

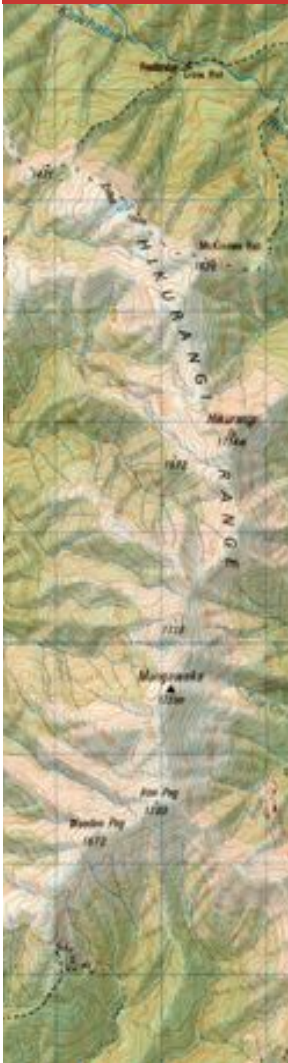
May 2010  
Issue 05

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**The ash cone within the Mt Meru crater**  
(Photo: Christine Scott | Tanzania | January 2010)



## Upcoming club nights

### Tanzania+AGM

**7.30 pm, 1st Tuesdays of the month at the RSA, Palmerston North, 200 Broadway Avenue**

#### 4th May - Peak bagging in Tanzania

Christine and Barry Scott have recently returned from climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro - the "Roof of Africa" - and the stunning volcanic Meru Peak. Come along to find out more about tramping in Tanzania.

#### 18th May - Annual General Meeting 2010

This is the official notification that the 2010 AGM will be held on Tuesday 18 May at 7:30 pm, at the RSA, 200 Broadway Ave, Palmerston North. See Ken's President's Report on page 2 for more details.

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If you'd like to receive your newsletter by email as a pdf in full colour rather than by post then please send an email request to [editor@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:editor@mtsc.org.nz). If you have a change of contact details please email the club membership secretary at [membership@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:membership@mtsc.org.nz) as well as copying the message to [editor@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:editor@mtsc.org.nz).

**Items for the newsletter:** The deadline for newsletter items is the end of the month. Please include a date with trip reports. Photos are appreciated, any number of images at 1024x768 pixels or greater if possible. For example a 2 megapixel image is 1600 x 1200 pixels. Please include the date and an appropriate caption for the photo.

# President's Report

by Ken Mercer

email [president@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:president@mtsc.org.nz) or phone (06) 356 7497 or (027) 364 6475

At our last club night Sergeant Bill Nicholson spoke of his role in coordinating search and rescue in this region. Many members of our club are involved in Land SAR but Bill's role extends to marine searches where there is the added complication of no tracks whatsoever combined with currents moving the lost party in a difficult to predict manner. Thankfully injured or lost trampers at least have the option of staying put!

Triggering one of the club's emergency locator beacons will probably bring a helicopter within a couple of hours. Or will it? Flying over our forest parks is very weather dependant and even more so as we move into winter. Don't be lulled by a false sense of security as it could take many hours before a SAR party is alerted and walks in. Always carry some form of shelter, even on day walks. Also very useful is a cut down sleeping foam. Mine takes up little room in my pack but provide tremendous insulation from the cold ground. As a bonus it's great to sit on at lunch time!

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on May 18. All positions are up for election but we are particularly looking for someone to replace our Newsletter Editor, Wei-Hang Chua. Wei has done a sterling job for the past eight years but now wishes to retire. Please have a chat with a committee member about what is involved if you feel you can contribute to the club in this capacity. It is not an onerous task but is very important. Regardless, please come to the AGM! The June Newsletter will include the annual reports and agenda for this meeting.

## New Club Members

The club welcomes the following new members:

Owen Rogers (Palmerston North)  
 Glen White (Palmerston North)  
 Jane Dennis & Family (Palmerston North)  
 Michelle White (Palmerston North)  
 Maren Domke (Palmerston North)  
 Emmy Eason & Family (Palmerston North)  
 Leanne Pratt (Feilding)

## Chief Guide's Report

by Kim Fraser

email [dowson\\_kr@hotmail.com](mailto:dowson_kr@hotmail.com) or phone (06) 355 5496

The Winter trip card is ready, and I'd like to say a BIG thank you everyone who has offered to lead a trip, without you our tramping club would surely be boring (or non existent). On the trip page of our website are guidelines for trip leaders. I encourage all trip leaders and party members to read them again as they are there to help make your trip leadership responsibilities a more pleasurable experience and will help party members know what's involved in running a trip so they can make leading a trip easier.

