheryl D & Marilyn H	021 374 882	23	Carolyn Brodie	06 358 6576
29	Robyn Laing	021 267 8328	30	Christine Scott	021 724 098
March Weekend Tramps and Biking					
11	Back Track/Arapuke	021 062 4106	Alan Hawkins at kiwitrampa2@gmail.com		
25-26	Linda Campbell	027 333 4493	See below		
Midwinter Potluck Dinner – Save the Weekend!					
24-25 June	Nicki Fielder	022 515 3807	nickifielder@gmail.com See over page		

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.

25-26 March, 2023: Taranaki

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

The plan is to walk on the west side of the mountain. Exactly which hut we will visit will depend on numbers but I am thinking Waiaua Gorge Hut or Kahui Hut. There is no loop in the area so it will be a there and back walk. Please let me know if you are interested asap so I can finalise the plan. Thanks.

Saturday 11 March, 2023: Mountain Biking: Back Track/Arapuke Park Bike Trails

Alan Hawkins Ph 021 062 4106 / 06 323 0583 or kiwitrampa2@gmail.com

Bikers and trampers to meet at Kahuterawa Road Car Park at 10am. From there, bike or walk up the Back Track to Scotts Road car park and Arapuke Bike Park. (Weather dependent. No plan B at this stage. Note that this trip is more suitable for mountain bikes.) From the top car park you can choose what biking tracks you feel comfortable riding, from grades 2 to 5, or just cruise the gravel roads. Then back down the Back Track to the car park. Trampers can take the loop track back over the walking bridge or go back the way you came. We'll finish at Sony's Cafe on the corner of Ruapehu and Summerhill drive for coffee etc If time permits Cafe closes at 4.30pm.

24-25 June, 2023: Midwinter Potluck Dinner

Nicki Fielder 022 515 3807 or nickifielder@gmail.com

A midwinter weekend get together plus a shared potluck dinner on the night of Saturday 24 June, 2023 at the MTSC Lodge on Mt Ruapehu. All club members and their partners welcome. Tramping options will be planned for Saturday and Sunday. More details to come.



24-26 January, 2023: Ruapehu Rambles

Trip Leader: Ken Mercer

Trip Reporter: Mary Mercer

Photographer: Helen Peek

Rain started just as 9 of the 11 of us in the van set off from the Turoa Road for Lake Surprise and that, combined with a cold wind, meant the pace down hill was very fast initially. Fortunately, both the rain and the pace eased off once we began to climb though it was overcast the whole day with intermittent views of the top of Mt Ruapehu. The mostly dirt track winds its way up and down through jumbles of rocks until it reaches the Cascades. Here multiple streams pour down over smooth rock covered with white deposits. As we crossed one, we spied Cheryl Dawson, Marilyn Hewitt, Carolyn Brodie and Robyn Symonds who had travelled separately. They were having a break to consider whether to go further because the track disappears over the edge of the rock into "nothing" which is quite intimidating. We joined them for an early lunch and eventually they all decided to return to their car. Appearances can be deceiving because it was not too hard to find foot holds in the rock as we climbed down to more level ground.

From there the track enters some bush, meanders down a steep gully and across to Mangaturuturu Hut where we had a second lunch. Then we crossed the Mangaturuturu River and climbed up to Lake Surprise which turned out to be the lake we had spotted from the Cascades. We retraced our steps



and arrived back at the van about 5.30 pm to find Anja and Helen waiting patiently. Because they had both been to Lake Surprise recently they had opted for an alternative walk to Blyth Hut and then up to the edge of the ski field. We arrived at the Lodge around 6.30 pm in drizzle and 'dined' around 8 pm.

Heavy rain was forecast for later on Wednesday so we opted for sheltered walks around Whakapapa Village, namely the Silica Rapids and the Whakapapanui tracks and then we walked down the road to view the Tawhai Falls where we had lunch. Ken kindly dropped us off and drove the van to Whakapapa Village and walked up to meet us on the Silica Rapids track then doubled back to get the van while we walked to the Falls. After watching a film about volcanoes at the DoC Centre we headed back to the Top o' Bruce car park for a visit to Meads Wall for some while others returned directly to the lodge.

