

# beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North 4440 [www.mtsc.nz](http://www.mtsc.nz) <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>  
Issue 04. May, 2023

## CLUB MEETINGS

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

### 7.30 pm Tuesday 2 May, 2023: What Happens When You Activate Your PLB?

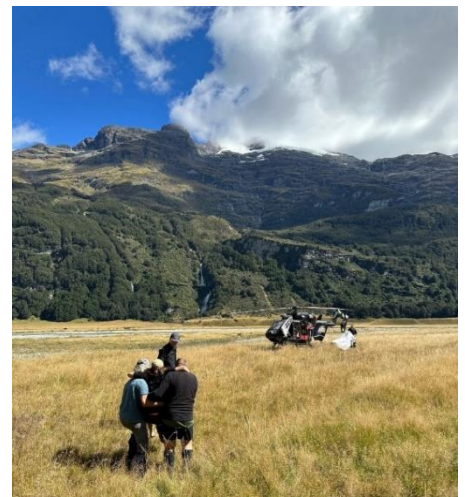
“ So, you have a PLB but what happens when you activate it? Who responds and what do they do?

Chris Wilson, from the Rescue Coordination Centre, will speak at our May club night. Chris is travelling from the Wairarapa for this so please make sure you come along and support this session.

Chris’s talk will include Search and Rescue (SAR) coordination in New Zealand

- How distress beacons work
- Personal locator beacons (and other satellite emergency notification devices) in the back country, and what happens when you need to activate one
- and any questions you may have

*If you would like a ride over from Feilding please contact Linda on 027 333 4493*



### 7.30 pm Tuesday 16 May, 2023: Annual General Meeting (AGM)

This is your chance to have your say about the running of the club and even contribute to it by standing for the committee. All positions are up for election: President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chief Guide, Newsletter Editor, Membership Secretary, Lodge Manager, Minibus Manager and five General Committee members. *Do come along.* Note that the AGM Booklet will be made available on the MTSC website with the link circulated to members. A limited number of printed copies will be available at the Aquatic Club Rooms prior to the meeting. *Note that the current Secretary, Howard Nicholson, (as well as other committee members) plans to stand down so we are looking for a club member willing to take on this and other roles.*



### 7.30 pm Tuesday 6 June, 2023: Water Topic

A representative from Horizons will speak to us about a topic relevant to all water users. More information to come.

### 7.30 pm Tuesday 1 August, 2023: Photo Competition

# REPORTS AND NOTICES

**MTSC President: Tim Swale**

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

As club president I cannot help be proud and impressed by the number of activities that our members are involved in. My email inbox is constantly filled with trip previews, trip reports and intentions for tramps and more recently, bike rides. I also get frequent updates on the amazing volunteer efforts going into lodge development work, LandSAR, Outdoor Training, trapping and outdoor advocacy. It is wonderful to have such a thriving club.

I would like to make a special mention of the team that have done so much in recent months to upgrade the lodge toilets. The toilets have always been a bit of a dark dungeon within the lodge and were definitely showing their age, but thanks to John Lyttle's leadership in getting a grant and masterminding the project, we now have a completely new layout, including an extra cubicle with waterless urinal. There has been so much work done by so many people (see p9), but I would particularly like to publicly thank Rob Pringle who led the practical construction work over many weekends this year. Rob has done much of the skilled trades work on the lodge over the years making it the wonderful asset we have today. We owe him a great debt of gratitude.

As many of you will have noticed, the FMC (Federated Mountain Clubs), which help to represent us in the outdoors, are holding their election of officers. Club member John Beech has been on the executive for several years but is stepping down this year. We thank him on behalf of the club for his service which has ensured a local voice at national level. Our club has 3 votes which, in consultation with John, we will be casting soon. If any other members would like to have an input, please get in touch with me. One of the issues that came up last year was the proposed stopping of Opawe Road by Manawatu District Council. Its proposed easement did not have the same protection from closure as the current paper road. Our club, along with FMC, were amongst the 61 objectors who thankfully have brought a back down on the stoppage.

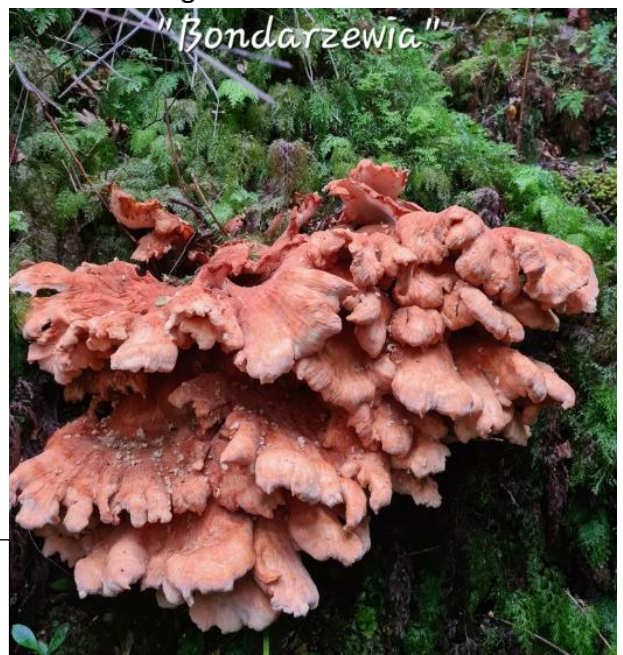
Whilst the MTSC committee meets every month, there is a lot to get through in terms of finances, membership, website, lodge, correspondence etc. and it is often difficult to spend sufficient time discussing tramping and the systems we need to have in place. We have in the past had a Tramping sub-committee to go through items such as health and safety, trip leader guidelines and training, the trip card, communications, club equipment etc. It is probably timely to re-convene this group, so if you are interested in being involved, please let me know.