A couple of things have been brought to my attention, one is booking in for trips. If you wish to go on a trip please ring the trip leader in advance, making sure there is plenty of time before the trip (usually by Tuesday for a weekend trip) as once numbers are known, trip leader needs to plan food, equipment, transport etc and ring everyone back in time before the trip so party members can get organised. If you ring after all this planning has been done you will most likely miss out. The second is communication within the tramping party during a trip, remember when you are tramping you are part of a team. Leaders need to make sure everyone

knows what is going on, for example does everyone realise we are stopping for afternoon tea now? Party members need to make it easy for the leader to do so, i.e. stay together as a group, ask if they are not sure what is going on, and let someone know if they plan on wandering off or stopping for any reason. The guidelines can be found at: <http://www.mtsc.org.nz/trip%20guidelines.pdf>. Happy tramping.

## FMC March Newsletter Available

Contributed by Jenny McCarthy

The Federated Mountain Clubs monthly newsletter is now available online, you can view the March issue at [www.fmc.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/club-newsletter-1003.htm](http://www.fmc.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2008/11/club-newsletter-1003.htm)

Note that is publication is different from the hardcopy FMC Bulletin that you receive in the post.



**Rainbows on Mt Taranaki**

(Photo: Kim Fraser | Lake Dive Trip | 12 February 2010)

# 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.

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

## TRIP SAFETY

Trip leaders are reminded that trip intentions can be emailed to [intentions@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:intentions@mtsc.org.nz), although this is not a substitute for leaving full written details with the designated contacts within the club. If you require further information on this please contact the Chief Guide. The club also has tent flies and personal locator beacons available free of charge, the club transit van will always have these so there isn't any reason not to take these on a trip short or long, they way next to nothing.

### Wednesday Trampers

14 April

Bev Charlton

Please call for more details.

Easy/Medium

356 0094

### Thursday Trampers

15 April

Nigel Spencer

Please call for more details.

Medium

329 8738

### Fenceline Walk/Geocache

18 April

Christine Scott

The Fenceline Loop is a 1.5 – 2 hr return trip that passes through regenerating forest above the campground and gives some good views of the Waiotauru Valley. We will also visit a geocache on the way so bring your GPS if you have one. We will leave the Police Station at 8am.

Very Easy

354 0510

### Wednesday Trampers

21 April

Liz Flint

Please call for more details.

Easy/Medium

356 7654

### Thursday Trampers

22 April

Gordon Clark

Please call for more details.

Medium

359 2500

### Roaring Stag Hut

24-25 April

Duncan Fraser

We aim to leave Palmy by 8 am, and will plan on being at the hut just after lunch sometime, and return the same way. Please book in for the trip by the 20th as I'm away later in the week.

Easy

355 5496

### Makawakawa Stream

24-25 April

David Harrington

From Pohangina Valley East Road follow Makawakawa stream up past Diggers Hut and on into the headwaters which may involve waterfalls, deep pools, steep sidlings and leatherwood bashing. Out via Takapari Rd and ridge track down to Diggers and down stream. Another option is from Takapari Road, down ridge track to Diggers and up Makawakawa headwaters which would make a shorter trip.

Fit

(06) 839 5766

### Mangaweka Trig

25 April

Hugh Wilde

Please call for more details.

Medium

356 9450

### Wednesday Trampers

28 April

Angela & Kelvin McKinnon

Please call for more details.

Easy/Medium

358 9025

### Thursday Trampers

29 April

Hugh Wilde

Please call for more details.

Medium

356 9450

### Wellington Zoo

2 May

Adam Matich

Please call for more details.

Trip

359 2796

### Wednesday Trampers

5 May

Anne & Ken Rush

Please call for more details.

Easy/Medium

357 2529



**Thursday Trampers**

**6 May**

**Hugh Wilde**

Please call for more details.

**Medium**

**356 9450**

**Joe's Hut**

**8-9 May**

**Kim Fraser**

Somewhere in the Upper Tauherenikau River lives Joe's Hut, not many people have been there or know of its existence and no I don't know where it is either but I have seen a picture. I have vague instructions on how far to go up river to find the hut, its on a terrace, possibly three hours or so up and that its also on the first available site that is large enough to even hold a hut. Not that this lack of information will stop us from trying to find it, it only adds to the excitement of the hunt, and yes we will get our undies wet. So we will leave Palmy early-ish on Saturday, zoom over to Cone Hut and up the river and possibly return the same way on Sunday. I expect to find the hut within six walking hours and if its not found we will be camping out.

**Medium/Fit**

**355 5496**

**Atiwhakatu Hut**

**15-16 May**

**Christine Scott**

A perfect trip for beginners or those wanting a cruisy overnighiter. The new 12 bunk Atiwhakatu Hut has a woodburner and double glazing and should be very comfortable for a May visit. The walk takes you through the beautiful Atiwhakatu valley alongside a stream with lots of native wildlife including tui, bellbirds, fantails, kaka, tomtits and riflemen. I am aiming to leave the

**Easy**

**354 0510**

Holdsworth road end at approximately 1pm for the short 2-3 hour easy walk into the hut.

**Beach Walk**

**16 May**

**Linda Campbell**

The plan is to leave at a leisurely time and head for the coast. Exactly where we will start is still to be decided but there are a few 'treasures' that I am keen to look out for. I will make sure the trip is suitable for families with young children, if anyone is keen, otherwise we will stroll long and far before returning to the vehicles.

