



**Dec 07 - Jan 08
Issue 11**

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Photo from Wakelings
Hut Trip (Nov 3-4).
Photo: Howard
Nicholson



Upcoming club nights

End of Year BBQ+Esplanade evening

7.30 pm, 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month at the Manawatu Aero Club Rooms, Airport Drive

4th December - End of year club BBQ

The end of year BBQ is at the Aero Club rooms. Festivities along with the prize giving will begin at 6 p.m. The club will supply sausages, tomato sauce, bread, a small amount of wine and juice. Bring your own salads, drinks and other meat if you wish.

5th February - Opening club night of 2008

The opening club night of 2008 will be an outside event held at the Palmerston North Esplanade at the BBQ area. The BBQ will start at 6 p.m. and will be followed by either a walk or orienteering. Further details will be sent out closer to the time via email, or please feel free to contact one of the committee.

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Editors message

What happened to the year? Hopefully you all have a safe and enjoyable summer where ever you happen to be. Thanks to all of you that have contributed to the newsletter of the year! Happy trails and best wishes for the New Year, Wei.



Above: Our club van now has an identity!
Photo: Jean Garman

President's Report

Lodge Refurbishment

by **Howard Nicholson**
email mtsc.president@xtra.co.nz or phone (06) 357 6325

The committee has approved a plan for refurbishment at the Lodge, including the complete re-lining of two bunkrooms and the installation of new bunks/beds. Also, the long-awaited installation of a second shower unit in the Ladies' bathroom will be welcomed by many. Ryan Badger and Rob Pringle will lead the charge, starting with an extended work party over the Christmas break.

This work and other essential maintenance (such as exterior painting, glazing and general cleaning) must be done in the short period between now and May next year, and so I ask that you reserve some time and help out when you can. Keep an eye on the newsletter and website (www.mtsc.org.nz), or contact Ryan for details and dates.

It is with regret that we accept Clare Wilford's resignation from the committee. In her short time on the committee, she has produced proposals for minibus sponsorship, pushed through the sign-writing of the minibus, and arranged publicity opportunities for the Club. Clare has offered to continue sending regular articles to our local newspapers and will still be active with the Thursday Trampers and the Club. Thank you Clare for your efforts, and we wish you well for your move to Wellington.

Have a happy and safe Christmas break, and I look forward to hearing your tales (tall and true) next year.

Chief Guide's Report

by **Bev Akers**
Phone (06) 325 8879

Can't get over how I have had virtually no response to the First Aid Courses which are on

offer - Guess that gives me a lot of assurance if I hurt myself at anytime, there will be someone to help me - Great. If you are having second thoughts, please give me a ring so we can organize something.

Lodge Work Party

26-31 December 2007

Well summer is here once again, and while that means that unfortunately the ski season is over, it also means that hopefully there is some fine weather on the way and we can get stuck in and carry on with the work on the lodge that we started last year.

As most of you would know we put a new roof on the back half of the lodge and while doing so fixed our little problem of snow getting up into the roof space and then leaking down through the ceiling. So now we can start on the inside of the lodge with the plan for this year being to re-line the walls and ceilings in the two bunk rooms on the summit side of the lodge and also re-line the drying room. We also plan to install another shower in the women's bathroom! Another job close to the top of the

list is to carry on with the painting of the outside of the lodge which was started last year. A few of us will be heading up on the 26th (boxing day) and we are planing to get a few good days at it and come home again on the 31st. If you are handy with a hammer or a paint brush we would love you to come along! But even if you aren't handy in those areas there is sill plenty of cleaning and tidying to be done and most importantly hard workers to be fed! If you would like to help out with the work party please let me know. You could come for 3 days or 1, Any help would be greatly appreciated. Please contact me on (027) 4451 997 or farmboy_ryan@hotmail.com if you are able to help

For Sale

DoC hut tickets - discount rates to members.
Contact: Howard Nicholson on (06) 357 6325.

Upcoming trips

TRIP GRADING

The times listed below include tramping, rest and meal stops. In assessing the trip times and grades, terrain, weather and party fitness (a party is as fast as its slowest member) must be considered. As these factors will never repeat themselves, times are only estimates. Contact the trip leader if you are unsure about trip gradings for a specific trip.

