

July 2010
Issue 07

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www.mtsc.org.nz



Club members Kim Fraser (on belay) and Hugh Wilde with other volunteers taking part in a SAR stretcher carry/low angle ropes training day on Sunday 23rd May. The casualty was located and then lowered through thick bush down to the sledge track.

Upcoming club nights

7.30 pm, 1st Tue of the month | Rose City Aquatic Club Room, 50 Park Road, Palmerston North

6 July 2010 “Spreading Green Film”

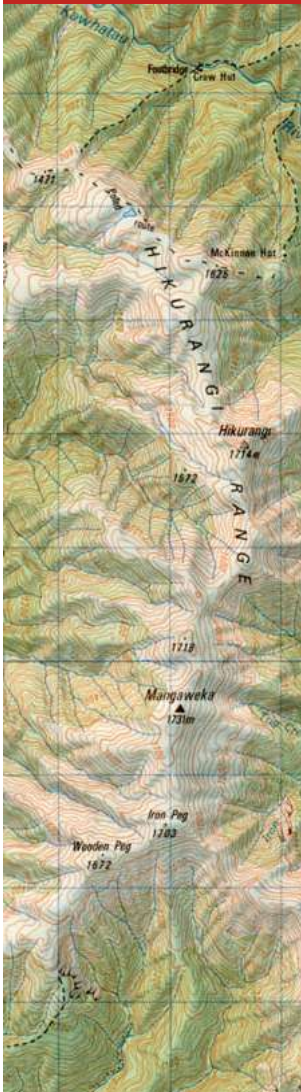
Brent Barrett is an American by birth, a scientist by trade, and an optimist by nature. In the Manawatu since 2000, he pursues his passion for a healthier planet through community involvement, including being a member of MTSC, a founding member of the Reel Earth Environmental Film Festival, and formerly Chair of Forest & Bird Manawatu. In slivers of spare time, Brent enjoys time in the mountains, mountain biking and reading. Brent will talk on the subjects of film, wildlife conservation, and present opportunities for a better relationship between people and the planet.

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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. Change of contact details please email the club membership secretary at membership@mtsc.org.nz as well as copying the message to 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 - Ken Mercer

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

Fast & Light

There is a style of tramping known as fast and light which I think began with some of the long US trails, such as the Appalachian Trail. It is an attractive concept based around using light equipment and carrying only what is needed. After all every gram collectively contributes to that load on your back. This is difficult to argue with but I'd like to pick it apart.

Firstly lightweight gear. I have no dispute with abandoning enamel plates and metal cutlery in favour of plastic. There are also lightweight packs and rainwear available although I wonder about their durability in the NZ bush. Has anyone had experience with ripping either?

The second way to save weight is to leave "stuff" behind. It is unpleasant to pull on cold wet socks in the morning but more sensible than carrying them in your pack while your 2nd (or 3rd) pair also get wet during the day. For many years my approach has been two sets of clothing, one wet for daywear and the other dry for evenings. The ultimate piece of dry clothing is your sleeping bag which, particularly if it is down filled, must never become wet.

Food is the heaviest item for a longer trip and ensuring it is all dry saves carrying water. Of course dry doesn't necessarily mean dehydrated food packs (actually you have to watch these as the packaging can be 30% of the weight!) You should be able to get enough energy with less than 1kg/day of food (Brian Webster mentioned a trip where they carried 800g/day).

Various luxury items can be left behind too right down to the long handle on your toothbrush. What shouldn't be ignored is equipment in the "what if" category. At the lower end of the scale: what if the hut is already overflowing? More seriously though: what if we're delayed and end up walking in the dark? Or what if someone is injured and cannot continue? Remember too that we enjoy a maritime climate which is far less predictable than the continental US.