**Easy**

**323 3836**

**Wellington Skyline**

**23 May**

**David Newstead**

Please call for more details.

**Easy**

**(027) 457 6175**

**Shorts-Knights**

**23 May**

**Ken Mercer**

May 23 Shorts-Knights (Ken Mercer)  
Here's a chance to get to the tops of the Ruahine's before winter really bites. This track in the western Ruahine range, a bit south of the more familiar Rangiwahia trip. There is a decent climb, about 900m, which will take about 3 hours and we can expect frosted tussock up near Toka. If there is interest a group can do the shorter Deerford loop.

**Medium**

**356 7497**

**Kapakapanui**

**30 May**

**Hugh Wilde**

Please call for more details.

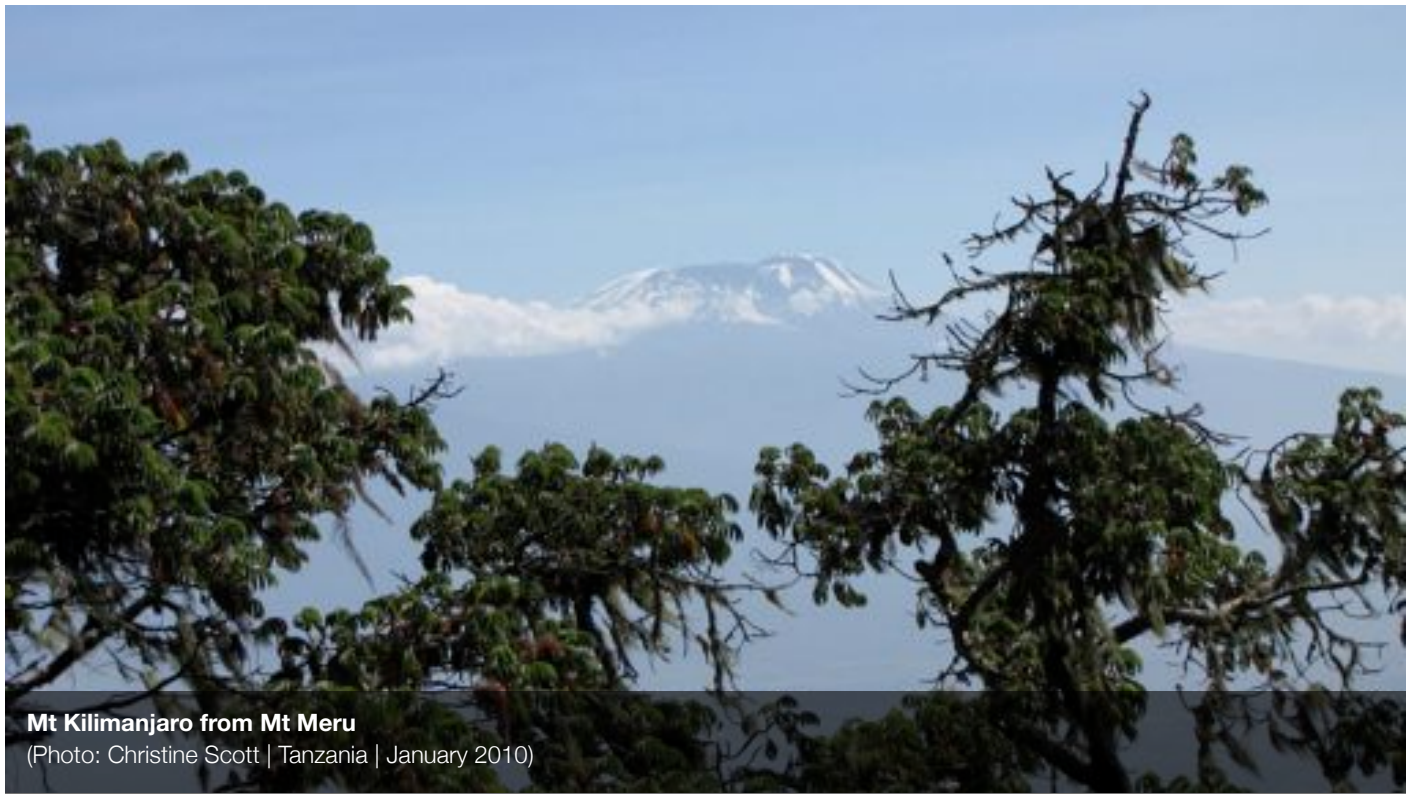
**Medium**

**356 9450**



**Mt Taranaki Steps**

(Photo: Tim Swale | Taranaki Trip | 26-28 February 2010)



**Mt Kilimanjaro from Mt Meru**

(Photo: Christine Scott | Tanzania | January 2010)

## Trip Reports

### **Mt Meru, Tanzania** **January 2010** **by Christine Scott**

To celebrate his 60th birthday, my husband, Barry, decided to climb Kilimanjaro (5896m) with an old climbing buddy from uni days, Conway Powell. I didn't want to be left out but due to an injury was unable to put in the miles for cardio training so decided to opt for the mountain next door, Mt Meru, the second highest mountain in Tanzania at 4566m. After all, "Kilimanjaro was just an old man's doddle at altitude", Meru was the more technical one. I figured that I would be moving so slowly at altitude that it wouldn't affect my achilles and after all I only had to walk 10km max in a day (and climb 1000m).