On Thursday the group breakfasted, cleaned up and packed up very efficiently so we were walking along the Mangatepopo Track by 9.10 am. It was clear but there was a cold wind blowing as we climbed up Devils Staircase along with a relatively small number of tourists. We had a lunch stop just past Red Crater where we had a good view of the Emerald and Blue Lakes. Then we set off across Central Crater where Ken, of course, had to climb to the top of the little hill in the middle of the crater. The rest of us took a fairly direct route across to and up the ridge running more or less north from Tongariro. Once on top we had good views



of Lake Taupo and surrounds and made our way around the side of Tongariro above the baby Whanganui River. There was some debate as to the exact route we should take down as it looked like there were some steep gullies to cross. However we managed to negotiate these without too much difficulty and eventually made our way on to the ridge that runs above and parallel to the Tongariro Crossing Track. The group split up as we approached Mangatepopo Hut with Christine leading the way on a diagonal track down towards the gully while others took a more vertical route. We all met up at the bottom and climbed up to the hut for a short break then walked back to the van, arriving about 5.30 pm.

Then a burger stop in Ohakune and back to Palmerston North by 9.30 pm.

We were Ken Mercer (driver), Lorraine Barr, Mary Mercer, Leonie Lowndes, Christine Finnigan, Graham Irvine plus Marion Beadle, Anja Scholz and photographer, Helen Peek.

Wednesday 1 February, 2023: Panatewaewae Ridge and Stream via Carl's track

Trip Leader and Reporter: Ewen Cameron

Photographer: Leonie Lowndes

My interest in this loop followed a discussion some of the Wednesday group had with a guy, now known to be Carl, while the rest of us were up Waitewaewae, a couple of years ago. Carl reported that although going up and down the Panatewaewae Ridge track was an OK tramp, a better option was to do a loop including the Panatewaewae Ridge track but then going further to the 527m high point and then to follow a well trodden, but largely unmarked, track down to the Panatewaewae Stream and back downstream to complete a loop.

On February 1st, 23 trampers met at the North Manakau road end to complete this loop. We began with a short walk along the former extension of North Manakau Road to find the start of the Panatewaewae Ridge track. Although it's marked with a piece of tape, the start is easy to miss: we have missed it in the past. A couple more people planned to do a part loop and head back the way they came. Most of the Panatewaewae Ridge track is a gentle gradient, rising through regenerating native bush. Carl, whom I have met a couple of times following our initial meeting, said he can remember being driven up this track in 1972, when there was still some milling occurring - the bush has regrown well since then. It was perfect tramping weather, so we all made pretty fast time to the clearing at the 527m point to enjoy morning tea. The view from this summit provided glimpses of the area south of Levin and of Lake Papaitonga through the rapidly growing pine trees.

The next leg of this tramp, initially through pine trees, then goes up and down along an old 4WD track, beyond the end of the track marked on our maps, to a 437m high point. Here we made our turn on to Carl's track, which drops down a ridge, through nice, fern-dominant regenerating forest to a grassy clearing, where we stopped for a second morning tea. A marker then guided us to a track that leads to a grassy expanse on the edge of the Panatewaewae Stream. The track then heads downstream, crossing the water several times, as the stream snakes its way down the valley.

Lunch was enjoyed at a shady, but dryish spot on the banks of the stream. After lunch we continued downstream enjoying the short bush-clad cut offs and subsequent stream crossings. Commiserations to the people who had an unexpected dip. Following the last stream crossing near the confluence of the Panatewaewae and Waikawa Streams, we headed back, across the old DoC carpark, up and over the slip that cut off access to the carpark and back to the road end. The loop took us around 6 hours. Carl is right about this loop tramp - it is a really nice tramp on a fine day.