Finally, our AGM is to be held on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May at the Lido clubroom. This will include the election of committee members, so if you are keen to get involved, please come along.



In the meantime, enjoy your tramping, have fun, but stay safe out there.

*Bottles Track 5 April  
(L) by John Salisbury  
(R) by Chery Dawson*



# UPCOMING TRIPS

May Wednesday Tramps			May Thursday Tramps		
03	Leonie Lowndes	027 359 5015	04	Ian August	06 362 7658
10	Carole Kennerley	027 264 0232	11	Nicki Fielder	022 515 3807
17	Jenny Williamson	06 328 6857	18	Darlene Westrupp	021 167 8815
24	Nicki Fielder	022 515 3807	25		
31	Helen Peek	021 065 0754	1 June	Chris Mercer	021 292 6292
May Weekend					
13	Judy Swainson	021 030 3425	Biking Dam Block		
20	Tim Swale	0221348384	Manawatu Gorge "Amble or Scramble"		
Midwinter Weekend Social Get Together – Save the Weekend!					
17-18 June	Nicki Fielder	022 515 3807	<a href="mailto:nickifielder@gmail.com">nickifielder@gmail.com</a> Details over page		

**Trip Intentions:** The email address for leaving trip intentions is [intentions@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:intentions@mtsc.org.nz). Intentions sent to this address will not be acted upon UNLESS a party is reported overdue (e.g. by a family member, flatmate, friend, etc). The email is sent to several MTSC members. This information will be provided to Land SAR/RCC only if the party is reported overdue or a MTSC-owned PLB is activated. The email should include: a list of participants and their contact details; a brief description of the intended route and possible alternative routes; starting point; start date; date/time due out; vehicle registration; and any other relevant details.

### Saturday 13 May, 2023: Bike Ride: Dam Block

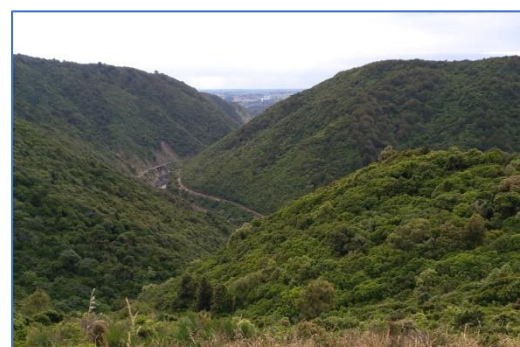
Judy Swainson [jswainy@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jswainy@xtra.co.nz) 021 030 3425

Start from the car park at Fitzherbert Bridge, PN then up to Turitea Rd, over to Greens Rd, down to Kahuterawa Rd, left on to Old West Rd, left onto SH 57, right onto Camp Rd into Linton Military Camp, right on to Bells Rd then onto He Ara Kotahi cycle track back to town – about 30 kms.

### Saturday 20 May, 2023: Manawatu Gorge "Amble or Scramble"

Tim Swale 0221348384

There will be a choice of two short activities starting at the Woodville Ferry Domain. One is a couple of hours ambling round the loop that heads over the bridge to the Balance Domain, up the Gorge track before dropping back down the Klein Track. Some nice views and nothing too strenuous. Linda Campbell will lead this. I will lead the other short trip which is a bit of a scramble but a lot of fun. You will get some different views of the gorge but be prepared for very steep slopes where hands will be needed to pull you up, a bit of crawling under and pushing through vegetation.



Again, this will take a couple of hours after which the cappuccino commandos will regroup with the amblers and retreat to Woodville for coffee and medals!

## 17-18 June, 2023: Midwinter Weekend Social Get Together at the MTSC Lodge

Nicki Fielder 022 515 3807 or [nickifielder@gmail.com](mailto:nickifielder@gmail.com)

Come along to our Potluck Dinner and social weekend and bring your partner / significant other if you would like. There will be optional tramps on Saturday and Sunday or just relax and enjoy the lodge.

Important – **This is limited to 32 people (Lodge capacity) so please respond asap if you keen.** 😊

**Please include in your reply email the names of those joining us.** Contact Nicki [nickifielder@gmail.com](mailto:nickifielder@gmail.com)

Open to all club members with transport by the club van and private vehicles.

There will be a bed for everyone in the lodge's shared rooms. Choose your bed as you arrive (we will not be allocating beds). **Cost:** \$40 per person per night plus the cost of transport based on mileage.