ALL	All welcome
EASY	4 hours per day, pace slower than Easy/Med. Does not relate to terrain.
EASY/MEDIUM	5 hours per day at a pace slower than medium.
MEDIUM	7 hours per day at a standard walking pace.
MEDIUM/FIT	8 hours per day at a pace faster than medium.
FIT	Over 8 hours per day at a pace faster than medium/fit.
TECHNICAL	Qualifying requirements to be announced by the trip organiser.

Wednesday Trampers

5 December

Bev Akers

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

325 8879

through some lovely beech forest following the Mangatainoka River, before a steep climb up to the ridgeline, and walk along the ridge to the hut. We will have lunch at the hut and return via the same route. Meet at Police Station at 7.30 am.

Thursday Trampers

6 December

Merv Matthews

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

357 2858

Tongariro Crossing

11-12 December

Don McDonald

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

357 0222

Howletts Hut

8-9 December

Gary Bevins

Phone for more details.

Medium

325 8879

Thursday Trampers

13 December

Carolyn Brodie

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

358 6576

Herepai Hut

9 December

Alla Seleznyova

This pleasant walk starts at Mangatainoka Road end (also called Putara Road) not far from Ek-tahuna and takes about 5 hr return. We pass

Easy/Medium

355 0862

Leon Kinvig via Top Gorge

15-16 December

Adam Matich

This full-medium trip will start from the Longview Road End (Moorcock Saddle) from

Medium

359 2796

where we will head up through Longview Hut and either drop directly into the Pohangina River and follow it down to Top Gorge Hut, or head down along the tops past Rocky Knob to the high point North of 1174 (or maybe even a little short of that), and drop down the Top Gorge Hut. Then it will be all the way down the river to Leon Kinvig Hut for the night. Next day, we will climb up to 1232, on the Ruahine range, drop down through 855, past the turnoff to the no longer existent Birch Whare, and then NNW down the spur into the stream we will follow down to Makaretu Hut. We then follow the stream down to the North Branch of the Makaretu, which we follow all the way up to Awatere, to then climb back up to Moorcock Saddle. Needless-to-say, if it rains that weekend you are on your own because I will be staying home, warm and dry!

Waikamaka Hut

16 December

Medium/Fit

Tony Evans

357 4355

Have had no luck with the weather on previous plans for this destination so hopefully this will be a case of third time lucky? We will leave town nice and early(7 am) for a good days(maybe 8 hours?) walk. Leaving the vehicle at North Block Road we head up the track towards Sunrise Hut and take the left fork in the track to Waipawa Forks Hut. From there we follow the Waipawa River up to the Waipawa Saddle and on down to the Waikamaka River and downstream to the Hut. Then we eat our lunch and come home again.

Neill-Winchcombe Crossing

19-21 January

Medium/Fit

Adam Matich

359 2796

It has been decided to do a loop and not a crossing which will avoid the most probably busy huts on the long weekend. This trip is also a bit weather dependent and so may change at a late date. But at the moment, on day one we will start early from Wall's Whare, head to Cone Saddle

and up to Cone from where we will do the Neill-Winchcombe Ridge to Mt Hector. We will camp somewhere around Hector for the night, so people will need flys and bivvy bags etc. On day two we will head around the Dress Circle, past Alpha Hut and maybe camp somewhere around Bull mound or even as far as Cone Hut. Then on day three we have a short amble back on out again.

Barlow Hut

20 January

Easy/Medium

John Beech

354 9310

Please phone for details.

Ruahine Crossing

26-27 January

Medium

Greg Dobson 06 364 8218 or 027 374 5620

I plan to do this crossing via Longview Hut and over the tops to either Iron Gates Hut or Tunupo Peak. We will camp out on the tops if the weather is fine and if not we will crash in the nearest hut. Last time I did this it was a pleasant 9 hour walk so over 2 days it should be around 4-5 hours per day. We will need to organise transport for both ends so if you're interested call me.

Wednesday Trampers

30 January

Easy/Medium

Sue & Lawson Pither

357 3033

Phone for more details.