At the recent club night Tim Swale showed some pictures of a three day trip where clear weather unexpectedly deteriorated so the group retreated over the tops in snow, with poor visibility. He was very cold and tired which wasn't helped by a navigational error but they eventually descended to the van. In such conditions the group is relying on everyone being strong enough to continue. If, due to exhaustion or injury, someone must rest then an emergency shelter is vital. Tim now carries a bothy bag which is a nylon dome in which up to 4 people can sit on the turned under edge, facing each other. It doesn't sound like much but the air inside quickly becomes warm and humid. Fortunately one can easily improvise a bothy bag with a tent fly (which is arguably more versatile). Try it next time you're stopping for a break on the tops!

Ski Captain's Report - Rob Pringle

email rob.kate.pringle@gmail.com or phone (06) 354 0218

A "minor" set back to Tower 9 of the high noon express has not slowed the fresh snow falling on the slopes of Turoa and Whakapapa as we gear up for the 2010 winter season. With a 3-4 week turn around on the repair for this Whakapapa might be the way to go for the start of the season. A good opportunity to make the most of using the Lodge facilities.

After a busy weekend on the 11 & 12 June with the Food Carry the lodge is fully stocked, thanks to all those that helped out. So now it's your turn to get in to gear and tune your skis, boards and personal fitness and get ready for winter!! See you on the slopes.



Whoops! Tower 9, High Noon Express, Turoa.

The Snow Code

1. **Stay in Control at all times** ~ Know your ability, start easy, be able to stop and avoid other people.
2. **People below you have the right of way** ~ The skier or boarder downhill of you has the right of way. Don't forget to look above before entering a trail.
3. **Obey all ski area signage** ~ Signs are there for your safety. Keep out of closed areas.
4. **Look before you leap** ~ Scope jumps first. Ensure the area is clear of others. Use a spotter on blind jumps.
5. **Stop where you can be seen** ~ When stopping, try to move to the side of the trail and where you can be seen from above.
6. **Don't lose what you use** ~ Equipment must be secured while walking or stashing
7. **Stay on scene** ~ If you are involved in, or witness, an accident, remain at the scene and identify yourself to the ski patrol.
8. **Respect gets respect** ~ From the lift line to the slopes and through the park.

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 grading 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.

TRIP SAFETY

Trip leaders are reminded that trip intentions can be emailed to 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.

Chief Guide report - Kim Fraser

I'm just quickly writing this as I'm leaving on my horrible weather trip since that snow we had in December. What a week we've had - rain, wind and in other parts of the country, snow, the ski bunnies must be chomping at the bit as I noticed skifield reports appearing on the mountain forecast at the metservice website so I guess that makes winter slightly official now. If you notice on the trip card the club is running two alpine courses this year. If you have never done one and plan on doing some tramping above the bushline this winter I would recommend you do so (even if its only the first one for now), the first course is easy and open to all, so don't be shy and its a lot of fun. Happy tramping!



Photo: John Ridge | Field Hut | 19 May 2010

Manawatu Gorge Track

Standing Invitation

Easy

David Newstead

027 4576175

I walk the Gorge Track (W to E) most Sunday mornings. This is a reminder that the invitation to join me still stands.

Starting time is usually 8:00 to 9:00 (flexible). I walk over and meet my wife at Beyond-the-Bridge Cafe, for morning tea / lunch, as appropriate, and she drives us back to the Western car park. So if you feel like a Sunday morning walk (vigorous or ambling, your choice) give me a call. Families, young children, everyone welcome.

Roaring Stag Hut

26-27 June

Easy

David Newstead

027 4576175

Roaring Stag is in the foot hills to the Eastern side of the Tararuas, in from Eketahuna. It's a new hut, down in the river valley. It makes a nice easy mid-winter outing. Its a bit of a slog to the top of the ridge on the way in, not so high, but straight up, through the bush, but there is no hurry; then turn left (Herapai is to the right) and down all the way to the hut. Should be about 4 h. We shouldn't need to leave (Police Station, Church St) before 08:00 on the Saturday.