**Food/Drink:** Bring per family (to share for dinner)

– a dessert or snack/starter plus a main dish (meat or veg).

Also bring what you would like to drink, bread (if you would like it for lunch/breakfast) and any special food/drink you would like. The pantry and freezer are well stocked at the lodge so most things will already be there for all other meals.

**Gear:** <https://www.mtsc.org.nz/gear.php> : pillowslip, sleeping bag or bedding; footwear for inside the lodge; wet weather gear; normal gear for sleeping /walking/relaxing.

### Suggested Itinerary:

**Saturday:** Leave PN at 8 am; morning tea in Ohakune;

12 pm (noon) – Those joining the tramp to meet in car park opposite DOC or Skotel Centre. TBC  
Taranaki Falls Loop Walk (2 hours – Easy). Take normal tramping gear and packed lunch.

Visit Visitors' Centre – optional

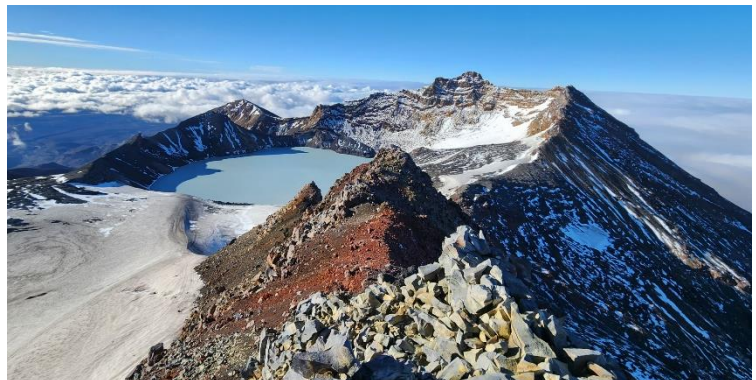
4 pm Everyone to meet at Lodge. Get settled, sort beds, gear, etc

Music, Munchies 'n' Mingle

Shared dinner and social evening.

**Sunday:** There are four options...

1. Own time
2. Sky Waka – Could meet 'Option 4' trampers at Café
3. Silica Rapids Walk to Chateau - Van/car shuttle return – 2 hours.....Easy
4. Lodge to NZ Alpine Club Hut to Café / down via Sky Waka; weather dependent (there will be another option if this is not available); 3 hours.... More challenging.



Crater Lake by Philip Browne  
3 April, 2023

### Additional Info:

- There is also the option for people to head to the lodge for Friday night or stay Sunday night.....or longer.
- Everything you bring must be able to be carried to the lodge from the car park. This is approximately a 15 minute walk.
- We will need a trip leader for each tramp.
- As usual, the van will leave from PN and we can sort carpooling to suit.
- Once we know who is coming, Nicki will gather more info re what people are wanting to join, etc.
- The aim is to keep it relaxed, flexible and weather appropriate.

# TRIP REPORTS



## Alternative Tramp Wednesday 22 March, 2023: Foxtton Beach Walk

Trip Mis-Leader and Reporter: Bob Hodgson

Five trampers gathered at the Sunset Walkway at Foxtton Beach, making a leisurely 10am start on what proved to be a beach walk with a difference. The tide appeared mid-range in the estuary and we enjoyed spotting six or more spoonbills spooning as well as some of the more usual suspects. As to be expected the river was coloured brown by the recent rains.

The informal vehicle track to the river mouth alongside the river bank was awash, covered with driftwood, and impassable to vehicles. As we made our way north towards the Surf Club, we found ourselves hard up along the edge of the dunes picking our way through driftwood and the increasing target of the on-coming waves. The combination of an extra high tide and a very large swell, reported to be up to six metres further down the coast, made for slow, damp going. This became tedious and perhaps even hazardous, so about a hundred meters shy of the Surf Club, we followed an informal track inland. The original intention was to continue north until we could cut inland to pick up the 4WD track. After morning tea taken near the club, we searched for a track to take us through the pine plantation and we found one. It was closed due to dangerous fallen trees! We continued our search for a route but eventually walked in a big loop back to the estuary and the cars.



After lunch we briefly visited the bakery in Foxtton for coffee. So, after an unusual but enjoyable expedition, we were back in PN by 3.30pm. Thanks to Driver Bob and Driver Gay who drove herself.

## Thursday 23 March, 2023: Holdsworth

Trip leader and Reporter: Jenny McCarthy

Photographer: Alistair Hall

Mapper: William Laing

There were nine at the Holdsworth car park. Two went set off to Atiwhakatu hut. Seven set off for the high point on Pinnacle Ridge. It was very muddy and slippery along the bottom before the climb. Judy found this out the hard way and did a very impressive roll down the bank. After some first aid was administered by Chris, Judy was ready to carry on. The rest of the climb was without mishap and Judy raced to the top. We had a leisurely lunch at the top and then split into two groups. Three went on to the point 864 and then starting the descent to Donnelly Flat. The trail was easy to follow with a variety of flora that changed as we



descended. The gentle slope was a bit steeper before the river crossing and then up after the river crossing. We were then on the old track until it merged with the new one before Donnelly Flat. Back at the car the other two were waiting for us.

