

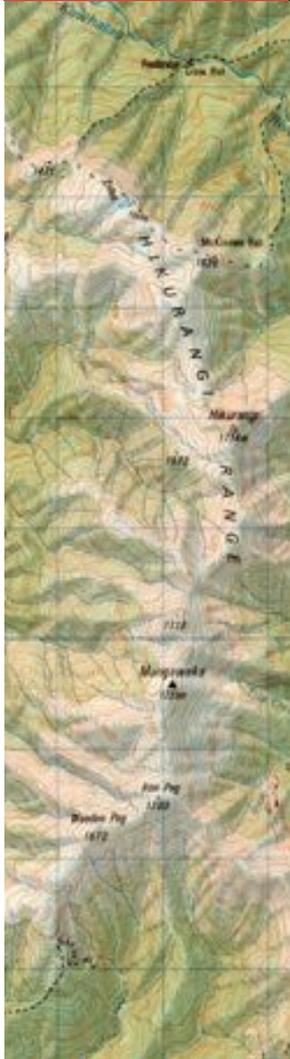
March 2008  
Issue 02

mail:  
MTSC  
P.O. Box 245  
Palmerston North

web:  
www.mtsc.org.nz



**Mt Egmont from Lake Dive Hut**  
(Lake Dive Private Trip | Wellington Anniversary Weekend).  
Photo: Alla Seleznyova



## Upcoming club nights

### Endurance walking + Sir Edmund Hillary

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

#### 4th March - Endurance walking

Linda and Tim were part of a team to walk 100 km in 30 hours. Linda will talk about preparing for the event; the tracks walked and share some of the photos Tim took as they walked. Everyone Linda had approached to join the team declined until a few weeks before the event when Tim gave in and joined up. The energy used was probably no more than on a long hard day of tramping but being on ones feet so long was a challenge. It was really about believing in yourself and team encouragement.

#### 18th March - Sir Edmund Hillary

The death of Sir Edmund Hillary has been a time for sadness, reflection and gratitude. As the first man to reach the summit of Mount Everest, he went on to achieve much more in mountaineering and exploration. However, it was in his humanitarian work for the Sherpas of Nepal that gave Sir Edmund lifelong satisfaction. As Burra Sahib to the Sherpas, he built schools, bridges, air strips, water systems and established tree nurseries. In a small team of New Zealanders, Robert Bruce spent six weeks in Nepal in 1973 alongside Sir Edmund, helping to build a school at Salleri. Robert will talk of his experiences and encourage others to recount their meetings with and recollections of Sir Edmund Hillary, " a most remarkable New Zealander and 'once in history' person.

#### Contents

Notices ..... page 2  
Upcoming trips ..... page 3

Trip reports ..... page 5  
Club information ..... page 10

# President's Report

## Hut and Lodge Maintenance + Lodge Rates

by Howard Nicholson

email [mtsc.president@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mtsc.president@xtra.co.nz) or phone (06) 357 6325

What a fantastic summer we have had to date. I note a few exceptions, such as the chilly evening of our first clubnight's barbeque where fleece and down(!) jackets were donned, which is a timely reminder to be prepared for poor conditions even when the weather forecast looks good. I was pleased to have my hat, gloves and parka on when an icy southerly pounced on me during a January tramp in the Ruahines.

Club members are busy at this time maintaining Mangahao Flats Hut and our Lodge. Please do come forward to assist – the work must be done, your contributions mean that we can keep accommodation costs down, and the trips are fun to boot!

Having said that, lodge rates will increase, for the first time in over 10 years, from 1 April to reflect increasing costs of having accommodation on the mountain. Staying at the Lodge is still exceptional value, and the ambience of our Lodge is hard to beat. The programme of work currently underway will make your stay even more enjoyable.

Happy tramping!