Arete Forks Hut

2-3 February

Medium/Fit

Tony Evans

357 4355

Leaving Palmy at 7.30 am on the Saturday we drive to the Kiriwhakapapa Road end and head up the Blue Range track, left at the junction to Blue Range Hut and on to Cow Creek Hut and unless time is running short carry on to Arete Forks Hut for the night. Sunday we retrace our steps and home again. Just a simple plan to take advantage of the longer summer days to visit 2 huts I haven't been to yet.



Left: Warp speed on the club van or as Adam likes to call it, the gullibility meter
Photo: Adam Matich



Above: Wednesday Trampers on the Mangaone Walkway
Photo: Margaret Gillingham | 24 October 2007)

Right: Heading down from Bruce Hill
Photo: Adam Matich (Mitre Flats Trip | 24-25 Nov 2007)



Trip Reports

Longview Hut 30 September

by Rod McKenzie

Five eager trampers left PN under an overcast sky which cleared as we got further into the Hawkes Bay. It took two hours to get to the car park due to a slight delay when all the passengers had to leave the car and walk up the first and last hill on the access road due to loose metal no providing enough traction.

Still conditions allowed us to be at the hut for an early lunch just before mid day. Following lunch a decision was reached to return down the same direct track as we had come up on. An uneventful trip back to PN, including an ice cream stop in Dannevirke, completed a great day out. We were Judy and Emma Callesen, Maureen Talbot, Dave Allan and Rod McKenzie.

Pureora Forest Park 20-22 October

by Christine Scott

I was told the forest was beautiful – and it was, with magnificent tall trees and clear, deep running rivers.

It is not the easiest area to plan a trip because the park is long and narrow running along the Hauhungaroa Range and there didn't seem to be any public transport we could hook into to get dropped off and picked up at different road ends. Luckily we had two cars so after a leisurely drive up with two coffee stops we dropped one car off at the Waihora Track and the other at a farm car park just adjacent to the DoC carpark at the beginning of the Waihaha Track.

The Waihaha Track was a very pleasant wander through shrubland along side a deep clear stream moving slowly

through deep pools and occasionally rushing over small papa rock rapids.

Waihaha Hut is a new hut set in a clearing in dense podocarp forest about 3 hours from the road end. It was full but luckily has a very large verandah complete with picnic table so as the rain set in we were able to cook and sleep in relative comfort.

The track from Waihaha to Waihora was more challenging with a couple of short steep ascents and descents but was always below bushline and was well marked and easy to follow. The rain had cleared and although it was windy we were well sheltered in the bush. Six hours later we emerged at Waihora Lagoon and had a quick wander round the lagoon which is surrounded by rimu and kahikatea.

After returning to the cars Clare and David headed back to a BBQ in Palmerston North while the rest of us headed round to a DoC campsite beside the Puroera Forest Park HQ. There, two small primus stoves competed against the might of an MSR primus in a race to cook tea and heat water.

Monday dawned cloudy and drizzly so we opted for viewing crawler tractors, vintage steam haulers, the buried forest, forest tower and treetop protest site rather than climbing up Mt Pureora which is said to have spectacular panoramic views of Taupo, Ruapehu and the Kaimanawa's. We were; Clare Wilford, David Pickering, Ivan Alve, Tony Evans, Greg Dobson and Christine Scott.

Mangaone Track 24 October

by Pauline Hall

Ten trampers piled in the bus and headed for Te Horo. We turned left towards the hills and then began the mys-

Right:
Pureora Tractor
 Photo: Christine
 Scott (Pureora
 Forest Park Trip |
 20-22 October)



tery trip. Would you believe at least 5 of us had been before but had no recollection of the road in. With plenty of advice from the back seat, we arrived at Mangaone Track in the Kaitawa Scenic Reserve. The weather was great as we strode off with great enthusiasm. The track followed the river and it was very picturesque and not too challenging. After about an hour we stopped for a refreshment stop and a chin wag. We passed a camp with a caravan, removal van and chucks all around. This was very intriguing to find in the middle of nowhere. No people were to be seen and no road in that we could detect. We also spotted a house in the bush pretty well disguised by trees. This sent our imaginations wild. We continued down the track and found a nice posy for lunch by the river. Being a social lot - we stopped at the Brown Sugar at Otaki for coffee on the way home.