We were (L) Carolyn, Jeff, Chris, Judy, Jenny, William, and photographer, Alistair plus Jinny and Darlene.

The four Atiwhakatu hut descenders passed the peak 846 where the Donnelly Flat track starts and searched for the junction of the track to the Atiwhakatu hut descent. After

thinking we had passed it, we found it about one kilometre further on and started a steep drop (over 45% in places) to the river. Fortunately, it was short and mostly clear of roots and other hazards so we got to the river quickly. However, I would not want to climb it. Crossing the river was a matter of finding where the track started on the other side, which turned out to be up another side creek to the main track. After a brief pause at the hut to recover, we set off at a fast clip back to the car park taking about 1 hour 45 min along the luxuriously graded river track.

You can see the steep descent of our track from the Junction.

## 25-26 March, 2023: Waiaua Gorge, Taranaki

Trip Leader, Photographer and Reporter: Linda Campbell

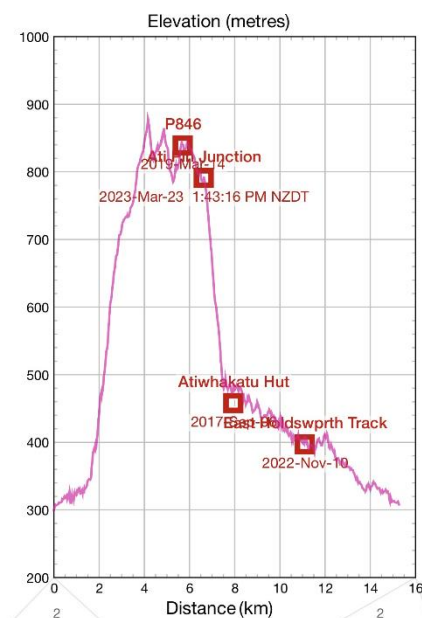
After a lovely morning tea at a café in Opunake we met Linda Darbyshire at the Ihaia Track road end. I had been told to expect the track to take longer than the usual times and it certainly became apparent why I had been given that advice! The weather event in 2021, which closed the round the mountain track, necessitated a new, longer route to the hut starting a few hundred metres below the junction with the Oaonui track. Then there was damage from Cyclone Gabrielle. DOC staff were in the process of making their way around tracks in the park dealing with windfall and slope failure from the cyclone so advised us to take care.



From the start there was mud - serious mud and lots of it. Cattle had obviously got in near the farm boundary which added to the mess the track was in. The wind fall was considerable and included some very large trees. Ken had his trusty saw and did quite a lot of clearing as we went. It was lovely to see Linda D, now based in Taranaki, who was on a day walk and left us after our lunch stop to return home.

I had a nice surprise when we met a large group coming down the track and found two friends of mine from Egmont Alpine Club /Hawera Tramping Club in the group. They had been up to an old plane wreck in the area. We decided that if the weather was O.K. we could try to find it on Sunday on our way out. Unfortunately the rain came so that will have to be another trip!

We continued on along the new route which took us down to the Waiaua River where there are warnings of flooding and lahars in times of heavy rain. After walking about 500m up stream we arrived at Waiaua Gorge Hut. We had a hot drink and then set off along the track, down the 30m ladder and on to Brames Falls Lookout. There was more mud for a while and a stream crossing before the track changed and became easy travel. The falls were nowhere near as spectacular as expected. In fact they were not very big at all!





Not long after returning to the hut the rain started and didn't stop all night. It was obvious next morning that we needed to go straight out as we had the river to walk down and cross and it was still raining. On arrival at the river, we checked it carefully and decided that, fortunately, it was still alright to cross. A lot of the track on the way out was almost like walking down a low stream and the mud was worse after many hours of rain. We got to the road end just as the rain stopped which was rather nice for getting changed into our dry gear. From there it was back to the same café for an early lunch before heading home. Thanks to Mary and Ken for taking their car, Ken for driving and the great company - Mary and Ken Mercer, Christine Finnigan, Sandi Pearson, Linda Darbyshire and Trip leader, Linda Campbell.



Bob & Ken on the Escarpment Track

### Wednesday 29 March, 2023: Paekakariki Escarpment Track

Trip leader, Photographer & Reporter: Robyn Laing

I have been reading with interest Ewan's data collection of where we have been on Tramps. It is good to have this record of where we have been over the last few years. When my turn came up I thought that this time would be a good chance to make this crossing in the slightly cooler, but still sunny/settled month of March. Reading the Paekakariki entries on Ewan's list I realised that both Evan Davies and Richard Lander had had the same idea as me. I had good memories of both of these crossings. Obviously everyone else had as well as, at one stage, we had 22+ eager participants though, on the day we had 18 'ready and rearing to go' at Pukerua Bay train station.

This year, instead of sun hats and summer tramping gear, we were all wrapped up warmly in anticipation of a maximum of around 12°C, accompanied by gale force winds from the southern ocean, with icy showers thrown in for good measure. The motto of "Never trust a weather forecast" proved to be true. At the beginning we did have a short spell of light rain but, by the time we got to the start of the track, that had stopped and the day improved from there on. As usual, the group generally chose their own pace from the "Gotta get there before the cafe closes" folk back to "I'm taking my time to enjoy the views and experience."