Barry opted for the 7 day version to climb Kilimanjaro via the Machame route which gave more time for acclimatisation and he summited along with 50 other people on the same day. Seventy five people turned back mainly due to the very cold weather (-20degrees on top). Meanwhile, over on Mt Meru, 6 of us summited on the same day. A bit of a contrast.

I was a bit nervous of the guide books description of the "dramatic and exhilarating walk along the knife edge of the crater rim" while climbing Meru and hoped this would be an over exaggeration. Thankfully I was proved right and on the third day of the climb we left the huts at 1am for the final 1000m climb around the rim of the crater to the summit. The previous two days we had climbed 2000m through grassland and forest with a National Park ranger equipped with a rifle in case one of the local elephants or buffalo took a dislike to us. I was teamed up with an American couple to share the same park ranger. We also, of course had our own personal guide, cook and porters (two for me alone). (Barry and Conway had 11 porters but they were camping).

We reached the summit just after sunrise and got a brilliant view of the sun rising over Kilimanjaro and the perfect triangular shaped shadow of Meru spread out over the plains below us. The descent along the crater rim was spectacular with the cliffs of the inner crater wall of Meru dropping 1500m below us to the base of the Ash Cone inside the crater of Meru, Mt Kilimanjaro in the distance and the steep outer side of the volcanic cone dropping away to the villages and farms below. Kilimanjaro may be called the roof of Africa but we were certainly up in the ceiling too. We were back at the hut by lunch time and after a brunch and a bit of a sleep we descended a further 1000m to the next hut. The following day (4th day) we dropped the final 1000m back to our start point.

### **Taranaki** **26-28 February** **by Linda Campbell**

It was a big weekend in Taranaki with the Cliff Richard concert, and Americana with 600 or so car owners in New Plymouth. This meant it was very difficult to get accommodation and I was starting to get a bit concerned until I heard that friends had just started Waitepuke Homestay in Norfolk which is between Stratford and New Plymouth.

Five other club members (Ken, Mary, Tim, Mark and Shailesh) and three other keen people (Jane, Glen and Owen) set off on a lovely Friday night that was full of promise for a great weekend. When we got to Taranaki the mountain was standing out clearly in the moon light and we were positive we had the right weekend.

We were up at 5.00am on Saturday and ready to start walking from the Stratford Plateau at first light. After a good walk to Tahurangi Lodge we had 'second breakfast'.





### Heading up the track to Mt Taranaki

(Photo: Tim Swale | Taranaki Trip | 26-28 February 2010)

From there it was up the stairs and onto the scree. This is a well beaten track and there were probably at least a hundred people climbing with us which is quite normal for a fine weekend on Taranaki at this time of year. What is not so normal is that we past one young man coming down in his jandals!!! Not a practice I would recommend! We also met a few who were coming down after they had done a night climb to see the sunrise.

We made good time to the lizard where I started experiencing pain near the back of one knee. My thanks go to Tim for waiting for me to catch up with him and then walking with me. The others were at the Summit when I arrived in the crater and Tim carried on up to meet them. I decided to stay put as I have been to the summit many times before and I wanted to rest so my trip back was more comfortable. It was lovely and warm and I found a rock to sit on while I waited. In fact it was so nice I was tempted to put my head down and have a wee sleep! Even though it was a beautiful day we had cloud well below us all day. The views were still great and we could see Ruapehu peaking through the cloud in the distance.

Once the others joined me in the crater they asked about going back via Fantham's Peak. It is a much longer trip this way but everyone was keen so it was off through the crater to the south entrance. The trip down the scree did not take too long and as usual in the early afternoon the cloud was swirling in and making visibility a bit of an issue at times. Once we were on Fantham's Peak Tim and Ken were keen to take the 10 minute trip to Syme Hut to fill water bottles while the rest of us waited and did a dandy repair job on Jane's boot. The body of boot and

sole had decided to go their separate ways as we came down through the scree but it was nothing that electrical tape and a boot lace couldn't fix. The repair worked well and the boot lasted the rest of the day and for Sunday's walk too.

The south route is not a popular route to the top as it is quite hard work so we did not see another soul until we were well down Fantham's Peak where we met two couples heading up to Syme Hut. From Fantham's we carried on down to Dawson Falls, along the Ridge Track back to the Stratford Plateau. It was a long day on the mountain and there were some pretty tired legs. For me it was a fabulous day visiting an 'old friend'- the place where I am most at home.

In spite of tired legs everyone was keen for more so after breakfast on Sunday we made lunch and headed to New Plymouth. Those who hadn't and wanted to, along with Tim who had, climbed Paratutu just because they could while the rest of us enjoyed the sun from below. It only takes about 10 minutes to climb, is very steep and has amazing views from the top which makes the climb worthwhile.

