

# beechleaves

Newsletter of the Manawatu Tramping and Skiing Club



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

Issue 2. March, 2022



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

## 7.30 pm Tuesday 1 March, 2022: First Aid

In 2020 Mel Harper spoke to a group of us about first aid via Zoom, thanks to Covid. It was a very useful talk for all trampers. Mel will speak again, this time face to face, in March 2022 on First Aid for Trampers and age specific issues. It will be a great opportunity to hear words of wisdom which are useful for both the outdoors and everyday life.

## 7.30 pm Tuesday 5 April, 2022: Interclub Quiz

In 2021, thanks to Covid, we had to postpone our Interclub Quiz Night. We are now hosting the Interclub quiz night at our usual (Rose City Aquatic) clubrooms at our April 2022 club night. Tim and Linda will host the evening and would love to see as many club teams of 4-6 people as possible. There will be eight lots of twenty questions. There will be sweet treats for all, especially winners and tailenders!



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## Hut Tickets for Sale

Hut tickets can be purchased from Howard Nicholson at club nights. \$5/ticket for adults and \$2.50 for youth (11-17 years). Information about Back Country Passes, valid for 6 or 12 months, as well as the use of hut tickets is available on the [DOC web site](#)



*Powell Hut trip 3 Feb, 2022 by John Brock*

# REPORTS AND NOTICES

## MTSC President: Tim Swale

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

I write this month's report from the shores of Lake Wakatipu. Our MTSC group of Ken, Mary, Nicki, Wendy, Linda and I finished four days on the Kepler track yesterday. We especially enjoyed spending time with Phil Hoskin (DoC Ranger at Moterau Hut) whom many of you will know from our mid-week tramps. Phil excelled himself making a batch of scones for us, fresh out of the oven just after we arrived at his hut. Phil is living the dream, semi-retired but still making a massive impact in caring for his part of the track and helping people appreciate the natural environment.

There are all sorts of people doing the great walks, many of whom are not regular trampers, but keen to take on a challenge. One incident that struck a chord was on the second day of our walk, where there is a steep 1000 m descent to Iris Burn Hut where we came across a fairly mature woman who was clearly struggling. She was wearing knee supports but had fallen a couple of times and was somewhat distressed that the rest of her group had gone on without her. She was greatly relieved when our group stayed with her to help and another young woman offered to carry her pack. An hour later we got her to the hut but no thanks to her own party. We should probably all reflect on why we go into the outdoors as a club. It is for shared experiences, social connection and also safety. We all have a duty of care to each other which should override the goal-centred urge to go the furthest or be the fastest. So please, in your tramping, look out for each other, make sure everyone has a great day and, if you miss that summit this time, it will still be there to knock off on another occasion. Enjoy yourself but stay safe in the hills.



## Track Closure

A short section of the Wharite Peak Track is closed while repairs take place to the telecommunications tower. The section is at the top of the track near the tower. This closure means that there is no access from:

- Wharite road end onto Wharite Peak Track, or
- Coppermine Road to the Wharite road end using the Wharite Peak Track.

You can still access earlier sections of the Wharite Peak Track from Coppermine Road – it is just the first section of track at the Wharite road end that is closed.

Tower repairs are expected to take 2-5 months. We are also looking into alternatives. For updates please refer to the DOC website or contact [dlow@doc.govt.nz](mailto:dlow@doc.govt.nz) <https://www.doc.govt.nz/parks-and-recreation/places-to-go/manawatu-whanganui/places/ruahine-forest-park/things-to-do/tracks/coppermine-road-end-tramping-tracks/>

# UPCOMING TRIPS

March Wednesday Tramps			March Thursday Tramps		
02	Robbie Green	022 398 2205	03	Suzanne Clark	06 356 8300
09	John Salisbury	06 280 0117	10	Royce Mills	021 055 2527
16	Evan Davies	06 357 6288	17	Audrey Shepherd/ Syd Easton	06 356 7462
23	Dan Lynch	027 227 9751	24	Judy Swainson	06 358 4082
30	Wendy Williams	06 329 6829	31	Wayne Lincoln	06 280 4217
March Weekend Trip					
26-27	Taranaki	Linda Campbell	027 333 4493 or lindammc@xtra.co.nz	Easy	

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

**March 26-27, 2022      Taranaki      Easy**  
 Linda Campbell      027 333 4493      lindammc@xtra.co.nz

The plan is to leave Palmerston North quite early and drive to Taranaki. We will start our walk near the Stratford Mountain House and head to Maketawa Hut for the night. On Sunday we will walk up to 'The Puffer' and continue up to Taurangi Lodge before heading back down to the Mountain House.