## Chief Guide's Report

by Bev Akers

Phone (06) 325 8879 | Email [bevakers@xtra.co.nz](mailto:bevakers@xtra.co.nz)

### Trip Card Meeting - February 26

The planning meeting for the May to October 2008 Trip Card will be held at 798 Main St Palmerston North. It will be after dinner (7 pm) because Adam is too cheap to supply food. If you don't want to come along then phone or email Bev with the long list of trips you are going to lead... or some suggestions of trips you would like to go on, just in case someone is interested in leading one of them.

### First Aid Courses

Please note that in April, there will be 2 club night meetings on First Aid. So please take advantage of this opportunity to freshen up on these skills. Also there are various other courses run by the Mountain safety Council through the year. Look up on the web under [www.mountainsafety.org.nz](http://www.mountainsafety.org.nz)

## What do you think about the number of club nights?

At the last committee meeting we talked a bit about the possibility of reducing club nights from the first and third Tuesday of the month to once a month and we would like feed back from club members about this idea. The social convenor tries to organise a range of speakers / activities. Over the last few years club night attendance has ranged from three to approx forty people. (The smallest group attended the first club night in January 2006 and it was decided to hold the first club night in February from then on.)

Any comments/thoughts/ideas may be emailed to Linda at [lgcampbell@infogen.net.nz](mailto:lgcampbell@infogen.net.nz)

## Craig Potton

Contributed by Brent Barrett

Craig Potton, New Zealand's pre-eminent wilderness photographer, will give an illustrated talk entitled "New

Zealand Through the Lense" at 8 pm Tuesday the 11th of March in the Regent Theatre in Palmerston North.

Admission is \$10 per adult (\$7 student) and will go on sale on the 10th of February. These are available from Bruce McKenzie Booksellers in George Street (06) 356 9922, or in Feilding from Svendsen Photography in Fergusson Street (06) 323 5357. Admission may be purchased at the door on the night for \$12/\$8. Sponsored by The Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society to mark their golden jubilee in the Manawatu and Rangitikei regions.

## Road closure in the Kaimanawas

### News from the Department of Conservation:

Clements Mill Road closure and limited access  
Repairs to culverts on Clements Mill Road in the northern Kaimanawa Forest Park means that the road will be closed 7 km from the access point from 3 March 2008. The work is expected to take up to five days. The Department of Conservation hopes the work will begin on time and weather permitting will be completed by 7 March. Additional information can be obtained from Murray Cleaver on (07) 378 3008 or Terry Slee (07) 386 9245.

## The hills are alive, with the sound of mu-sic...

Recently we received the following letter:

*Dear Tramping and Skiing,*

*Here is an anonymous donation of five mouth organs, they are all new and have not yet been played. They have been donated because mouth organs are such a good instrument for tramping. They are compact, light, can be carried almost anywhere, and do not easily get out of tune. I hope you will put them in your packs sometime, carry them into the wilderness and sit around a campfire in the evening playing "The Happy Wanderer" or tunes of a similar ilk.*

*Yours Sincerely, Anonymous*

Accompanying the letter was a set of five harmonicas.  
Thank you, Anonymous!

## For Sale

### The MTSC Trailer

This trailer was purpose built for the club in 1998 for towing behind the Transit Van, but we have a bigger van now and so no longer need it. The trailer is enclosed and lockable and the interior dimensions are 2050 mm long x 1390 mm wide x 1090 mm high. If you think you can give it a good home then the asking price is \$2000.

Given that its replacement cost is \$4500 it is cheap at twice the price. You can view it at 798 Main St Palmerston North (Adam Matich 359-2796), and if you want to haggle then phone the club president, Howard Nicholson, on 357-6325.

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



## Upcoming trips

### TRIP GRADING

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

<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.

### Wednesday Trampers

27 February

Pauline Hall

My trip is to Te Mata Peak, Havelock North. There are a series of walking tracks and spectacular views from the peak which is 399 meters above sea level. This will suit people of most fitness levels. have friends over there who are doing a reccy and who will accompany us on the walks. Just pray for wine weather.