From there we carried on to Surrey Hill Road, Oakura and the start of the Davies Track in the Kaitake Ranges. Tim and I left everyone there and drove the club van around to Lucy's Gully where we walked the Waimoko Track to the summit. It was a very hot, humid walk of about two hours from both track ends to the trig. The others had been resting at the top about 15 minutes when we arrived. There are fabulous views from the trig along the coast line and out to sea. After lunch we headed back

to Lucy's Gully via the Sefton Track. Back at the van we had cake and then, as every good tramp deserves an ice cream, we stopped at Opunake for our well deserved treat.

It was a fantastic weekend with great weather, great company, great accommodation, plenty of sweat and a great sense of achievement and in spite of the long day on Saturday and some very tired legs we now have three new club members! Thanks to everyone for making the trip such a memorable one.

## LandSARdog Training Camp

26-28 February

by Christine Scott

Sika Lodge, Taupo.

With only one training day with Sue Chesterfield under our belt after a 3 week long break while I was in Tanzania, Shilah and I headed up to Taupo to tackle the next phase of our training. We were at a bit of a cross roads in our training, with Shilah more than ready to bark at anyone lying or sitting down in order to get a her toy to play with and very quick to find anyone which involved less than a few minutes of searching. We needed to move onto longer searches but it just didn't seem to be happening and I wasn't confident that Shilah was up to searching for longer periods.

Day 1, morning: the importance of playing well with our dogs was re-emphasized with everyone having a go under the watchful eyes of the assessors. Apparently none of us looked like we were enjoying it so not a good start. From there, the tracking dogs separated off for their own particular training regimes and Shilah and I moved onto a short runaway, followed by the 'lost party' moving further and further from our start point so that Shilah had to spend more time searching.

Day 1, afternoon. Three of the Wilderness teams (air scenting dogs), including us, who were hoping to attend the assessment camp in May, were presented with a large area of young pine forest with a lost party hidden somewhere in it and told to 'go find them'. This was to be Shilah's first go at a long search so it was with quite a bit of excitement and nervousness that I set off into the pines with a trail of people following me. However, 20 – 30min into the search, Shilah hit the scent, went straight to the lost party and barked at them till I arrived and got her 'rubber titty' to play with. I was rapt. We could do it!

Day 2 saw us concentrating on getting a good bark response from our dogs and instead of the lost party having the toy, the handler lobbed it in. We also had the lost party varying their body position and even talking to the dog (advanced) to make sure they still gave a good bark response. The 3 more advanced air scent dog teams had another go at a short search after

each handler assessed how best to search the area.

Day 3 and we practiced what we had learnt and each sat down with the 2 LandSARdog assessors (Grant Cooper and Chris Martin) to go over where we were at in terms of our training and what we needed to achieve for the next camp in September. For Shilah and I: we were getting close to assessment level, dog was capable but I needed to do a lot of work on search area planning and using the wind to aid the dog. We had a reasonable chance of being invited to the May assessment camp but probably more as a learning curve to give us a greater chance at the September assessment camp in Hamner.

The following weekend Shilah took part in her first SAREX at Santoft Forest. Grant Cooper was also there so we spent most of the day practicing search area planning followed by a 40min search by Shilah for a lost party then a short fun search for her in some very open pine forest. Late in the evening we joined up with one of the search teams which were tasked to TCA the lost party through the pine forest. The lost party was found just on dark by both Shilah and the TCA team – however someone sitting under a tent fly talking to her was a bit outside Shilah's stage of training and she never barked, so the credit of the find had to go to the TCA team. We all bedded down for the night – Shilah's first night under a fly – and in the morning Shilah had a bit of a play with the lost party before he was stretched out. A really good learning curve for me on handling a dog in a SAR environment.

Thank you to those of you in the club who have helped me with training and if there are others of you out there who are interested in helping or know of an area (eg 15 acres plus of open pine forest) that might be suitable for searchdog training please get in touch.

## Wednesday Tramping Trip

3 March

by Dave Pollard

Eleven of us set out on a day of adventure, because none of us knew what was in store, all we was sure of was, that it was somewhere at the back of Levin. However, all became clear as we got closer, John Hunt was kind enough to act as the Trip Guide, and a marvellous job he did, providing us with a couple of side trips.



Thursday Trampers outside North Ohau Hut

(Photo: Keith Fisher | North Ohau Trip | 4 March 2010)



The warm up walk started at Waiopēhu Reserve, just a couple of K's, but no one knew of it's existence, then it was on to Kohitere Forest up to Arapaepae No 1 Trig, I came back with a volunteer to pick up the bus so we could pick up the rest at the end of the track, but we were not done yet, John then took the group to Kimberly Reserve which was very picturesque, we were surprised at how it had changed presumably by flooding, and finally on to the highlight a coffee shop at the Museum Café on the way back.