Purity Hut **25 October**

by Royce Mills

After experiencing gale force winds in our region during and after Labour weekend we were very lucky to strike a perfect day for tramping - almost calm and even some weak sunshine. We had an early lunch at Purity Hut then continued up to Wooden Peg. We returned for a second, late lunch at the hut and retraced our steps back through the magnificent stands of Kaikawaka below the new hut. Six in the group.

Mountain House Loop **28 October**

by Sue Tuohy

We spent a very pleasant Sunday strolling up to the shelter for lunch and then back down via the Akiwhakatu Stream. Weather was perfect. Called into Mt Bruce for the usual on the way home. We had 3 new people on this trip who hopefully enjoyed their day.

Rangipo Hut **31 October**

by Rita Hodson

The weather was perfect not a cloud in the sky and hardly a breath of wind. The van was looking flash with the new sign writing done just the day before. The views of the desert road area and mountains as we arrived was stunning and 15 trampers were keen to start the track to Rangipo Hut. Beautiful wide open space bare and rocky the undulating track gave us glimpses of the snow clad tips of Ruapehu peeping through and then sometimes we seemed to be walking right beside the mountain. Arriving at the gorge swingbridge we had the opportunity to see the spectacular remains and changes from a major lahar flow at the beginning of the year. After a relaxing lunch in the sun taking in the fabulous views from the hut we made our way back and on the drive out to the dessert road noticed 2 whirlwinds. A lovely day in the mountain area finished off with coffee at the Wild Bean Cafe in Taihape

Arawaru Trig **1 November**

by Merv Matthews

Sixteen Thursday trampers headed up Scotts Road to the Gordon Kear Forest, then followed a farm track (permission required) to the bush edge. After a brief search we found the start of the old hunters' track which had previously been cleared by a few keen members of the Thursday group. It is an easy grade, following ridge lines all the way to the trig. Most of the track is within Hardings Park, but strays into the Tararua FP at a couple of points. Some of the group took the brief side trip to a cosy biv built largely of punga and covered with a large NZR tarp. The hoped-for panoramic views from the top were not to be as they were totally obscured by low cloud.

Wakelings Hut

3-4 November

by Dave Mitchell

After looking at the weather forecasts all week, Saturday morning rolled around and it hadn't rained yet. This was good as it meant we could do the trip as planned. We arrived at the Kawatau Base road end via Mangaweka, better still it looked fine on the tops. There is a steady climb from the base up the ridge to Colenso trig, we stopped on the way to take in all the views up the valley and across to Ruapehu. From the high point on Colenso we traveled across to where we turn on to the Mokai Patea range. There is a weathered sign alerting people about private land further north. We stopped for lunch before tackling the next stage which is a gradual climb. The Mokai patea range is a broad open ridge with interesting tarns dotted along it. Not long before Rongotea the poled track down to Crow hut appears. Just before Rongotea 1483 m, the track doglegs around a big tarn. It was still fine but getting windy by this stage, from there we had good views across to McKinnon Hut and down to Crow hut. From Rongotea the track drops quickly through the alpine belt and down a steep track through very attractive bush, which is typical of the ruahines. On the way down someone spotted a fresh boot print, which meant when we arrived at Wakelings hut we found it was occupied with hunters who had flown in the previous day. The hut is in good repair with a single maori bunk and mattresses. It is only 29 years since I last visited here. So it was down to the river flats to set up the flies for the night. Even though the clouds threatened that evening it never rained so we had a comfortable camp.

On Sunday we set off back up the ridge towards Rongotea and it started raining after leaving the bush. We didn't linger on the tops as it was cloudy and rainy. From Rongotea we were able to follow the poles to get us on

the right ridge down to Crow hut. The map doesn't show the track in very good detail and we(I) missed a turn off. Once we had worked out where we should be going, it was a quick bush bash to get around onto the ridge. It was all down hill again through nice bush to the Kawatau River, this ends with a very steep little climb down into the river. If the river happened to be in flood you possibly might be stuck there. To get to Crow hut there is a choice, either walk down the river for 10 min or take the sidle track down to the bridge. The bridge has no sides, so you need to make sure you watch where your feet go. We had lunch at Crow hut, this is a very tidy 6 bunk hut, with a new woodburner in it. After lunch and a brew we headed straight up to the track to get on the Hikurangi Range. There is no let up until you are out of the bush. The track then rejoins the main track to McKinnon Hut, except we turned right and headed down again to the cage across the Kawatau River. By the time everyone had reached the cage, knees had turned to jelly etc. Brian found some bright spark had left the cage hooked up on the otherside, but by rocking the cage the hook released it. This has been a problem in the past so DoC have made it so the chain hook will drop if it is rocked. Then there is just the last little grunt up to the Van. The tramp went well, with the weather cooperating for a change. The times were approximately 6 hr on Saturday and 7 hr on Sunday. Thanks to all that came on it. We were Dave Mitchell, Brian Webster, Jenny McCarthy, Jean Garman, Peter Rawlins, Tony Evans and Howard Nicholson.