Me being the "Tail End Charlie" got to enjoy the views and the experience. I did miss out on the café but hey, a day of abstinence in Lent was no great hardship. I was able to get back in the van and be reassured that there were no miserably wet folk and that no one had had a mishap. A big thank you to Ken Mercer

who drove the van and to Mary who collected the money. Thanks to Anja for your offer of a car and to Jenny who bought her car and to Gaye and Margaret who transported the beach walkers.

## Lodge Work Parties: February to April, 2023

Reporter: Mary Mercer

Photographers: Philip Browne and Mary Mercer

The toilets at the MTSC lodge on Mt Ruapehu have been successfully renovated over the course of four work parties held in February, March and April this year. John Lyttle, our Lodge Manager, instigated this work



some years ago because of moisture accumulation in the wooden basement wall. John has overseen the construction of a large new drying room in the basement plus a new locker room and sitting room in the 'space' upstairs. The changes also required considerable improvements to meet fire safety regulations. However, John was overseas skiing in February so the final phase of the modifications was led by Rob Pringle, aided by a small but hard-working band of club members. Rob has dedicated many hours to this and other lodge renovations. Just one example is the beautiful, Kwila-lined doors, shown above, which Rob built and installed. John was back for the March work parties and we were also fortunate to have the assistance of Isaac Gunn, a qualified plumber. Another volunteer with invaluable skills is Ivan Rienks, a qualified electrician, who completely rewired the lodge in January. Though Ivan (and Jean) have recently moved to the South Island, he came back to the lodge with Ken Mercer and Doug



Ken & Philip

Isaac

Rob, Howie & Robin



Lagerstedt for two days at Easter to finish off the work. Others who have contributed one or more weekends' work were Philip Browne, Riley Cody, Alan Hawkins, Robin Lane, Mary Mercer, Howard Nicholson, Carl Pester, Xander Pringle, Peter Rawlins, Rachael Railey and Marcel Vroege and Karen Tutt.



Riley

On the final work party, the only one Ken and I were able to attend, the three toilets plus a urinal were installed in addition to doors to all four cubicles and a sliding door which opens on to the corridor leading to the bedrooms. In the corners of the space between the inner doors and outer sliding door, two vanity units were added. Previous work parties had removed the old toilets, raised the floor and the ceiling, rearranged the plumbing



Xander, our 13 year old volunteer

and built the cubicles. (Professionals installed the lino.) This meant a lot of rubbish had accumulated so there were many trips to carry this out to the large trailer Ivan had organised and then a mad rush to get to the rubbish dump in National Park before it closed at 5 pm on the Sunday. We made it!

### Wednesday 5 April, 2023: Bottles Track

Trip Leader and Reporter: Rod McKenzie

Photographer: Cheryl Dawson

Twenty two trampers arrived at the Putara Road end around 9am to see mist around the high points and a few rain spots falling. The plan was for fourteen to complete a loop using the Bottles track then the Herepai track and eight to start with the main group then returning to complete a shorter walk. Leaving the car park we encountered some Tararua mud before making the first swing bridge. Twenty minutes past the bridge the main group turned right straight up the hill using an old, sparsely marked track and began climbing towards point 655. The balance of the group came up the hill for about half an hour then turned back down to walk the main Herepai track.

On making point 655 the main group found that the going levelled out towards the stream and the track became easier to follow as there had been some clipping done recently to the edges of the track. On reaching the stream a skiff of wetting mist came over so the group decided not to stop and enjoy the grassy banks but to head down stream. The climb up the next hill was easier and the junction with the main Herepai track was reached in good time. The mist also cleared as the climb continued. There was cold gusty wind blowing across the main track here but a sheltered lunch spot was found part way towards the Roaring Stag track junction. This section of the track was very muddy. After turning down the hill at the junction towards the second swing bridge at the bottom of the hill the main group met three of the small group who had also been to the junction.



The return along the riverside track towards the car park was slowed first by having to navigate a major wash out and then to clamber over a large tree trunk which had fallen awkwardly across the track. Everyone was back to the vehicles by 3pm. Overall, a good day was had by all with everyone achieving what they wanted to do on the day. Thanks to van driver, Ken, and four car drivers, Ewen, Anne, Cheryl and Marion.



**Thursday 6 April, 2023:**

**Not Quite Pukenaena**

Trip Leader and Reporter: Judy Swainson

Photographer: William Laing

Six of us set off to tramp to Pukenaena but the weather clagged in at Hardings Park so we came back down over the bridge and up to Scotts Rd. We lunched at the rest area then walked out: a five and half hour local tramp - pretty good when don't want to travel far. (L to R) Ian, Jinny, Tony, Anja and Judy

**Wednesday 12 April, 2023: Mt Thompson**

Trip Leader and Reporter: Marion Beedle

Photographer: Cheryl Dawson

The Waikawa campsite on North Manakau Road has a locked gate so we parked on the roadside. (I have heard access can be obtained from the Horowhenua Council.) The camping area is not mowed and has a somewhat abandoned appearance although the toilet has been repaired. The track is surprisingly steep in places but easy travelling as it is used by light 4WD drive vehicles caring for numerous groups of bee hives. Beyond the Mt Thompson junction the track narrows somewhat.