### North Ohau Hut 4 March

by **Stuart Malcolm**

Ten trampers undertook this trip in beautiful early autumn weather. Bev Aker's report in the previous newsletter details the trip well, so I will not repeat that information. It makes a lovely day trip providing you do not mind river travel for about 4 hours!

### Stanfield Hut 7 March

by **Kim Fraser**

At 8am a carload of international students, a carload of new members and a car load of seasoned and lightly seasoned MTSC members met and trundled over to the other side and onto the Tamaki Road end, the weather was pleasantly overcast which made for a lovely cool day for a change as my last 6 tramps have consisted of unbearably sweltering heat. We made light work of the river (talking all the way up) which probably was the reason why the river disappeared underground for a while, we made the hut in time for a few spots of rain, lunch and more talking. Because the walk up was rather unchallenging we decided to take Holmes ridge back to the cars (talking again most of the way), after a snack and more talk to try and fill in time we left for palmy. We were: Kim Fraser (leader) Robert Bruce, Terry Knight, Michelle White, Maren Domke, Emmy Eason, Mark Bethel, and our international friends (Moniek, Gerbin, Erica, and Nico).

### Te Araroa Walkway - Makahika to Archie's Lookout & PT.690 17 March

by **John Hunt**

Because our group (14 trampers) had recently done a "fair bit" north of Woodville and in from Otaki, a trip in from Levin seemed appropriate,



**Stanfield Hut**

(Photo: Robert Bruce | Stanfield Hut Trip | 7 March 2010)

especially as quite a few, like me, had not yet done this part of the Walkway. The prospect of a relatively easy walk through some open farmland and lovely fern glades then gently up bushed streams, albeit with frequent crossings, followed by an hour's steeper climb of some 400m up past Archie's Lookout and on to Pt.690 for lunch, had a lot of appeal.

The day began disappointingly with rain and even some "small hail" on the drive down, but as we drove up Gladstone Road, the weather cleared and we had brilliant sunshine for the rest of the trip.

Ivan Alve, who was familiar with the route, was "press ganged" into being pathfinder, leaving me to bring up the rear.

We all gathered for morning tea break in a delightful fern glade, before the main group took off for Archie's Lookout, and having waited there awhile, decided not to wait for the tail and pushed on up to the main viewpoint some 20 mins. Further up.

The tail enjoyed their lunch at Archie's, before returning to the roadend to enjoy the sun till the main group returned shortly afterwards, after a total trip time of about 5 hours.

Thanks to Ken Rush for looking after one of the party who found the steep section more than they had expected, allowing me to at least make the first viewpoint. Thanks also to Dave Pollard for driving the bus, and to all of



**Trampers arriving at Kiritaki Hut for lunch**

(Photo: Tim Swale | Kiritaki Hut Trip | 21 March 2010)





**Heading from Waipawa Saddle to Waikamaka Hut**

(Photo: Jean Garman | Waterfall Hut Trip | 27-28 March 2010)

the party for their enjoyable chatter and good companionship.

### **Hikurangi Stream 20 March**

**by David Harrington**

With no takers for the trip and an iffy weather forecast I thought I'd go anyway. After an early start and a quick stop for breakfast at Taihape I arrived at the road bridge on the confluence of Hikurangi Stream for an 8.00 am start. Under light drizzle I headed off up the wide easy stream bed of Hikurangi. At 9.30 I passed a large tributary on the true left, the stream now quite boulder y and travel slower going. With the weather conditions still drizzly I arrived at the waterfall (ref: 615899 BK36) at 11.15 am. Nearby I found a track on the true right which climbed steeply up onto a spur then gradually sidled back to the stream. I continued on up the now easy stream bed flats to a big tributary from the north with a large amount of rock scree. At this point with the vegetation being very wet and rocks being very slippery due to the drizzle I decided that sunny Hawkes Bay maybe more pleasant so spend the weekend in so turned around and headed back out. Two hours later the weather cleared... Damn! Too late now to change my mind again. It was out to my ute, onto Taihape for coffee then home to the Hawkes Bay sunshine with the Hikurangi waiting for another time.

### **Kiritaki Hut, Eastern Ruahines 21 March**

**by Hugh Wilde**

Eleven of us left Palmerston North at 8 am for the Kiritaki roadend at Fairbrother Road, behind Dannevirke. Once there, we headed through the locked gate up to the old farmhouse site, where we accessed the ridge route up

to the bush edge. The idea was to do the round trip – through the bush to the hut and then home via the river. The walk along the hunters' track through the bush was very pleasant, particularly where the track had been trimmed for the first hour or two. Further along, the track was more of a route, with a number of fallen trees across it slowing progress. The odd bit of route finding was necessary here. The weather was fine but with quite a strong gusty wind. Fortunately the bush was sheltered. We reached the hut at 1 pm, had a quick lunch and decided on the route back. This was to be via the river.

There are two tracks out of Kiritaki towards the east – one to Maharahara and Kumeti and the other back to Fairbrother Road. We took the latter. This track starts in front of the hut near the rubbish bin and heads down to the confluence of the two streams. The climb down took 30 to 40 minutes and was quite steep in places. But a very good, well-used track. Surprisingly, it is not signposted by DoC.