Sunrise Hut

4 November

by Linda Campbell

The forecast was not good but as we all know the best way to be sure is to get out there and have a look! Four of

Right:
Pausing for a break
Photo: Dave Mitchell
(Wakelings Hut Trip |
3-4 Nov 07)



us, Tim Swale, Kylie Shepherd, Dieter Stalman and Linda Campbell set off in damp conditions for a very enjoyable and beautiful walk. We could only go as far as the hut due to the very strong winds but we braved a wee look over the ridge behind the hut nearly getting blown back the way we had come. It was definitely a great walk helped along by great company and lots of interesting stories.

Tongariro Crossing 8 November

by Merv Matthews

Twelve Thursday trampers left town at the crack of dawn, well 6.00 am actually, and headed for the Mangatepopo end of the famed Tongariro crossing, arriving at 9.00 am. Several vehicles were already parked there, showing that we would not be the only ones on this trail. Weather was excellent, though low cloud initially blocked views of the tops. On the climb out the South Crater we were met with a sudden cold breeze which caused a scramble for windbreakers and gloves. This is not surprising since the altitude at this point exceeds 6,000 ft. At the lunch stop overlooking the Emerald Lakes we noted a long line of trampers snaking their way across the flats and up and over the saddle in the distance. More trampers were arriving, descending from the Red Crater. A quick count showed that no less than 70 trampers were in view from our lunch stop! It was an enjoyable trip with magnificent views from the vicinity of the craters. Total time for the crossing, including stops, was exactly 6 hours, compared with the DOC estimate of 7-8 hours.

Maharahara Crossing 11 November

by Tim Swale

There is something very satisfying about the crossing of a mountain range on foot but it is rarely done because of

the logistics of arranging transport to and from road ends. Our plan however was to have two parties starting from either side of the divide and swapping car keys at the midway point. Sounds easy but it did require a lot of phone calls as plans kept changing as more people came on board and we needed to balance numbers at each side and ensure they were going to have transport back when they reached the end of their walk.

Starting from the Kumeti road end near Dannevirke were Linda Campbell, Mark Learmonth, Kathy and Brendan Corner, Dan and Tim Swale accompanied for a while by Adam Matich (who intended to go off exploring a new route towards Kerataki Hut) There was little water in the stream so most of us managed to keep our feet dry before starting the steep climb up to 750 at which point the gradient lessened and we were able to enjoy the panoramic views to either side of the ridge. Getting lost would be just about impossible as the route follows a corridor through the dense leatherwood with virtually no chance of getting off the track. When we got to the first peak of Matanginui we could see our other party tantalisingly close waving to us from Maharahara. However, dropping down, scrambling across a couple of steep gullies that don't quite show on the map because of the contour interval, it seemed quite a while to finally reach the summit of Maharahara.

On Maharahara, Jo and Wayne Scott, the Clarke family (including young Michael who at just 9 years old put in a fantastic effort) plus Ken and Mary Mercer had already settled down to a long and leisurely lunch break in a sunny and almost windless clearing. There would be few days on the Ruahines when you would find such perfect weather. With lunch over we swapped car keys, arranging to meet up again at Ashhurst domain when we had finished our respective walks. One of the good things about this walk is that there is almost constant cell phone coverage so it was easy to track progress. The descent on the



Right: Lunch break
in the leatherwood
Photo: Tim Swale



Left: Crow Hut
Photo:
Dave Mitchell (Wakelings
Hut Trip | 3-4 Nov 07)

Pohangina side is shorter but steeper than the Dannevirke side so we were soon down to the Park boundary for the final walk across farmland to the cars at Opawe Road.