Thanks to: Carl for telling us about this loop and for the work he is doing in this area opening up tracks, to Margaret for driving the minibus and for looking after her passengers and to Bill, Jenny and Robbie for bringing their cars.

Thursday 2 February, 2023: Oroua River towards Irongate Gorge

Trip leaders: Anja Scholz and Helen Peek

Reporter: Anja Scholz

Photographer: Syd Easton

Down the Ōroua without a rou...

A quick language lesson for starters:

The name Ōroua, roughly translated, means: a place of dredging for shellfish

Ō (place of) -rou (dredge for shellfish) -a (some sort of activity marker/verb marker)

Nine of us intrepid shellfish dredgers got to the carpark for Alice Nash Memorial Hut (ANMH)/ Iron Gates, only to find that we'd left the dredge behind. Not to be deterred, we nonetheless proceeded, dressed in sun hats, sun shirts, sun shorts, sun boots, sun gaiters, and slathered in sunscreen, first of all to the ANMH. The decision to have morning tea at the hut, and not by the river, was made to lengthen the trip (which wasn't going to make it onto the 'Top Ten Longest Thursday Trips



of all Times' list by a fair margin) by about 15 minutes. We'd also only tramped a modest 30 minutes by the time we got to the hut.

Alas, strengthened we carried on down to the river which looked in about similar flow as two weeks ago at the recce - as per dictionary, short for reconnaissance (just thought I'd throw in another free language lesson). - With a "looking good", River Runners Chris and Syd were off down stream as trusty trackers, leading the rest of us on the true left bank a little ways along. Soon, however, we had to start crossing the Ōroua, and while in very manageable flow we still had to scout for the best crossing places. Seeing Tony submerged to halfway up his shorts meant most of us more vertically challenged folks tried to find a better place to get to the other side. Avoiding the rapids and opting for the slightly deeper but slower flowing parts proved the ticket. We negotiated the bottom of a couple of slips and waded mostly up to just over knee deep through pools and puddles.

The cold water was definitely a winner given the temperature – the tree ferns, heat and cicadas made for a near tropical backdrop to our journey. At some point one crossing was a bit deeper and swifter, so Margaret gave us a bit of a refresher for 'River Crossing 101', and we linked up. Good to test what felt comfortable and how to support each other – thanks Margaret. Before we knew it we had come close to the confluence of the Ōroua and the Umutoi (couldn't find a translation, could be named after a person) Stream, and did a final cooling crossing before we had lunch and a peek down the Iron Gates waterfalls and gorge.



Suitably refreshed we immediately lost all that freshness ascending steeply through the pine forest of the stoat track back towards the main path. A look out at the Umutoi waterfall, but the leading party did not

deviate on the (5 minutes max!) detour to the slip view point! So another trip will have to be planned for that.

When we hit the main drag we dragged out the tramp a bit more with Margaret outlining her overnight trip for next Thursday/Friday, which will lead to an interesting place at the volcanoes – the Ruapehu Black-backed Seagull Colony <https://blog.forestandbird.org.nz/mountains-of-sea-birds/>

Soon after we trudged back up the grassy last 500m (5000m?) to the carpark, to make this a swift and fun 4 hour river run tramp. As I write this, the rain is bucketing down. And while in Spain it falls mainly on the plain, in New Zealand it yet again did not fall on the trampers Syd (main organizer for this trip), Chris (main river tracker), Margaret (river crossing coach), Geoff (newbee and club-member-to-be), Tony (best river crossing 'anchor'), William (survivor Ōroua), Darlene, Audrey and Anja (three mouseketeers).

As Jinny unfortunately could not lead this day trip, there will hopefully be another opportunity for her to experience the shellfish dredging, or maybe just river splashing, in and out of the Ōroua.

Wednesday 8 February, 2023: Castle Rock

Trip Leader and Reporter: Wendy Williams

Photographer: Cheryl Dawson

If there were one word to describe it, It would be WOW!