## Lodge Work Parties

Due to the high rate of Covid now circulating in NZ and the Committee's decision to require a Covid Vaccine Pass to stay at the MTSC lodge, the planned work parties have been postponed.

# TRIP REPORTS

## 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2022: Ruapehu Lodge and Environs

Trip Leader and Reporter: Ken Mercer

Photographers: Lucie Marychurch, Richard Lander

The minibus and eight cars drove to National Park to walk the Tupapakuraa Falls Track. Multiple road works delayed the minibus by 30 minutes; the messy beginning was then exacerbated by Google directing the

Shipmans to the wrong toilet so it was a spaced out start. No matter; it was a lovely walk on a dry track and the rain held off. Mary and Margaret kindly left the tramp ahead of the pack to get dinner underway. It was just as well as the meat hadn't had time to thaw in the fridge. Thanks to a group in the lodge a few days earlier, we all enjoyed hot showers that night and discussed the options for Wednesday which had a marginal weather forecast.

Most opted for the Tama Lakes track. The occasional showers and wind deterred the lead group who turned



back at the lower lake. Not far behind, the majority headed up to Upper Tama Lake as the visibility cleared and had a delightful lunch in the three-sided rock shelter before returning. A small group chose to do easier walks at the Top o' the Bruce and Whakapapa Village.

Thursday dawned clear with a breeze at the lodge. Ken consulted the ski field forecast which predicted 40 km/hr winds but Richard pointed out the National Park forecast had winds of 70 km/hr at 2700 m so it was an easy decision not to attempt climbing Ruapehu that day. Instead, we positioned vehicles at Whakapapa Village and walked off track from the lodge down to the Round-the-Mountain track and continued around the Whakapapaiti loop. We enjoyed a pleasant morning tea break in sunshine before cresting the ridge above the Whakapapaiti valley. Here we encountered wind and mist as we dropped into the valley, down the zig zag track, admiring a beautiful rainbow in the distance. We had no more precipitation that day, ducking into the just painted hut for the second phase of our progressive morning tea. Boulder jumping across the river kept most feet dry and the walk down the valley and sidle across the mountain back to the road was beautiful and varied. On the way back, some diverted up the longer Silica Rapids walk while the remainder, including the drivers, went directly to the village to the vehicles and ice cream.

A small group just did the Silica Rapids walk before going their separate ways.

Finally, for Friday, a clear and calm weather prediction. Although thorough, the lodge clean up was so fast that we were packed up and at the road by 9 am. Unfortunately we had to wait 30 minutes to buy gondola tickets and the ride wasn't supposed to start until 10. Generously, RAL began loading 20 minutes early so we enjoyed the ride up with 24 people reaching the cafe at 9:50 am, ready to climb. Restful ridge was the planned route while Robbie and Coralie chose a less ambitious objective up Knoll Ridge.

The rocks were grippy and route finding generally straight forward although one portion required a bit of a scramble around a bluff. The leaders paused multiple times enjoying the ever-widening panoramic view and waiting for the tail to catch up. Our earlier route to the Tama Lakes looked insignificant and we could see the zig zag descent into the Whakapapaiti valley.



Perhaps the best thing about the four days was the camaraderie in the lodge. For instance, the kitchen was a hive of activity with overwhelming enthusiasm and hilarity producing superb meals. The washing crews cleared and processed the dishes almost before they were empty. We arrived back in Palmie in time for tea, tired but satisfied.

### **Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2022: Roaring Stag Hut / Herepai**

Trip Leader, Reporter and Photographer: Nicki Fielder

Nineteen trampers joined us for our first Wednesday Tramp of the year to Herepai and Roaring Stag huts. The weather was perfect and everyone was in good spirits. Before starting off we divided into groups ...