I thought the weather was disappointing but others enjoyed the misty atmosphere. The temperature was pleasant but low cloud obscured all views on our way up and a rain shower made the track a little slippery. Everyone reached the



*Clavulina rugosa*  
"Wrinkled Club  
Fungus"

tadpole pond and the rain stopped for lunchtime but the low cloud made it hard to identify folk on

the other side of the clearing. The grandchildren who had joined us on this trip enjoyed the tadpole pond from where some were caught and transported back to ponds on farm.

On the way down a small group diverted to the lookouts where we could see just enough to appreciate the width of view possible on a clear day. My thanks to all the drivers and photographer, Cheryl.

## Thursday 13 April, 2023: Mokai Station

Trip Leader, Photographer and Reporter: Royce Mills

With just seven signed up for this tramp we took two cars. Thanks very much to drivers Chris and Tony. It was a sunny morning and, as we headed towards Mokai Station, we enjoyed spectacular scenery - the unique pointy hills along Torere Road, the huge white cliffs of the Rangitikei River and poplar trees turning gold. The last Thursday tramp here was in 2011. Since then there have been access problems across the farmland. Last December DOC reached an agreement so that trampers can again walk across the station. It was a real privilege to be here again.

We started tramping at 9.30 am and it is all uphill! The biggest climb comes after about an hour when the grass farmland is starting to become tussock - a very daunting and steep climb of 600m. A couple of group recovery stops were taken on the way up! Towards the summit we ended up in two groups, two of us reaching 1100m and heading to a spur with view of the Ruahines with the distinct peak of Potae standing out. This was looking in the direction of the bush edge and the track to Iron Bark hut. We were thrilled to see a falcon close to us, sometimes resting and sometimes soaring through the sky. The other five continued climbing through the tussock slopes to reach the top of Mokai Patea at 1210m. Although out of sight of each other we were in phone contact and met again before too long.

On the high points of our tramp both groups separately met a farm supervisor, his wife and two girls, aged 3 and 5, all on two quad bikes, also carrying guns and two heads of deer, freshly shot! We had a friendly chat. It was good to have a chance to tell them of our appreciation of being able to tramp again in this scenic high country. Back together again we took a break on the tops, gazing at the views around us and the

amazing geology of the Rangitikei River valley with its terraces and cliffs. It was hard to leave, but we had the big downhill walk ahead of us and the drive home. Arriving back at our cars at 3 pm we had spent 5 1/2 hours enjoying Mokai Station in perfect



weather. We were Alistair Hall, Chris Mercer, Jenny McCarthy, Phil Hoskin, Tony Evans, William Laing and Royce Mills.

## Saturday 15 April, 2023: Mountain Biking – London's Ford - Ridge Road - Apti-Kimbolten

Trip Leader and Reporter: Royce Mills

Photographers: Nicki Fielder and Linda Campbell

A group of 23 riders, all colourful in fluoro tops, gathered at Kimbolton in autumn sunshine somewhat chilled by a cool easterly breeze. After a group photo was taken (over page) we set off at 10.40 am. A stop was needed early on for a puncture. By this time most of the group had reached a scenic viewpoint high up on London's Ford Road and we could look down on the small group far below, like colourful dots, dealing with the repair. Fortunately we were in phone communication. Then we were all on the way again with more hills to climb until reaching the gravel of Ridge Road. This road lives up to its name and undulates along with great views of the Ruahines, even if the tops were in cloud. By this time we had broken into a series of

groups. The later ones got tangled up with a large mob of sheep being driven along the road in the opposite direction. Always tricky when on a bike - a rural challenge for the day!

We re-gathered at Apiti for a snack / lunch stop in the sun. Groups then headed off to tackle the last two climbs back to Kimbolton. The destination for most was Hansen's cafe!

This was a particularly scenic 40km loop ride on sealed or gravel roads. The teamwork on the day was appreciated; we waited as a group while the puncture was repaired, and thanks also to the e-bikers who took care to support the pedal bikers who had several lengthy, tough hill climbs. Our elevation gain on the ride was 780m.

Special thanks to Linda Campbell for driving the support vehicle at the back along the busiest section of road from Apiti to Kimbolton. Thanks also to Nicki Fielder who started this very popular and growing group of biking enthusiasts. We appreciate your work behind the scenes keeping contact and emergency details up to date and making sure the monthly rides are running smoothly.