Wednesday's tramp to Castle Rock in the Kaimanawa Forest Park was exciting to say the least..... we set off, from a 7.30 am start with 11 in the van and Bill Milham as our van driver. In addition there were three





car loads plus one independent driver who was going on to Rotorua later. (A big thank you to all the volunteers of cars.) Heading towards Sanson, we had our first hold up with road works, stopping for lights, which seemed a long 20 minutes. We encountered several more lots of road works along the way. By this stage I was over it because I knew we weren't going to get to Waiouru in good time for our pit stop, before setting off to our final destination, the South Kaimanawa car park and the start of the walk. With my approval, some who had made good time with their cars and started walking before the van had even got there. We finally arrived at the car-park about 10 am, with everyone keen to get out of the van and head off into the Kaimanawas with no time to spare. A hand full of people did make it to Castle Rock, stop for lunch and a rest. Everyone made it back to the van by the 3 pm turn-around time and decided on a well-earned coffee at Waiouru before continuing our journey back home (with more road works and lollipop stops).

A big thankyou to all that took wonderful photos of the day; the weather was sunny....

Saturday 11 February, 2023: Mountain Biking in the Pohangina

Trip Leader: Chris Brunskill

Trip Reporter and Photographer: Royce Mills

A very enjoyable country ride in the Pohangina. Seventeen starters. Four opted for shorter turn offs. Then lunch at Backyard Cafe, Ashhurst.



Wednesday 15 February, 2023: Santoft and Scott's Ferry

Trip Leader and Reporter: Christine Finnigan

Photographer: Anja Scholz

With rain falling at Memorial Park, we ventured off to the only dry place in the lower North Island (hopefully). Within 15 minutes the rain had eased then stopped. The Oroua and Rangitikei rivers were in full flood. We took a forestry road close to Santoft that led straight to the coast, parking 100m back from a large grassy car park (due to surface water). We walked south, parallel to the beach through trees and shrubbery, until we reached a stream that was a little deep to cross. The track was sheltered. We headed back through macrocarpas trying to find a way to the beach but ended up back at the car park and formal beach access. The dunes appear to be infested with what looks like stunted Tasmanian Blackwood?? A real weed! This part of the beach is part of the Te Araroa trail.

The beach was pretty windy so we only walked as far south as the possible site of the Fusilier wreck from 1884 (buried or in the dunes).



Our next adventure was to Scott's Ferry, past the restored barge and through the township where every house has a name: Toddle Inn, Hilt Inn, Breeze Inn, Fish Inn to name a few. We walked past a tidal estuary and along a 4 wheel drive track behind the dunes to the river estuary and mouth (more distant) where we lunched. A couple of Spoonbill and a flock of Canadian geese weren't too far off. It was then out to the sea and back along the beach with the wind behind us. This time the estuary had Pied Stilt. With 10km under our belt plus a bit of sand we retreated to the Woodshed cafe near Sanson. Thanks to Wendy and Jenny for driving and to everyone for getting out and about on a less than perfect day. It was made very enjoyable with good company and a few laughs!

Beechleaves, June, 1958: Notes on Cave Carvings Near Waverley

The cave is really a washout of vertical sandstone, 24 feet long by 8 feet high and 8 feet deep. The back portion which is almost vertical is the carved part. It has probably been used by the Māori either as a shelter or resting place.

Most of the back of the cave was covered with relief work, though time has almost effaced it and recently it has been mutilated. The local Māori people seem to have been ignorant of its existence.

On both side of the carvings are what seem to be long lizards standing erect on their tails, which are bent to the left in order to support the body. The mouths are wide open and in them is a long oval body. At the bottom left there is what looks like an eel or serpent wriggling along wit neither head nor tail, these having possibly been worn away by the weather.

The middle portion is made up of strange objects curved in various ways and two of them show the spiral which is distinctive of Māori carvings.

These carvings differ markedly in design from South Island rock paintings, are apparently unique.

G.H.



Contact Details

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

Committee 2022 - 2023

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
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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: Nicki Fielder, Linda Campbell, Richard Lander, Blair Petersen, 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.