Eleven opted for the day tramp along the track to Herepai, with one trumper choosing to walk more slowly and enjoy the early part of the track.

Eight opted to walk to Roaring Stag for the overnight option. Four extra keen ones headed off first with the aim of climbing up the Cattle Ridge track in the afternoon.

The Herepai trampers and Roaring Stag trampers generally walked together until we reached the junction. People seemed to enjoy being back in the bush and catching up after our break. At the junction one trumper chose to settle for lunch. The others headed to Herepai for lunch before the descent back to the van.

The track down to the Roaring Stag Hut was riddled with tree roots but very dry and the river was low making



for easy crossings and enjoyable walking. Once settled in the hut, Robbie opted to enjoy the bush setting and Margaret, Caroline and Nicki headed straight for the river for a swim. The water was refreshing and appreciated. Royce, Pam, Judy and Carole, who headed up the rather steep Cattle Ridge track, made it to the lookout before heading back for hut hor d'oeuvres at 5 and a well deserved swim. Quite an achievement!

We were joined at the hut by a couple of trampers from Wellington. Royce had deluxe tent accommodation in the bush and Pam and Judy enjoyed the hut deck for the night. It was a fabulous evening filled with chat, laughter and a few games of cards. The tramp out was just as enjoyable as the walk in with slightly cooler weather and everyone walking together. There was even time for morning tea and a bit of Op Shopping in Eketahuna.

Many thanks to John Doolan for joining us and driving the van for our day group. Welcome back to MTSC Robyn and thanks to the many experienced trampers in the day group who helped sub-lead on the day. Margaret and Robbie were stars once again, driving cars for the overnight group.



### Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2022: Powell Hut

Trip Leaders & Reporters: John and Gillian Thornley

Photographer: John Brock

Thirteen trampers took the van and one car (thanks, Garry Grayson) on what started out heading in to a cold southerly coming up on the eastern side of the Tararua Range. Having left Palmerston North in balmy late 20s temperatures, I wondered if I would regret not bringing warmer clothing! But nothing to fear! The prevailing Nor' wester still hung over the Holdsworth valley, and there was no rain for the whole tramp, but the wind was howling around 90 km/h near the tops, as seen in John Brock's photograph of Wayne Lincoln and Syd

Easton on the final plateau steps to Powell Hut. Syd's smile shows how much he is enjoying the challenge! Because of the wind, they made the hut their lunch spot before descending. Five of us chose to make Mountain House our high point, and then descended to the valley river track to Atiwhakatu Hut, having lunch near the junction, and completing a round trip back to the carpark. The five support group were John and Gillian Thornley, Suzanne Clark, Audrey Shepherd and Jinny Anderson. One hour later we were joined by the other eight: Syd, Wayne, John, Garry, plus William Laing, Riki Allison, Jenny



McCarthy and Alistair Hall. This email note to the leader summed up how we all felt about our first trip: 'Thanks for a great trip. Powell Hut is an ambitious tramp and we all enjoyed the accomplishment'. Some of our regulars had joined the Wednesday overnight trip to Roaring Stag hut outlined above. We'll catch up with them on future tramps.

### Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2022: Waitewaewae Summit

Trip Leader and Reporter: Ewen Cameron

Photographer: Pam Dransfield

Our tramp to Waitewaewae, the hill not the hut, began at the second gate off the end of North Manakau Road, from where we walked up the old access road, crossed the slip (simplified using the ropes put there by other(s)) to the now muddy car park, cut off by the slip. Following a brief get together to outline "the plan", we headed up the track that runs alongside the Waikawa Stream in good spirits. Despite various approaches

to stream crossing, we all got wet feet crossing the Panatewaewae stream, before getting up to a small grassy area on a terrace just above the crossing. It was hot enough that wet feet were not a biggie. Our easily missed track began at the back of this grassy area. For the first hour, the track heads up a steep supplejack and Kiekie-lined route. The cicadas were in full noise and the heat was oppressive.