Island Range

27 Jun (Sun)

Fit

David Harrington

06 839 5766

Please phone for more details

Wednesday Trampers**30 June****Easy/Medium****Marie Inkpen****06 323 1089**

Please call for more details

Thursday Trampers**1 July****Medium****John McLeod****06 323 5785**

Please call for more details

Moerangi-Rogers Hut**3-4 July****Medium****Mark Learmouth****06 355 9143**

Please phone for more details

Beehive Creek**4 July****Easy****Christine Scott****06 354 0510**

Beehive Creek is a 2-3 hours, 4km walk located on Pohangina Road, around 33 km north of Palmerston North. The walk follows the sandy bed of Beehive Creek through a mixture of native bush and exotics. It requires several crossings of the normally shallow, gentle stream and then climbs over hilly farmland to reach the Pohangina Road. There are good views of the Pohangina Valley and the Ruahine Ranges from the top of the hill section and you may see tui, kereru, fantail, bellbird and kingfisher along the way.

We will leave the Police Station at 8.30am.

Wednesday Trampers**7 July****Easy/Medium****Pauline Hall****06 329 7707**

Please call for more details

Thursday Trampers**8 July****Medium****John Thornley****06 356 9681**

Please call for more details

Wednesday Trampers**14 July****Easy/Medium****Bev Akers****06 325 8879**

Please call for more details

Thursday Trampers**15 July****Medium****Bryan Evans****06 323 7614**

Please call for more details

Beginners Ski Weekend **CHANGE OF DATE****17-18 July****All****Ken Mercer****06 356 7497**

A great opportunity to hit the slopes with other club members both young and old. Please call for more details.

Rimutaka Incline - Mountain biking**18 July****MTB****Tim Swale****06 376 6556**

The Rimutaka incline once provided a rail link between the Wairarapa and Wellington and was quite unique in the way that railway carriages were hauled up the hill from Cross Creek Station near Featherston to the Summit. Trains no longer use this route but it now makes for a great bike ride with several tunnels and interpretive signs. It is approximately 18km between Cross Creek and Kaitoke all of which is ridable (no more than grade 2) apart from a short section at Siberia Gully.

Last year we had two groups riding in opposite directions with cars returned to the Cross Creek end afterwards. A return trip from the Cross Creek end is also a possibility. We can make a plan once we know who is coming.

Wednesday Trampers**21 July****Easy/Medium****Ivan Alve****06 356 3123**

Please call for more details

Thursday Trampers**22 July****Medium****Jill Spencer****06 329 8738**

Please call for more details

Snowcraft**24-25 July****All****Brian Webster****06 357 0189**

Please call for more details

Wednesday Trampers**28 July****Easy/Medium****Rita & Arthur Hodson****06 323 5491**

Please call for more details

Thursday Trampers**29 July****Medium****Keith Fisher****06 357 1724**

Please call for more details

Rangi Hut**31 July-1 Aug****Christine Scott****Easy****06 354 0510**

This is a 2-3 hour walk into the 13 bunk Rangiwahia Hut in the western Ruahines. A short, steepish 30-40 minute detour track around an active slip is the only section of track that is not uniformly graded. The detour comes out just before a picturesque arched wooden bridge crossing a deep ravine of the Mangahaia Stream. A slightly steeper grade from here, the track heads up through smaller shrub species past a pretty waterfall to reach Rangiwahia Hut.

We will leave around lunch time, spend the night in the hut with hopefully snow around us and return to the carpark in the morning

Pelorus River (Richmond Range)**22-25 October****Adam Matich****Medium/Fit****06 359-2796**

At the moment I intend this trip to include Dun Mountain (which is not in the forest park) and the Pelorus River, starting and finishing at Maitai Dam in behind Nelson. A figure-eight route should take us through Rush Pool, Dew Lakes, Dun Mountain; Rocks, Browning, Roebuck, and Middy Huts.

There is going to be at least one long day in here so we will be picking up the Ferry late Friday afternoon to enable an anti-socially early start on Saturday morning, and we will make it back to Palmerston North quite late on Monday night (but it will be Monday and not Tuesday). Some of the huts only sleep six people, and so we all need to be prepared to sleep out.