The trip down the river to the farmland took another two hours and was quite slow going in places, particularly as not all participants were used to stream travel. It was a very pleasant walk none the less, arriving at the roadend around 5 pm and Palmerston North about 6.30 pm. Our participants were: Mary, Maran, Isobel, Holly, Terry, Greg, John, Ken, Tim, Ian and Hugh (Leader).

### **Kapakapanui Trip 25 March**

**by John & Gillian Thornley**

A group of 10 made a successful round trip of the peak, in typical changeable Cook Strait weather patterns. Two fronts were competing for space, but we slipped in between them, and found it clear (well, almost clear) on

the summit ridge, and relished the panoramic views all round. The anticlockwise direction gave us a steep ascent – to sound of bellbirds and sights of autumn flowering rata – with lunch at the hut around 1 pm, and a more gentle stroll down the sun-pierced bush on tops, then dodging the supplejack on the steeper lower section of the track.

### Waterfall Hut 27-28 March by Jean Garman

As we drove up the eastern side of the ranges the weather got progressively better until we could even see the tops of the ranges peeking out of the cloud. The wind, however, was rather fearsome. Opening the gates across the farmland was a struggle and everything had to be carefully weighted down as we got dressed in the car park down by the Waipawa river. As we headed up the Waipawa river the wind got progressively more passive until it was a jolly pleasant day. Large amounts of shingle had washed down out of a side gully making river travel very easy for the first half then it was much the same as usual for the rest of the way up to the saddle. We had lunch in the lee of the Waipawa saddle as the wind whistled through above our heads and discussed whether to battle the wind and enjoy the views round the tops or to go via Waikamaka hut. The valleys looked a more relaxing option and once we had dropped down from the saddle the wind was gone and we had a lovely stroll round to Rangī saddle apart from the nasty spiky spaniards which had a good go at us as we climbed the last slope to the saddle. It wasn't too breezy up there so we sat in the sun for a rest and a chat before dropping down the other side into Rangī creek and rock hopped around to the bright orange unoccupied Waterfall hut. 5 min after we arrived two hunters turned up but by then all the bottom bunks were taken (hehe). We chatted away, ate dinner followed by liquor chocolates and dessert wine then had a good long sleep. The rain forecast for Sunday morning had not yet arrived when we awoke and there were actually hints of blue sky when we left the hut around 8am. In fact it was jolly pleasant all the way back to Rangī saddle from where we could see the ranges nice and clear to the west and covered in grey dark cloud to the east. We all put on another layer and climbed into the cloud heading for Rangīoteatua. Before long we were enveloped and it started to drizzle so it was on with more warm clothes and the raincoats. All wrapped up we were as snug as a bug in a rug and the rain was never too heavy or the wind too strong so it wasn't overly unpleasant even if we couldn't see anything. Before long we were dropping into the Waipawa saddle and out of the cloud once more although the light rain continued all the way back to the car. We were changed into dry clothes and



**Wednesday Trampers**

(Photo: John Hunt | Te Araroa Walkway Trip | 17 March 2010)

heading for home by early afternoon. We were Jenny McCarthy, Ivan Rienks and Jean Garman.

### “Trip Report” for the Driver Refresher Course 30 March by Hugh Wilde

Sixteen members, mostly drivers, attended this refresher course which most thought was useful. Our instructor, a senior driving instructor with the AA covered four main points relevant to our minibus driving. Here they are with some embellishment by me, so please take note even if you travel only as a passenger. It's good to know what should be going on around you. For those drivers who could not attend, there will be an opportunity to attend an AA course later in the year.

#### Competence vs. licenced

We may be legally allowed to drive a particular vehicle but unless we are familiar with the vehicle and have driven it a number of times in recent years, it may well be wiser to leave the driving to someone with more experience in driving that vehicle, particularly when passengers are involved.

#### Risk management

We carry out risk management for the actual tramp, e.g. carrying a PLB and/or fly, map and compass, extra clothing and food in cold weather, storm clothing, etc, and ensuring everybody is up to doing the trip. But what about travelling there and back on the road? Do we give it a thought? We should! The risk does not start and finish at the roadend. The trip is not finished until all have safely returned home. Risk management would address issues such as having a driver in reserve in case the nominated driver is tired or incapacitated; fatigue after a hard day or weekend tramping; the nature and state of the road; are the passengers all asleep in the vehicle while the driver is expected to stay awake? It is wise to get someone to sit alongside the driver who is not going to fall asleep. Change drivers during a long trip home, and take a break from driving each hour. Coffee stops (and icecream stops) make useful journey breaks.