Easy/Medium

329 7707

### Thursday Trampers

28 February

John McLeod

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

323 5785

### Wednesday Trampers

5 March

Jill Chapman

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

326 8605

### Thursday Trampers

6 March

John Thornley

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

356 9681

### Climbing Ruapehu

8-9 March

Ken Mercer

We'll travel to the lodge on Friday night and, if the Saturday weather is suitable, climb up to Dome peak. On

Medium

356 7497

Sunday I'd like to walk from the top of the ski field to Turora. That's very ambitious and there are a number of alternatives which range from relaxing at the lodge to the Silica Springs walk to doing part of the round the mountain track.

### Exploring Whakapapa

9 March

Ken Mercer

Phone for more details.

Easy

356 7497

### Wednesday Trampers

12 March

Don McDonald

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

357 0222

### Thursday Trampers

13 March

Christine Scott

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

354 0510

### Bush Craft

15-16 March

Bev Akers

This can be a lot of fun - camping out and hopefully learn some pointers. What is not needed to carry in ones heavy pack. Setting up a nights shelter so you will need a bedroll & sleeping bag. Learn how easy it is to prepare a meal & cook on gas cookers. Then sit around the camp billy (no fire due to fire ban) & discuss life! Sunday - we hope to go for a walk in the river and learn some compass

All Welcome

325 8879

skills and maybe do some pack floating for those keen ones. So you need an overnight pack with a Liner plus your overnight gear. When you all ring, we will organize food and shelter etc.

### Wednesday Trampers

19 March

Rose Strahan

Easy/Medium  
328 9861

I intend to take the Wednesday group to the Knights Track end of Table Flat Road, Apiti. There is a shorter loop track near the Deerford Crossing we can do if the weather is less than pleasant, or failing that, we could retreat to the Heritage Lodge area to have our lunch in the relative luxury of the new hut.

### Thursday Trampers

20 March

Bryan Evans

Easy/Medium  
323 7614

Phone for more details.

### Otago Rail Trail

21-24 March

Don McDonald

Biking/Hiking  
357 0222

Phone for more details.

### Wednesday Trampers

26 March

Colleen Newth

Easy/Medium  
358 8801

Phone for more details.

### Thursday Trampers

27 March

Jill Spencer

Easy/Medium  
329 8738

Phone for more details.

### Te Matawai Hut Work Party

29-31 March

Jean Garman

Party  
354 3536

Leaving Saturday morning and back by late Sunday afternoon by whatever route seems most appropriate on the day. The primary objective will focus on firewood (get rid of all those destructive urges), cleaning (bring out the inner Martha Stewart) and constructing a seat (for all those creative impulses). The secondary objective will focus on eating, drinking and in general being merry.

### South Ohau River

30 March

Bev Akers

Easy/Medium  
325 8879

Bit of farm walking till we get to the bush, then its a bush track till we get to the river. You can take it what ever speed you like up the river till we meet up with the work party group coming down from Te Matawai. You do need to enjoy river travel or just come along till we reach the river for a swim.

### Wednesday Trampers

2 April

Pam Wilson

Easy/Medium  
357 6247

Phone for more details.

### Thursday Trampers

3 April

Ray Pratt

Easy/Medium  
328 7884

Phone for more details.

### Roaring Stag Lodge

5-6 April

Christine Scott

Easy/Medium  
354 0510

The idea of this overnight trip is to make full use of the weekend by mowing the lawn and weeding the garden on Saturday morning (yeah, right), walk into Roaring Stag Hut in the afternoon, have a very pleasant evening meal at the almost new hut, sleep it off and then return to Palmerston North on Sunday morning. It is a 3-3.5 hours from the Mangatainoka Rd end (also called Putara Rd) into Roaring Stag Hut in the northern Tararuas. We will leave Palmerston North at mid day.