Now it is entirely possible for a medium trip to be done, from the Maitai Dam road-end through to Mt Richmond Road, as well should anyone wish to organise it. The medium-fit party can retrieve them on their way back to Picton. At the moment, if we have enough numbers to take the van then transport should cost around \$270. But as time goes on and the cheap fares get taken, this price will increase.

I need to confirm the number of people coming before the 25th of June, because this is the date on which I will be booking the transport and Friday night's accommodation in the hopes of avoiding a massive price hike.



Photo: Adam Matich | Wellington Zoo | 2 May 2010

Trip Reports

Wellington Zoo**2 May****By Adam Matich**

Fortunately for us the zoo has a cafe and so we had a much-needed morning tea upon arrival, which kept us going until our late lunch (2:30 p.m.) just before we headed back home again. Some considerable effort has been made at the zoo to create an animal friendly environment and so the animals aren't in bare concrete boxes. Because of this it wasn't always visitor friendly, it sometimes being necessary to hang around for a while until the inhabitants appeared from behind the vegetation in their enclosures. The spider monkeys live on an island surrounded by a moat and seemed quite happy to put on a show. The metre high fence was only there to keep us out, as the monkeys don't swim, so there was a much more open feel to their enclosure. The baboons and chimpanzees were much more securely housed, the latter being considered to be the most dangerous animals in the zoo. Given their close relationship to humans (98% genetic similarity) it is not surprising that they can behave badly at times.

True carnivores were also well confined, which was just as well, as the Sumatran tiger looked rather restless and the lionesses seemed overly interested in the young children. Other animals were more approachable; there was giraffe feeding time and apparently it is also possible to actually meet the cheetahs (bookings required). Some of the enclosures were also quite small and so viewing their inhabitants was quite easy; viz. the otters and the meercats.

But perhaps the most unexpectedly accessible animals were the kiwi, in their darkened enclosure. Once the noisy children had left and we hung around in the quite for a few minutes, they showed themselves. Their enclosure is under dim red light, and so it is possible to spot them rooting around in the undergrowth. At times they were only a couple of feet away from us on the other side of another metre-high fence and didn't seem to notice our presence. If you were quick enough you could reach over and pick one up...just before the zoo keepers boot you out the front gate.

We managed to drag the day out for over four hours, partly because we were trying to take photos and the animals didn't always seem disposed towards posing for us. Some were down-right belligerent. An ostrich kept pecking at the wire in the hopes that there might be an eye or a finger close enough to damage and a bad-tempered brolga crane made a sudden savage lunge through the wire to discourage our efforts at photography. Comforted to see that animals can behave as rudely as we often do, we headed back home feeling fully justified in their being kept behind bars. We were however, saddened that some humans are not required to benefit from temporarily spending time in their enclosures with them. We were Amy Overington, Jean Garman and Adam Matich

Herepai Hut**5 May****By Anne Rush**

Perfect weather - windless and cloudless for 23 people - 1 bus load and three cars ventured out. How does one keep 23 people safe and in check? An advance group was formed and a leader appointed. They intended to bypass the hut for lunch and eat it higher up. The second group raced off but fortunately the swing bridge slowed everyone down and we were able to reform into a middle group and the third for the tail enders. An excellent track. Dry in most places and well marked. There is an abundance of bird life to hear but not see.

Special thanks to bus driver Dave Pollard and car providers Sue Pither and Linda Derbyshire

Joe's Hut**8-9 May****By Kim Fraser**

It sounded like a promising trip, new territory and a new biv to visit. But then trip leader found out that the biv had probably been removed in the last month and then trip leader figured out rivers aren't too warm at this time of year so came up with a big long list of reasons why she couldn't go. Not so promising any more. If it weren't for the stubborn pig headedness of three slightly insane people the trip probably wouldn't have gone at all. In the end 3 overnigheters (Adam, Brian and Jean) met up with 2 daytrippers (Jenny and Kim) at the hot bread shop in Masterton. Greatly fortified they carried on their journey. Jenny thought it would be better to follow Adam to the road end so he got lost in Masterton and then took the longest route possible to the road end - that will teach Jenny. Underway about 10am we chatted our way up the hill, discussing all the many and varied recent documentaries on people's private bits and what they have had done to them. Before we knew it we were at the first turn off to Cone hut so we said goodbye to the daytrippers who carried on their merry way to Cone high point while we dropped down to the hut for lunch in the sun at the handy outdoor table.