### **Wednesday 19 April, 2023: Remutaka Incline**

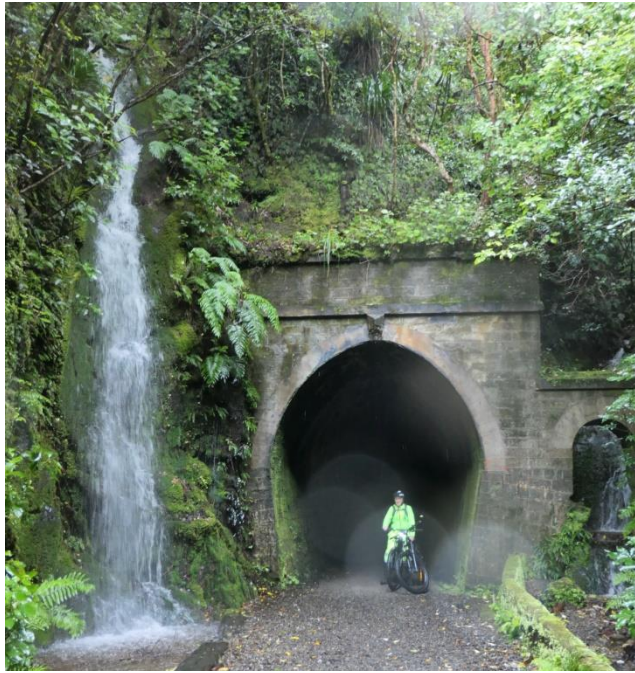
Trip Leader and Reporter: John Salisbury

Photographers: John Salisbury & Alan Hawkins

A party of thirteen, plus dog, tramped and cycled from the Kaitoke end of the trail, a gentle uphill stroll on a good gravel track, passing through a fortuitously positioned tunnel, where morning tea was taken, out of the intermittent drizzle. We crossed the Pakuratahi River bridge, admiring its sturdy construction, a fine example of Victorian engineering, and over another differently constructed bridge over Ladle Bush creek, similarly unique for its time.



Enjoying the bush and dramatic swollen river views, we continued in weather that varied between drizzle and dry, to the Summit shelter, where lunch was eaten. The remains of several locomotives were examined, and some explored the next tunnel, before returning in increasing rain to the van.



Many thanks to the new driver, Trevor, and the uncomplaining rest of the group; an enjoyable trip, despite the mixed weather.



### Thursday 20 April, 2023: Mitre Flats Hut

Trip Leader and Reporter: Tony Evans

Photographer: William Laing

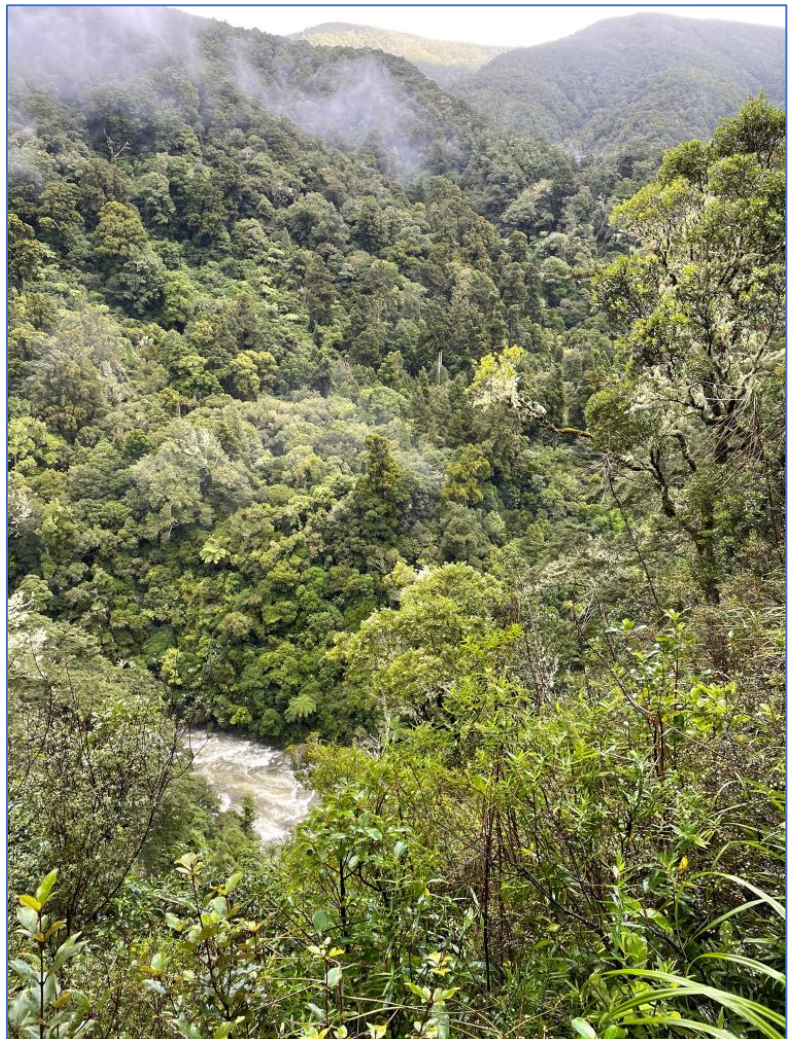
I had not been to Mitre Flats Hut for many years so, when a gap appeared in the Thursday Leaders Roster, I took the opportunity to take a trip into the hut. Recalling a trip where we went up the Mitre Peak Track and ate our lunch above the bush line with great views I put this as an option for keener members of the group. 'Oh boy'; talk about being over optimistic! None of our group, including me, was that keen and a study of my trip diary tells me that that was 19 years ago.