### Zekes Hut

6 April

Adam Matich

Easy/Medium  
359 2796

Zekes Hut is on the eastern face of Hihitahi Peak, which unsurprisingly is in the Hihitahi Forest Sanctuary on SH1 about 16 km north of Taihape. It is estimated, by DoC, to be a 6 hour trip in and out. We park just off the main road and tramp 30 min across farmland before entering the bush. There is about a 380 m climb up and over Hihitahi Peak (90 min), which is open-topped, and an 80 metre drop down the eastern face to the hut. Zekes Hut was replaced maybe a year ago and is 5-10 min further on than the old hut was, about 45 min from the top of Hihitahi. After our lunch break we will head back out the way we came in. We will probably leave PN from my place (798 Main St) at around 7.30 am on Sunday.

### Wednesday Trampers

9 April

Jill Spencer

Easy/Medium  
329 8738

Phone for more details.

### Thursday Trampers

10 April

Keith Fisher

Easy/Medium  
357 1724

Phone for more details.

### Waiopahu Hut

12-13 April

Bev Akers

Easy/Medium  
325 8879

About a 4 hour continuous gradual climb through bush till we reach the leatherwood where we find our hut. Wonderful views of the western side and nice new hut. Sunday, for those who are keen we hope to do the circuit up over Twin Peaks and down Cable End Track back to the carpark. Depending on the weather of course. Easy laid back break away from home.

### Waitewaewae-Thompson Loop

13 April

Jenny McCarthy

Medium/Fit  
06 376 8838

Phone for more details.

### Jumbo Loop

19-20 April

Dave Allan

Medium  
323 9734

Unfortunately because of a family commitment I am now going to be unable to take this tramp. I am looking for someone to lead this trip if possible. If you would like to take this trip, please contact me.

# Trip Reports

## Barlow Hut 20 January

by John Beech

About eight of us set off from Palmerston North in reasonable weather which deteriorated the further we got into the Hawkes Bay. Although we left the carpark in dry weather and headed up the Makaroro River persistent drizzle was soon encountered which remained with us for the whole day. By the time we arrived at Barlow steady rain had begun. A short lunch was had and then we returned down the river. The rain eased back to the drizzle as we made our way out. Once at the Gold Creek junction we opted for the walk up and out of the river through the forestry roads and past the old Craigs Hut site. A nice walk overall but a pity about the weather as a swim in the very low Makaroro would have been nice.

## Orongorongo/Mt Matthew/Rimutaka Incline 23 January

by Nigel Spencer

Seven of us set off from Palmerston North at 7 am heading for Catchpool, down the coast road from Wainuiomata. We were picking up Clare at the Petone Railway Station. The trains were having problems and we had to wait approximately three quarters of an hour. On over to Catchpool and we then set off for the Orongorongo Valley. Pleasant walk along the Five Mile Track out to the river where we had lunch then headed up the river to Baine Hut. Those who wanted to could go up Mt Matthews or else you could enjoy just being by the river. Five went on the climb as far as the South Saddle where they had a great view of Palliser Bay and

Wellington. Back to Catchpool where we set up camp for the night. Really good DoC. campsite. Next headed up to Upper Hutt and the Rimutaka Incline where six were dropped off to head up over the Incline. Two took the van round to Cross Creek and parked it there then set off for the summit. Arrived at the summit before the first group. All joined up and had lunch there. Headed on down to Cross Creek going through three tunnels. In to Featherston where some had coffee (women) and others going to the Fell Engine Museum (men). Dropped Clare off at the Featherston Railway Station to head back to Wellington. The rest of us set off back to Palmerston stopping in Masterton for our usual ice cream. Great couple of days enjoyed by all. We were Gordon Clark, Zac Adams, Ann Green, Royce Mills, John Mcleod, Clare Wilford, Jill Spencer, Nigel Spencer (Leader).