After lunch with the sun still shining we headed into the river and proceeded up stream. We were expecting enormous boulders and deep green pools and that is pretty much what we got and it was great. Really really beautiful and the river bed was big enough that there were always good options round the tricky bits and only one waist deep wade along the way. Not enough wetness to determine if Sponge Brian Chaff Shorts was going to suffer more than the Budgie Smuggler Boy and the Bikini Bottom Trumper. That experiment will have to wait for a future river trip.

A little over 2 hours and many photos later the nature of the river bed changed becoming flatter and wider and we soon spotted the slip that could be seen in a photo of the biv. Moments later we found the clearing and a nice rectangular brown patch marking where the biv had been. There was ample camping in the area, although most spots were only suitable for one person. We set up camp, had a cuppa, took some photos, walked around a bit, thought of the day trippers who would still be walking and started cooking tea. Dinner consumed it was time for a big long sleep. There had been the odd gust of wind blowing through the clearing but come darkness it disappeared and it was dead calm all night.

Morning dawned with a high overcast and not a breath of wind and we packed up and headed off straight up the spur to the North heading for the Neill ridge just before it intersects with Cone. The bush was open and friendly and part way up we got good views of the Neill-Winchcome ridge and all the way round to Alpha. Unfortunately by the time we popped out onto the track cloud had formed and coalesced and there were no more views to be had. We checked out the met mast on Cone before carrying on down the track back to the car and home via the ice cream shop. Now that we know where to camp and a good escape route come summer there will be a trip from Hell's Gate to Cone Hut to check out more of this beautiful wild river.



Adam & Brian taking a break

Photo: Jean Garmin | Joe's Hut Trip | 8-9 May 2010

Turakina Reserves

12 May

by Andrew Brodie

Twenty two Wednesday trampers met up outside the Argyle Hotel in Hunterville to start a trip through four Forest Bird Reserves at various points along the back road to Turakina. The first stop about 12 km from Hunterville was at *Laird's Reserve*. This is signposted on the left hand side of the road and involves a bit of a climb up a hill and then down to reach the reserve. This reserve contains some magnificent examples of totara, rimu and kahikatea as well as a variety of other vegetation. Unfortunately sulphur-crested cockatoos, which were introduced in the area in the 1900s, live here and pose a threat to many of the podocarp trees because they eat out the growing tips, strip bark and dig into the trees they roost on.

About another 6 km further along brought us to *Sutherland Mangaboe Reserve* which is supposed to contain a number of native birds including the bellbird, tui, grey warbler, North Island fantail, silveryeye and NZ pigeon. The fantails were plentiful as they followed you (if you were at the back of the group) looking for insects but we did not see other species. The next reserve on the list was *Sutherland Turakina Reserve*. The web site said that inside the entrance there was a small picnic area consisting of three old power cable reels and rustic benches. Rustic is a rather romantic description - long neglected and overgrown would be better. We chose to have lunch about half way round the longest track instead. Near the end of the circuit we passed some old Maori food storage pits which have been found on the forested part of the north-facing cliff of this reserve. It is believed that Maori would use the food from the pits when supplies ran short in the winter. Our final stop was at *Mcpherson's Bush*. This is the least interesting reserve with part of it still recovering from the 2004 floods which killed large areas of the forest. On the way home we past the site of the first Health Camp in NZ (marked with a plaque and a geocache beside the road) before stopping at Bulls for the usual coffee, ice creams etc and fuel for the van.

These reserves are well worth a visit if you have not explored them before and the trip as a whole would make an interesting day for overseas visitors provided they enjoyed walking. Further information about these and other nearby reserves can be found at <http://www.forestandbird.org.nz/what-we-do/reserves>. It is great that the local branches of Forest and Bird are doing so much to preserve these valuable remnants of NZ forest so we can have an appreciation of what our countryside was once like. For keen geocachers – there are several new caches just placed for you to find in these reserves – another reason to visit them again.