As expected, with the shorter walk and the shorter drive our party got back to the Café at Ashurst Domain nearly an hour before the Dannevirke party so we had a leisurely drink and lazed about in the afternoon sun to finish off what had been a very pleasant day.

Burn Hut Crossing 16-18 November

Gary Bevins nostalgic trip to a region he hunted 25 years ago

by Adam Matich

This trip was more of an arc than a crossing and hopefully has served as an abject lesson about the folly of nostalgia and not reading warning signs. Nostalgia because it may have been great 25 years ago, but it could be lousy now, and warning signs; if trip leader decides not to take the dog, then why might that be? Bev dropped us at number two dam on Friday and we breezed up to Burn hut (2 hrs) where we spent the night. Early next morning we continued on the Burn Arc track to Taramea Peak from where we headed off into the leatherwood and scratchy scrub to follow the spur heading roughly NW between the Ngapuketurua and Taramea Streams and terminating in the Mangahao River. There was leatherwood all the way and travel was slow and difficult, it taking us 8½ hours to travel from the hut down this spur to beyond bump 553, and drop from there into the Ngapuketurua Stream 100 m short of the Mangahao River.

The last 2 km of travel along the spur wasn't too bad as for 500 m we found it was possible to sidle in the forest on the eastern side and for the final 1½ km on the ridge-top itself once the forest decided to show some common

sense (unlike us) and claim the top of the spur as well. We used the GPS to tell us where we were, and that was quite successful. Although it did seem to eat the batteries. We overshot our turning point and had to sidle back so as to not fall onto the slip (not on the map) where the Ngapuketurua meets the Mangahao. Travel down the stream and crossing the Mangahao River was easy, and we startled a stag while doing so. Then it was a 500 m climb up through the forest to 651, 710, and down into the little saddle just beyond to camp for the night. This took 4 hours, not because the forest was difficult, but because on the tops it gave way to leatherwood again, and we had no choice but to bash on through it. One member of the party was also a little tired. These tops were open and grassy 25 years ago (this is a nostalgia bit), but now they are nearly fully covered with leatherwood and scrub.

Our camp in the saddle was very comfortable, it being a calm, clear night. Gary's gloves were frozen the next morning. Our climb from the saddle, up and over 830 and 849 was absolutely dire. It was pretty well leatherwood all the way, ranging from waist to 12 feet high. In places we had to crawl underneath on hands and knees. In all, we enjoyed 5 hours of intimate association with the vegetation in order to travel 1¾ km. Up higher, a good track that had been cut through the leatherwood 25 years ago (another bit of soul-destroying nostalgia) was only occasionally evident as a band of leatherwood chest high instead of 12 foot high. There was lots of scratching and our long-johns were eventually pretty well destroyed. Gary informed me that on one trip the dog accompanying them had accidentally impaled itself on leatherwood (like that was going to cheer me up). I suspected that the dog had actually attempted suicide and that was why Gary hadn't allowed Jemma to come along. While the sun shined down merrily, we kept on our rain coats and woolen gloves for protection from the natives. Water was

scarce, as were tempers. Although I think secretly, Gary was enjoying himself. At my expense. The leatherwood and scrub was just as vile when we started heading NW off 849 (Mairekau) and we couldn't see where we were going. You can't really follow a compass in a straight line if you can't travel in a straight line. So we made lots of corrections. After one brief stop I forgot to put my mittens back on, but remembered when only 20 m away. I decided that I would rather die than retrace the 20 m back to them.

However, just as all good things come to an end, so do most bad things, and finally we dropped into the forest where travel became almost pleasant again. We still needed to pay strict attention to the navigation, making corrections when the GPS and compass both complained or worse, when they started to bicker. It took us about 4 hours to travel down this spur through bump 410. The travel improved further down because we encountered blazes and paint markers which dropped us onto the Te Araroa Walkway at 2725860E, 6072210N. From thereon we had a solid 90 min tramp along and up the walkway to the car on Scotts Road (10-hr day). This was a once in a lifetime trip. So bad luck, you have missed both it and the very important lessons about being wary of going on nostalgia trips with Gary and needing to determine just why he is not taking the dog. While Gary didn't seem to suffer any ill effects from the trip, I was off-colour for the next 2-3 days. A touch too much sun perhaps.