There are occasional markers of various ages indicating that this track has been used for many years. The gradient eased somewhat after our first hour and we progressed steadily to a hunter's camp at about 700m. To keep together (as one group of 12), and to ensure we were all adequately hydrated, we enjoyed a couple of morning tea breaks over this part of the tramp. At the hunter's camp, the track heads to the right over a saddle and on up to a ridge between Thompson and Waitewaewae peaks (and some unnamed higher peaks beyond). As we ascended, the forest changed gradually to plants found at higher elevations and the cicadas disappeared. Nearer Waitewaewae we were in beautiful Goblin-forest with its characteristic mosses and lichens. The heat and humidity were nearly too much for many of us... not a pleasant climb on such a day. After more hydration stops, most of us achieved the peak (939m



in about 4 hours), where we celebrated with a photo by the rather utilitarian pipe that marks the summit. On our descent back on the same track, we all noted how



hot and humid it was. Cooling rain, promised for the afternoon, failed to eventuate; indeed the sun came out. As we descended the heat seemed to intensify. By the time we got back down to the Panatewaewae stream crossing, everyone deliberately soaked in the cool water – a very different approach to the crossing than that taken earlier in the day. Our tramp was completed with a walk back through the cut off carpark (Why did the slip do that? We'd like to have met our cars there), over the slip and down the old access road to the cars.

Thanks to:

Shorter trip leader - Bob Hodgson (one of the four Roberts);  
Drivers - Ewen, Marion, Richard, Robbie and Royce.

## Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2022: Events of Significance (?) & Ross Peak

Trip Leader, Reporter: John Brock  
Photographers: John Brock, William Laing

What can be of significance in climbing Ross Peak? After all, it's not very high, is not of any significance in the southern Ruahine Ranges and not a long walk. However, it is close to home for the trip leader for the day, a Pohangina local, has great views east and west from the top, and allowed time in this case, for the group to celebrate an event of significance.



By 8.45 am, six car-loads with 21 trampers in all had collected at the end of No.2 Line, Pohangina Valley, and were ready to walk. Having earlier negotiated with the land owner to use the farm tracks, the climb to and from the DOC carpark was avoided, shortening the trip a little. The day was forecast to be warm so the early scattered cloud cover provided a short boon until it cleared and the steep climb through the farmland up to the bush line became a hot slog. After a short stop there, travelling to the ridgeline in the cooler shade of the bush and ferns lining the track, wet (thanks to overnight showers), was a welcome change. The trig was reached by around 11.30 and, after the obligatory group photos and taking in the superb views, a leisurely lunch was enjoyed. Coming back, the skies were clear but luckily a westerly breeze arrived as we exited the bush to provide some cooling for the steep descent through the farmland and back to the cars by 2 p.m.



It was still hot though, so on the way back to the trip leader's residence, one carload stopped off at the Raumai Reserve to have a swim in the Pohangina

River and caught up a little later. Recently, it has become a bit of a practice (tradition?) to recognise/celebrate significant birthdays, in this case the trip leader's 80<sup>th</sup>, and the group plus several other members who either couldn't join for the day or had 'slowed-down' in recent years, gathered to enjoy a celebratory afternoon tea under the shade of surrounding trees. All in all, a very pleasant day! Thanks to all who came.

Anything else of significance? Well, it was also a 'significantly hot' day by Met Service standards at 32°C in the shade!



## Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2022: Makaroro River

Trip Leader, Reporter and Photographer: Christine Finnegan

Wednesday the 16<sup>th</sup> provided us with a beautiful sunny day. The temperature got to the low 20's with none of the humidity or heat of the previous week. With two weekends in a row of substantial rainfall, our trip up the river was looking doubtful. A Hawkes Bay Regional Council monitoring site at Burnt Bridge on the Makaroro, a few km downstream, is an excellent resource for river flow information. Combined with a reconnaissance trip on the previous Friday (reading 3513mm), we were able to gauge the river levels. Although still a little high (3700mm at Burnt bridge), no one cared to climb to Sunrise Hut so up the river we went!