Descending Toka

Photo: Ken Mercer | Shorts - Knights Trip | 23 May 2010

Turakina Beach

16 May

By Linda Campbell

In his article in the Wilderness Magazine dated January 2007 Ross Nolly talked about an old piano that had been left on top of a sand dune with an empty Jim Beam bottle on top. Given that it was over three years ago and that the dunes are constantly on the move we were not sure if we would find anything of the piano but we were keen to try. A look at the map revealed another point of interest, the wreck of the Fusilier, approx seven kilometres down the beach so we hopeful that we would also find both.

Tim, Holly and I set off south from the settlement of Koitiata. The sign post there told us that early last century the Fusilier was out in the sea, by the 1970s it was on shore and a site for visiting school groups. Since then with the moving dunes and a changing coast line it is approx 1 kilometre inland.

We set off along the coast in soft sand and overcast conditions. With no visible sign of the piano anywhere in the distance we resorted to local knowledge. The first person approached said the piano was no longer there so a second opinion was sort. This was fruitful and we were directed to the spot. The man and his young son then rode along to ensure we got to the right place and there, sure enough, were the remains of the piano. We are certain we would never have found it without help. Unfortunately we forgot to take a GPS so we were unable to record the exact location.

As we continued along the beach the look out tower at Santoft became clearly visible. Perhaps a good destination for another time! By the time we stopped for lunch the skies in front of us had cleared and the day was a lot brighter. However after lunch when we turned to return to Koitiata we found dark, ominous clouds had formed and sure enough before long cool drops of rain began to fall. As we walked back we were lucky enough to spot what looked to be a seal floating in the surf. After watching it for a while we headed slightly inland where there are tracks in the forest. We found these tracks provided a little more shelter from the rain than the beach did.

It is a lovely walk with lots of drift wood, lovely colours, lots of birds, the estuary and a stream to cross.

If you are looking for a beach walk it is one we can recommend.

Otaki Forks

19 May

By John Ridge

A party of 21 assembled just over the bridge south of the Otaki township and headed in convoy along the Otaki Gorge Road to the Forks Carpark. The weather was good, fine and no wind - we were prepared for a pleasant day of tramping.

Ken Rush and John Hunt led a group of eight on several tracks in this area of the Tararua Forest Park. They decided to do the Arcus Loop first, have morning tea followed by the Fenceline Loop. This walk proved to be more interesting as it passes through attractive regenerated forest and there are good views of the valley. After lunch the group attempted the Waiotauru River Walk but had to turn back because of slips/washout made it too difficult to continue.

During the day this group met a number of other trampers on the track including a large school group and members of the Wanganui T.C. some known to our members. They were delighted to renew the acquaintance.

Thirteen of the group set off for Field Hut. This walk is mainly a climb but there are easy stretches. The total ascent would be 700 - 800 metres. Once the bush is reached after the zig zag pathway the walk becomes more enjoyable, with plenty of birds and occasional views. However as we got higher mist rolled in and together with the drizzle this caused limited visibility.

The walk was enjoyed by all participants, everyone finding something of interest to please them. On returning to the carpark our two groups relaxed and exchanged their experiences which continued with a coffee and cake break at the Museum Cafe close to Shannon.

Thanks to Ivan and Bev, our drivers for the day; also to those who brought their own cars.



Wellington Skyline (Part 2)

23 May

By Dave Newstead

For those who were part of the September trip, or just read about it (Part 1 – “Jim and Others” November 2009 Newsletter): Why another Wellington Skyline trip so soon? Because 1) of my desperation for an easy trip with lots of bad-weather options, and because 2) Linda, sitting next to me at the time, said, “Why not.” Readers may remember that in September, by tortuously elaborate timing, we chanced to meet Jim (Gordon) a Club member from long ago still an associate. This time Jim was the first to sign on, Linda and I being already committed, in fact Jim was the only one to sign on. Jim would meet us at Café du Parc in Khandallah (where we chanced to meet in September) for a final planning and logistics meeting (and cuppa). So this time we started off with much better logistic organization, as Linda’s son, living in Wellington, would pick us up at the end and bring us back to where we’d leave the car. My wife, Leslie, having decided to have a day in Wellington, drove us down.