From the carpark the first section is on a flat farm road before dropping down to river flats for a short way; then the harder work begins. All up and down, with some steep pitches and rocky stream crossings, it is quite slow going with good bush and views of the Waingawa River below us. The company of several Piwakawaka added to the enjoyment.

Two of our party decided not to make the final descent to the hut but to relax and enjoy their lunch without a steep uphill climb afterwards. The other four of us went on down to the hut for lunch, arriving three and a half hours after leaving the cars.

The weather stayed kind to us, being cloudy and not too hot or cold although quite humid as we retraced our steps back to the carpark after a good day out.

P.S. It was discovered the next day that when William slipped on the track, he had broken a bone in his ankle (boots too hard) and will be out of tramping for six weeks.



## Sunday April 23 2023: Ōhingaiti Boulder Hike

Trip Leader and Reporter: Linda Campbell

Photographers: Alan Hawkins and Tim Swale

On the Saturday it rained. Really rained! All day!! This of course impacted on the track as it is papa rock which is a soft, blue-grey mudstone and very slippery when wet. There are two ways to walk to the boulders. The most popular walk being a short walk from Peka Road and the longer, the 'Boulder Hike', across farm land from Mangarere Road. Being intrepid trampers I had decided we would do the hike.

Thirteen of us met at 396 Mangarere Road and started with a safety brief and the decision to get to the top of the hill and then choose whether we would continue down the steep 'gorge section' given the slippery papa surface. With great care and caution, we slowly made our way and, once at the boulders, felt rather pleased that no one had ended up slipping over. Our feet were very heavy with the casing of papa mud we all had on both boots. That's another thing about papa. Not only is it slippery when wet but it sticks like anything and it is hard to remove!! Fortunately, there were great views out over the country side all the way along.



What a wonderful experience we had walking around the boulders! There were so many more than expected.

The boulders were formed millions of years ago when the river carried sediment from



eroding land out to sea trapping shells and vegetation. The sea water contained dissolved chemicals and formed a cement of calcium carbonate with the sediment around what was left of the buried shells and plant material. The boulders are now well above the river and definitely worth visiting.

Alan had photos from a previous trip there in 1994 and the change is remarkable. The area was very open in those days but it is now covered with well grown vegetation. The Kahikatea were in full fruit and the bird life was amazing, especially the number of piwakawaka. Kahikatea is a fast-growing tree found in wet lowland forests. It is also New Zealand's tallest tree species. There were wonderful reflections in a small pond near a large Kahikatea. After having lunch at a picnic table, we headed back the way we came. It was

much easier going back up hill, also helped by the fact that the papa had dried a little during the day.

Back where we started, Bronwyn and Jason of Whitecliffs Farm were really welcoming and after greeting us all, allowed us to wash some of the papa off our boots and gaiters.

Thanks for sharing a wonderful experience and your great company: (L to R) Angela Povey, Alan Hawkins, Linda Campbell, Ken Mercer, Shijia Chen, Angela Cameron, Ben Swale, Leonie Lowndes, Mary Mercer, Nicki Fielder, Phil Hoskin, John Cockrem and photographer, Tim Swale.





## Contact Details

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

### Committee 2022 - 2023

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Mini-Bus Manager	Ken Mercer	<a href="mailto:minibus@mtsc.org.nz">minibus@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 364 6475

**General Committee:** Nicki Fielder, Linda Campbell, Richard Lander, Blair Petersen, Peter Rawlins

### Appointees

Lodge Bookings	Hugh & Liz Wilde	<a href="mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz">lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz</a>	021 054 2560
Gear Custodian	Rob Pringle	<a href="mailto:gear@mtsc.org.nz">gear@mtsc.org.nz</a>	020 426 2176
Ski Captain	Peter Rawlins	<a href="mailto:ski@mtsc.org.nz">ski@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 678 0747
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Wednesday Trips	Bev Akers	<a href="mailto:bevakers@xtra.co.nz">bevakers@xtra.co.nz</a>	027 274 6265
Thursday Trips	William Laing		022 099 7988
Facebook	Ivan Rienks, Rob Pringle, Karen Tutt, Howard Nicholson	<a href="mailto:facebook@mtsc.org.nz">facebook@mtsc.org.nz</a>	

### New Members

Prospective members must be nominated by a Proposer and a 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](mailto: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	<b>The lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860.</b>
<b>Adult</b>	<b>\$40</b>	<b>\$58</b>	<b>Note that, due to rising costs, lodge rates will increase on 1 July, 2023 as shown on <a href="#">the web page</a>.</b>
<b>Secondary School</b>	<b>\$32</b>	<b>\$48</b>	<b>They were last increased four years ago.</b>
<b>Primary School</b>	<b>\$26</b>	<b>\$42</b>	
<b>Pre-school (3-5 yo)</b>	<b>\$13</b>	<b>\$13</b>	

**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.