## Ruahine Crossing 26-27 January

by Greg Dobson

After an early 7 am start from Palmerston North we headed to Kashmir road end and the beginning of our cross range walk. Just over an hour saw us at Longview hut for a short break and suitably refreshed we carried on minus Adam who returned to the carpark. Over Pohangina saddle and up to the tops where we stopped for a sunbathe and lunch in a warm sheltered spot out of the cool wind. After an hours rest we dragged ourselves to our feet to continue downhill along the track to Iron Gate hut where we rigged up tent flies for accommodation, as some Aucklanders had invaded from the north and it was a pleasantly mild night for sleeping outside anyway. Emma



Above: Tunnel entrance at the summit.

Photo: Nigel Spencer (Rimutaka Incline Trip | 23 January 2008)

Left: finding our way around a waterfall

Photo: Adam Matich (Maropea Forks Hut Trip | 9-10 February 2008)

slept on the hut deck to keep possums from molesting our packs for food. A comfortable nights rest under the drizzle and we were refreshed for our exit to the Tabletop roadend and the drive home. We had a brief stop along the way to admire the newly rebuilt Heritage Lodge with its roomy cabin and hot showers (only in the deerstalkers locked section though). High noon saw us at the carpark where Adam was waiting for us with the van to take us home, many thanks to him for transporting us there and back. All up it was a great weekend and a relaxing way to cross the Ruahines, only taking 9 hours or less to complete the whole walk. My fellow trampers were Bev, Gary, Emma, Felix, Gemma and myself Greg Dobson.

### **Arete Forks Hut 2-3 February**

**by Tony Evans**

Leaving the car at the Kiriwhakapapa Road end we headed up the track towards Blue Range Hut in overcast weather and after a spell at the junction turned left onto the Cow Creek Hut track, with a little low cloud and drizzle but not enough to disturb the raincoats tucked in the bottom of the packs we sidled past Te Mara. From the next signpost it was down down down and where the track is close to the Waingawa River the leader decreed that we cross here and pick up the track on the other side to Cow Creek Hut just a few hundred metres upstream because "the map shows the track moving away from the river opposite the hut and no bridge". We did this with the water only deep enough to get some of the feet wet and as we headed up the track toward the hut the leader told the story of a similar crossing recently when a few minutes walk upstream towards Trains Hut after crossing the Waitotara a brand new bridge appeared. 5 minutes later "déjà vu", a new-looking bridge appears and not just an ordinary netting and wire one person at a time structure but this one has pipe handrails and a web-grating deck with a five people at a time limit.

One tramper had developed a sore knee on the descent to the Waingawa so it was decided they would stay at Cow

Creek for the night and rest up for the walk out on Sunday. A good break and a hot cuppa at the hut and onwards, following the advice in the hut book the river route was taken instead of the planned sidle track. After a mixture of wading and boulder hopping and aided by low water levels Arete Forks was reached without any difficulty and only wet as far up as the bottom of my shorts (note: results may vary on shorter legged persons).

After a good nights sleep an early start was made to return to Cow Creek via the sidle track, the track is not as bad as some of the comments in the hut book at Cow Creek make out but it could use a little maintenance and the river route only takes two thirds of the time and effort, although a little rain would change that dramatically.

Another hot cuppa at Cow Creek and the re-united party headed across the flash bridge, slightly disappointed at only being able to utilise 40% of its capacity, and headed back towards Kiriwhakapapa Road. High cloud enabled us to enjoy the views that were covered the day before but still kept the temperature down a little, the knee had recovered enough to make the short side trip to visit Blue Range Hut for another cuppa and then it was on down to the road and into Eketahuna in time for ice-creams for Tony Evans and Sandra Rowlands.

### **McKinnon Hut 7 February**

**by Stuart Malcolm**

It is several years since the Thursday trampers last undertook this trip - good weather and the low level of the Kawhatau River helped. Of the 12 trampers present, most lunched at peak 1625 m, but five went down to the hut before returning. It was a great day to be up in the tussock.