#### Driving downhill

An essential message from our instructor was that it is vital to change down the gears when descending hills –



second nature to those of us who have driven heavy vehicles, but unfortunately a skill lost on many who now drive automatic cars. Descending hills is a risk, especially in a heavy vehicle. That's why large trucks now have engine retard brakes. Our van doesn't! So in general, we should descend a hill in the same gear (sometimes lower) that was used to climb the hill. This uses the engine for controlling the speed of the vehicle, rather than the brakes. Our minibus weighs 2.5 tonnes empty and 3.5 tonnes with 12 people and day packs. More with weekend packs. It is, in effect, a heavy vehicle, and one which a few years ago required an HT licence to drive it. Excessive use of the brakes when travelling downhill will heat the brake fluid to above 100 degrees C and can cause brake fade. Any water in the brake system will evaporate and operating the brake pedal will compress the water vapour instead of working the brakes and slowing the vehicle. The result – a runaway vehicle. Not long ago there was a fatal accident near Dannevirke involving a runaway shearers' van where the brakes failed whilst travelling downhill. There have been others. So, change down when descending hills and don't rely on the brakes. Remember gears before brakes – gears to control the speed, brakes to (occasionally) correct the speed. Remember too, in your automatic cars: when descending steep hills you should manually change down the autoshift to hold the vehicle in a lower gear. Don't just cruise down in the Drive position. Why else would there be those shift positions below the Drive position?

### Vehicle positioning

Concentrate on positioning the vehicle correctly on the roadway, particularly on narrow winding roads. Our

current minibus is considerably longer and wider than a car. This means that we need to take left hand bends and corners wider than we would in a car, to avoid running the left rear wheel off the road. Imagine that you are towing a trailer. The rear wheels of a long vehicle don't follow the same track as the front wheels. Furthermore, being nearer the centre of the road means that we need to drive slower, to give time to stop if there's oncoming traffic. We can't swerve left out of the way – there's not enough room so there's the danger of running off the side of the road. We should frequently use the left hand mirror to monitor the position of the vehicle in relation to the left hand road edge. Particularly when there is no centre line to help gauge the vehicle position.

Happy travelling.

Hugh

### Deadman's-Rangiwahia Loop

1 April

by Keith Fisher

There were 10 in our party. We left the van at 9.10 am. The car park was fairly full as there were a number of deerstalkers out for the Easter Break. Their number varied during the day. Also, as we were leaving at the end of the day, a camper van pulled in. The first of a group from the Auckland Tramping Club, who were on an Easter Trip across to Howletts Hut and back. Merv spoke to a Doc worker, who was checking tracks in the area, and he filled him on the details of the proposed new diversion to get round the big slip on the Rangiwahia Track. We were all back at the van by 3.30 pm. A fine autumn day made for good tramping.



**Clouds over Mt Taranaki**

(Photo: Kim Fraser | Lake Dive Trip | 12 February 2010)

# 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](mailto: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 mains power, heating, hot showers and is well stocked with food. Members and their guests are welcome. (Lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860).



Lodge bookings should be emailed to Liz and Hugh Wilde [lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz). If for some reason you cannot email, please phone 06 356 9450. To confirm your booking, payment must be made in advance by cheque, or cash (in person) to 179 Cook St, Palmerston North 4410. Internet payment is not available for lodge fees.

	Members	Guests
Adult	\$25	\$38
Secondary School	\$22	\$35
Primary School	\$19	\$30
Pre-school (3-5 yo)	\$10	\$10

## 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 Thurs day, 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. There is a Personal Locator Beacon, in the glove box, for people using the van to take with them.



Trip leaders and those planning trips should use this club asset. Adam Matich is our minibus custodian and he can be contacted at (06) 359 2796 or at work (06) 953 7679.

## Club Equipment

We have two personal locator beacons (PLB), 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 (no charge for PLB). Contact the Gear Custodian: Peter Rawlins on (06) 356 7443.

## Articles for the newsletter

Send by the **end** of each month to Wei-Hang Chua at [editor@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:editor@mtsc.org.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 [membership@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:membership@mtsc.org.nz).

## Club website | [www.mtsc.org.nz](http://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 2009-10 Committee

President	Ken Mercer	356 7497	<a href="mailto:president@mtsc.org.nz">president@mtsc.org.nz</a>
Secretary	Tim Swale	06 376 6556	
Treasurer	Christine Scott	354 0510	<a href="mailto:treasurer@mtsc.org.nz">treasurer@mtsc.org.nz</a>
Chief Guide	Kim Fraser	355 5496	
Day Trip Convenor	Bev Akers	325 8879	
Membership Sec.	Jenny McCarthy	06 376 8838	<a href="mailto:membership@mtsc.org.nz">membership@mtsc.org.nz</a>
Newsletter Editor	Wei-Hang Chua	021 212 0369	<a href="mailto:editor@mtsc.org.nz">editor@mtsc.org.nz</a>
Social Convenor	Rochelle Beaumont	354 4929	
Ski Captain	Rob Pringle	358 3319	
Lodge Manager	Ryan Badger	027 445 1997	
Lodge Booking Officers	Hugh & Liz Wilde	356 9450	<a href="mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz">lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz</a>
Mini-bus Custodian	Adam Matich	359 2796	
General Committee	David Newstead	025 576 175	
	Geraldine Fovakis	356 4327	
	Linda Campbell	323 3836	
Imm. Past President	Howard Nicholson	357 6325	