With 12 keen people, it was an excellent opportunity to practise river crossings. The river was high calf level with a reasonable current. Bev took us through the basics and we split into three groups of four. We had a strong person on the upstream position, followed by the "anchor" (the most stable or able person?) and then the last two people. We loosened our pack shoulder straps and slipped arms in behind the next person to grab their pack strap.

With practise we got pretty good – 14 river crossings til lunch. We were much faster coming back. Although the depth wasn't always high, the current took us by surprise. Marion's old boots tried out the duct tape, courtesy of Bill, who keeps it wound around his walking pole- good tip!! A



couple of poles went swimming, one retrieved, and unfortunately one not.

We didn't quite make it to the Colenso Memorial but we learnt a lot and gained confidence in the river. We were a great team: careful and considerate allowing everyone to explore the river!

Thank you everyone- a great day in a special place.



**Contact Details**

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

**Committee 2021 - 2022**

President	Tim Swale	<a href="mailto:president@mtsc.org.nz">president@mtsc.org.nz</a>	022 134 8384
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**General Committee:** Bev Akers, Linda Campbell, Richard Lander, Blair Petersen, Rob Pringle, Peter Rawlins

**Appointees**

Lodge Bookings	Hugh & Liz Wilde	<a href="mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz">lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz</a>	021 054 2560
Gear Custodian	Rob Pringle	<a href="mailto:gear@mtsc.org.nz">gear@mtsc.org.nz</a>	020 426 2176
Ski Captain	Peter Rawlins	<a href="mailto:ski@mtsc.org.nz">ski@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 678 0747
Social Convenor	Linda Campbell	<a href="mailto:social@mtsc.org.nz">social@mtsc.org.nz</a>	027 333 4493
Wednesday Trips	Bev Akers	<a href="mailto:bevakers@xtra.co.nz">bevakers@xtra.co.nz</a>	027 274 6265
Thursday Trips	Syd Easton	<a href="mailto:eastonps@inspire.net.nz">eastonps@inspire.net.nz</a>	06 356 7462
Facebook	Ivan Rienks, Rob Pringle, Karen Tutt, Howard Nicholson <a href="https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC">facebook@mtsc.org.nz</a>		

**New Members**

Prospective members must be nominated by a Proposer and a Secunder who are current MTSC members and have been so for at least one year. New memberships are confirmed at the next monthly committee meeting. Prospective members are encouraged to go on a club trip or attend a club night before joining. For further information or an application form please see the club website.

**Club Equipment**

Hire equipment: we have packs, 2 and 3 person tents, tent flies (small and large), snow mats, gas cookers, size 8 and 9 boots, billies and two bivvy bags. Ice axes, crampons, and helmets are also available. We have three personal locator beacons (PLB) for which there is no charge. Contact the Gear Custodian: Rob Pringle on 020 426 2176.

**Website** <https://www.mtsc.nz/>

This contains club information, photos, contact details and back issues of this newsletter, Beechleaves. The club website is maintained by Howard Nicholson 027 294 1941 and is kindly hosted by **Inspire Net**, a locally based company.

**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/MTandSC>

**Accommodation at the MTSC lodge on Mount Ruapehu**

The lodge is close to Iwikau Village, has power, heating, hot showers and is stocked with food. Members and their guests are welcome. For Lodge bookings email Liz and Hugh Wilde [lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz](mailto:lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz) or phone 021 054 2560. To confirm your booking, payment must be made by internet payment (please email to confirm before depositing) Westpac account number 03 1521 022035300 or by cash to 179 Cook St Palmerston North 4410 in person.

	<b>Members</b>	<b>Guests</b>	<b>The lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860.</b>
<b>Adult</b>	<b>\$40</b>	<b>\$58</b>	
<b>Secondary School</b>	<b>\$32</b>	<b>\$48</b>	
<b>Primary School</b>	<b>\$26</b>	<b>\$42</b>	
<b>Pre-school (3-5 yo)</b>	<b>\$13</b>	<b>\$13</b>	

**Booking the MTSC Van:** For bookings: Contact Ken Mercer 027 364 6475. Cancellations should be made as soon as practicable to accommodate other potential users. A tent fly (in the passenger door) and a Personal Locator Beacon (in the glove box) are available for use free of charge on trips.