Duly arrived at the Woodmancote Rd car park, I checked the Café and found Jim and his wife, Jenny, while Linda and Leslie accosted a lone gent being dropped off by his wife, with, “Are you Jim?” “No, I’m Phil.” was the reply. So, with a change of plan on Phil’s part, that made us a congenial foursome. (This could be habit-forming, these chance pick-ups in Wellington!) After a cosy cuppa Leslie dropped us off at Old Coach Rd, which is in North Johnsonville and is the Northern end of the Skyline Track (10:10 am).

The weather, true to forecast, was overcast with a fresh Northerly breeze (“decreasing during the day” said the forecast; and so it did), about 14°C. So off we go over grassy farmland past other Northerly entrances from the town, Carmichael St and McLintock St, on about ¼ mile to the first view point, to the West – Makara Beach (Ohariu Bay) nestled between the hill-spurs under a sombre wintery sky. Ten minutes more and we have our first sight of Mt Kauka, to SE, with its transmitter mast half hidden in the cloud.

The track is well-formed and two abreast most of the way making for jolly wayfaring for our party of four. As we go, we find that this is part of Phil’s build-up for a coming trip. In a couple of weeks he retires from the public service and is off for a 9-day trip in New Guinea, the Kokoda Trail; up and down through steep river valleys, over 4000 m, always wet from rain and rivers: then, straight after, to the Himalayas! So, back in Wellington – three quarters of an hour further sidling and climbing, with occasional glimpses of town and harbour, we reach Mt Kaukau.

Along the way Jim diverts us round a hillock to look down on an old waterworks installation, lichen-covered concrete walls and ancient pipework, cast iron in ornate Victorian style.

The Mt Kaukau mast is now only one third visible below the cloud, but the way ahead is clear, and we are on familiar ground (this being where we started in September; Part 1). From here on it’s down hill all the way – well, mostly down hill. Under the cloudbase, we have magnificent views, to NW across Cook Strait, to Tory Channel entrance, the Brothers by the head of Queen Charlotte Sound, Cape Jackson, its Northern head, where the *Mikhail Lebrmentov* came to grief, and D’Urville Is, jutting North in the haze just under the horizon. One p.m., tucked into a corner out of the wind, somewhere above Otari Botanic Park – lunch. From there, looking SE to the Mirimar Peninsular, we see that the car carrier, noted earlier out in the Strait on its way in from the Strait, has met the pilot boat we saw leaving harbour, and is now entering the heads. After lunch it’s even easier going, on a formed road, past Johnson’s Hill Reserve (where we exited last time – Part 1) past an old pine plantation, skirting the backs of Karori houses.

A pause along the way, Jim indicates a long ridge to the South (running from the Karori Sanctuary to Happy Valley, I think); “Next time you come down,” he says. Not long after we meet the Makara Rd – journey’s end (14:10, 4 h on the trail). Transport stage 1 arrives within minutes in the form of Linda’s son Robin and lady, Libby. Phil says goodbye, he is only 5 min walk from home, and we go off to meet to connect with Transport stage 2, Leslie at the Café du Parc, where Jenny collects Jim and the rest of us have an obligatory cuppa before Linda says good bye to Robin and Libby (shortly leaving to live a while in France). Then it’s home to PN, arriving comfortably at dusk.

(*Advt. from DN*: And there’s lots more great walks round Wellington: ideal for the Wednesday Group, by train!)