The hapless party were Gary Bevins and Adam Matich

Top Maropea Hut 18 November

by Tony Evans

Away from Palmy by 7.30 and on the track up to Sunrise Hut by 9.30 we passed a lot of trampers heading down

the track, Sunrise Hut had been crowded the night before.

Morning tea in the sun on the hut steps and on across the Armstrong Saddle and up a little more before stopping admiring the fantastic views as we went, what a brilliant day. Those of you who have been up there on a clear, calm and sunny day will know the feeling and for all those who haven't, well today was your chance.

Stopping to identify the landscape before heading down to Top Maropea Hut we could see back over our left shoulder the Waipawa Saddle, moving clockwise Te Atuaoparapara dominates the skyline and then snow-streaked Rongotea peeking above the ridge and the spur leading down to Wakelings Hut identifiable. Straight ahead was the tussock of the round topped Mokai Patea Range with snow capped Ruapehu and Ngaurahoe as a backdrop. Further round is the Ohutu Ridge and is that nearer peak Waikamaka with the nearby trig .1499 shielding the view of the high ground to the north of us?

Only another half hour to the hut where the planned half hour lunch break lounging on the grass in the sunshine by hut somehow became three-quarters of an hour and then time to head back home again, with mostly downhill walking and stopping for drinks and ice-cream in Dannevirke we were back in Palmy by 6 pm. What a grand days walk Dave Allan and myself had enjoyed.

Mitre Flats via Blue Range 24-25 November

by Adam Matich

Five of us started from the Mikimiki road end and after crossing the footbridge turned left to follow the lesser-known tramways SW for 700 m along side the stream and then NW for another km to 2721290E, 6038410N (Alt. 400 m) before we began our climb onto Blue Range. The



Right:
Traversing the tops
Photo: Dave Mitchell
(Wakelings Hut Trip |
3-4 Nov 07)

Right:
Sunny afternoon
at Mitre Flats
Photo:
Adam Matich
(Mitre Flats Trip |
24-25 Nov 2007



tramway criss-crossed the creek a bit and branched up at least one side creek, so some of us found it easier to stay in the creek bed, while others stayed on dry land. The route along the tramway has been marked, but I think it is necessary to know what you are doing in order to take full advantage of it. The beginning of our climb up on to Blue Range was marked with a cairn and a marker on a tree and the tree markers continued all the way up to 865 North, 300 m SW along the tops to 865 South, and then NW down into the Waingawa River. So we didn't really have to do any navigation. Part way up to 865 North we had lunch, and for the first time this season it was possible to sit anywhere and maintain dry grunts, apart from the copious perspiration. The forest was very dry.

There were quite a lot of 1080 pellets and some dead possums. Bird life was pretty good, there being constant noise, including what sounded like the screech of a cuckoo and some sightings and hearings of Kaka. Once past 865 South, we followed the marked trail down in a north-westerly direction. At about 620 m we decided it was heading a bit too far north for us and sidled WSW through the friendly forest to drop into the river about 50 m upstream of the hut. It was possible to cross over with dry feet. We are not sure where the marked trail terminates. Possibly at the site of the old bridge. We reached the empty hut at 2:30 p.m. after a 4½ hour day and proceeded to enjoy the golden weather on the verandah. Gary, Bev and Jemma arrived via the Barra track at around 5:30 and Jean went off to see if she could find something to kill. Fortunately all she managed was to frighten a couple of deer and so we weren't required to carry any extra weight the next day.

Early on Sunday morning Gary, Bev and Jemma headed back out via the Barra Track, whereas after crossing the bridge we climbed back up to 865 South and then headed all the way along the range to Bruce Hill. While not diffi-

cult, the travel along Blue Range is a bit scratchy, so we were glad to reach the well cut and marked route heading SE back down the spur to the Mikimiki road end footbridge. Travel down this spur was pretty good and only in one spot did we need to pay attention, which was the left hand turn at below 535. One treat encountered on this spur was a collection of New Zealand Iris (*Libertia ixioides*) in flower. In the New Zealand forest, flowering plants don't exactly leap out from behind every second tree and grapple hapless trampers to the ground. After a 5-hour day we popped out at the foot bridge where we cooled off and had a quick lunch before rambling along back to the van.