Inner Harbour from above Ngaio. From L: Phil, Jim & Linda
Photo: Dave Newstead | Wellington Skyline | 23 May 2010

Shorts-Knights

23 May

By Mary Mercer

After a lovely drive up the Orua Valley through lots of glistening green paddocks, past Sixtus Lodge to the road end, three of us set off on a windless day watched by lots of very interested cattle. The Makiemie Stream tributary was relatively easy to cross and we soon warmed up as we climbed up into the bush on Shorts track. Our passage prompted the occasional bird to burst into song and Nicola impressed Ken and me by her ability to name the chorister. It took us two hours to reach the bush line and as we walked up the tussock-covered ridge, we encountered an icy cold breeze. Nonetheless we had fantastic views of the snow-covered Mts Ruapehu and Ngaruhoe, and, further on, Taranaki. Since Nicola had seen very little when she done the same trip in reverse with the PNTMC two weeks earlier, we all appreciated our good fortune. After "summiting" on Toka, we dropped over the lee side for lunch and then headed down, down, down the Knights Track to the Makiemie Stream for a more leisurely afternoon tea and the final stroll back to the car, 6.5 hours after we started.

Makahika Track

27 May

By Royce Mills

In spite of the "weather bomb" passing over the country in the preceding days, 20 optimistic trampers signed up to do the Makahika track. We were fortunate to have a good day - cool, overcast and calm, and rain held off until just the end of the walk. In spite of some concerns, the roads and streams were all OK, and the track was in a good state. Bev drove the van up the Mangahao road (much appreciated thanks Bev) and two cars headed to the Makahika end - we swapped car keys when we met in the middle. For many of us this was the first time right through the track in one go. The leader also achieved her goal of finding the final stage of a multi-stage geocache that she had started a year earlier when doing the Burn hut circuit. The reward was finding a fantastic "pirate treasure chest". Thanks to all the drivers for making this good day possible.



Toilet Queue

Photo: Royce Mills | Tarn Biv | 20 May 2010

Kapakapanui

30 May

By Hugh Wilde

Seven of us left Palmerston North in the minibus with the intention of tramping around the Kapakapanui circuit. By 09:00 we were walking along the track towards the stream: it had been raining the night before with heavy rain in Wellington but lesser on the Kapiti Coast, the stream was up just slightly but crossing was still easy. As the weather was uncertain, although improving, we still decided to do the circuit clockwise as the hut would provide shelter for an early lunch.

It took a little short of three hours to reach the hut and after a quick lunch set off for the top. It wasn't raining but it was quite cold so we had put on our woolly hats, gloves and longjohns in preparation for the short distance of tops travel out of the bush.

Above the hut it was very wet underfoot, with deep puddles on the track. It's probably fair to say that these conditions are pretty typical for the Kapakapanui track in winter. About 20 minutes above the hut our party split into two groups: five going on to complete the round trip and two opting to return the way we had come. By 3:45 we were all back at the road end with only a fifteen minute gap between the arrival of the two parties, and were back in Palmerston North by 5:30 PM. The most remarkable feature of the trip to me was meeting thirteen others on the track - I don't recall ever meeting anybody else during our previous trips there.

The participants were: Jen, Maren, Kathy, Mary & Ken, Nacho and Hugh.

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 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. 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 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. 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. 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.

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 2010-11 Committee

President	Ken Mercer	06 356 7497 president@mtsc.org.nz
Secretary	Tim Swale	06 376 6556
Treasurer	Christine Scott	06 354 0510 treasurer@mtsc.org.nz
Chief Guide	Kim Fraser	06 355 5496
Day Trip Convenor	Bev Akers	06 325 8879
Membership Sec.	Jenny McCarthy	06 376 8838 membership@mtsc.org.nz
Newsletter Editor	Kate Pringle	06 354 0218 editor@mtsc.org.nz
Social Convenor	Lynda Campbell	06 323 3836
Ski Captain	Rob Pringle	06 354 0218
Lodge Manager	Ryan Badger	027445 997
Lodge Bookings	Hugh & Liz Wilde	06 356 9450
Mini-Bus Custodian	Adam Matich	06 359 2796
General Committee	David Newstead	0274576175
	Hillary Hurst	021343451
	Howard Nicholson	06 357 6325