We were Jenny McCarthy, Jean Garman, Tony Evans, Brian Webster, and Adam Matich

Wednesday & Thursday Trampers

Wednesday Tramps

Colenso Trig (7 trampers)
Mangaone Walkway (12 trampers)
Rangipo Hut (15 trampers)
Irongates Track (13 trampers)
Mikimiki Tramway (17 trampers)

Thursday Tramps

Irongates Track (7 trampers)
Purity Hut
Awarowa Trig (16 trampers)
Tongariro Crossing (12 trampers)
Tunupo Trig (12 trampers)

Club Information

Annual Hut Passes

Buy your Annual Hut Pass through DoC. The full price of an Annual Hut Pass is \$90 but is reduced to \$63 with your Federated Mountain Club (FMC) card discount. Jean Garman will provide you with a form to fill in which will be sent off with your cheque and FMC card (if you have one) to DoC Waikanae who will post you an Annual Hut Pass. Note that MTSC family memberships only pay one FMC sub so only one FMC card (and therefore discount) is available per family. Contact Jean at jeanandivan@value.net.nz or phone (06) 354 3536.

Accommodation at the MTSC lodge on Mount Ruapehu

The lodge is close to Iwikau Village, has power, hot showers, and is stocked with food. The lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860. Lodge bookings can be made between 9:30 am and 9:30 pm on any day. Do not call outside of these hours.



Note that bookings are not confirmed until the fees are paid. Payment is to be made in advance by personal cheque, bank cheque or cash. There is no Internet banking for lodge fees. Contact Hugh & Liz Wilde on (06) 356 9450.

	Members	Guests
Adult	\$21	\$33
Secondary School	\$18	\$30
Primary School	\$15	\$26

Booking and use of the MTSC Transit Van

The normal run-of-the-mill things you need to do if using the Transit Van are:

1. Book preferably by Thursday, and certainly no later than 6 pm Friday.
2. Cancel bookings by these times so others needing the van have time to amend travel arrangements.
3. A fly should be carried on every tramp, there is always one in the passenger door of the club van and they are available from the Gear Custodian at no charge.



Trip leaders and those planning trips should use this effect club asset. Adam Matich is our minibus custodian and he can be contacted at (06) 359 2796.

Club Equipment

We have packs, 2 and 3 person tents, fly-sheets, snow mats, sleeping bag cover, gas cookers, size 8 and 9 boots, billies, two bivvy bags and two big tent flies. Ice axes, crampons, and helmets are also available. Food Dehydrator: ideal for drying large and small quantities of fruit, vegetables, and meat for tramping rips. Easy to use, works well, and is available for hire from the Gear Custodian. Hire cost for members, \$1 per day. Contact the Gear Custodian: Peter Rawlins on (06) 356 7443.

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 15th of each month to Wei-Hang Chua at mtsc.editor@xtra.co.nz. Please contact me if you'd prefer to receive your newsletter by email only. Send changes of address to the Membership Secretary at P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North or email info@mtsc.org.nz

Club website | www.mtsc.org.nz

This includes a list of contact details and a club email address. The club webpage is maintained by Howard Nicholson and is kindly hosted by InSPire Net.

People to contact

If you would like to contact the club with general inquiries, please drop a line to MTSC, P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North and it will reach the appropriate person. If you want a particular topic discussed at Committee meetings, this is a good way to go about it.

MTSC 2007-08 Committee

President	Howard Nicholson	357 6325 mtsc.president.xtra.co.nz
Secretary	Tim Swale	06 376 6556
Treasurer	Christine Scott	354 0510
Chief Guide	Bev Akers	325 8879
Day Trip Convenor	Gary Bevins	325 8879
Membership Sec.	Jenny McCarthy	06 376 8838 mtsc.memsec@xtra.co.nz
Newsletter Editor	Wei-Hang Chua	021 212 0369 mtsc.editor@xtra.co.nz
Social Convenor	Linda Campbell	323 3836
Ski Captain	Ken Mercer	356 7497
Lodge Manager	Ryan Badger	027 445 1997
Lodge Booking Officers	Hugh & Liz Wilde	356 9450 wildeh@clear.net.nz
Mini-bus Custodian	Adam Matich	359 2796
General Committee	Geraldine Fovakis Ivan Alve Clare Wilford	