### **Maropea Forks Hut 9-10 February**

**by Jean Garman**

We reached the car park just before 10 am and it was already pretty chocka with assorted vehicles and various



**Right: Blue Duck**  
Photo: Jean Garman  
(Maropea Forks Hut Trip |  
9-10 February 2008)



**Left: Sunrise Hut**  
 Photo: Jean Garman  
 (Maropea Forks Hut Trip  
 | 9-10 February 2008)

stray people but we managed to slot the minibus in without running anyone over.

Being in the lee of the ranges it was a hot and sweaty climb up the track to Sunrise where we paused briefly to check out the new alterations to the hut. Looks great and obviously a very popular destination for both day trips and overnights. We carried on up to the high point north of Armstrong Saddle for lunch, fortunately when we crested the range a gentle breeze helped keep us refreshed and the views were stunning.

After lunch we continued north to the next high point where it was decided that we should drop into the branch of the Maropea River directly in front of us. Ignoring all of my pleas to find a nice slip to get us below the leatherwood line the crazies in the group charged off down the hill yelling back that it looked fine and wasn't it a grand thing to start off in the very headwaters. When I tentatively followed down over the crest and got a good look at what the front runners were disappearing into I was not at all impressed but being in sheep mode decided to follow anyway.

The next hour and a half was unpleasant. Mainly consisting of forcing your way through leatherwood/spaniards and climbing down endless rocky drops. A few of the later proved to be unclimb-able which resulted in the odd scrambly deviation. Eventually we got down into better territory and from there on it was a very pleasant trip down the river. Time was ticking by so we were all very pleased when the hut appeared at about 5.45 pm.

Dinner and Easter eggs were consumed and we all slept soundly waking to the sound of raindrops on the roof. Luckily it proved to only be a few small showers and although we started off with raincoats on we didn't keep them on for long. We headed towards Top Maropea Hut encountering 1 deer and 3 blue ducks in the river. Another shower hit us just as we reached the hut but luckily passed over while we had a quick break before heading up and over to Sunrise for lunch. Once again arriving just in time to miss another little shower that blew

through while we were eating. That was the last precipitation we saw in the hills till we were back at the van when it chose a very inconvenient time to start raining again. Interesting trip and now I know where there is another 500 m of river I never intend to set foot in again. We were Jenny McCarthy, Adam Matich, Garry Grayson, Ivan Rienks and Jean Garman.

### **Rangiwahia Hut** **10 February** by Ken Mercer

A quiet trip to Rangi hut was the plan but the four participants were reasonably fit and, since I'd not been up the Deadman's Track, that is the way we went. The climb to the tussock was hot and sweaty then a series of downpours ensured we remained soaked. However it was still very pleasant and, during a break in the cloud from near the top of the ridge, we almost spotted the hut!

We arrived there for a late lunch and observed a curious side effect of installing gas heaters – campfires had been lit on the flat area outside! I have some sympathy but it does spoil the grass.

While skirting around the slip on the final leg Peter and I convinced each other that building a bridge across it would be a piece of cake. If DOC want suggestions we can oblige!

Ken and Mary Mercer, Peter McCleod and Alan Cameron were the lucky four.

### **Waipawa River** **13 February** by Bev Akers

Twenty three trampers started at the Swamp Track and onto the Sunrise track to the junction, all easy track travel with beautiful bush. Dropped down to the river which is a typical tramping track with a couple of fresh slips on the way. Some of us walked up stream for a bit while the others stopped off at the Waipawa Hut. Down river back to our bus and 3 cars which were parked at the swamp/river carpark, saving a hot walk across farmland.

## Umakarikari Track to Waipatiki Hut 14-15 February

by Ann Green

Eight trampers set out on a sunny warm morning, two hours up through bush and on to Umakarikari Ridge (Kaimanawas) which gave us extensive views to Ruapehu and over Lake Taupo and beyond. We sat in the sun to at our lunch and admire the view and take photos. This is a long very exposed ridge rising to 1591 m. Then a steep drop down to the hut (12 bunks), total time 6 hr. The next morning the weather was changing by the time we got to the ridge it was blowing a gale and raining. It was with a sigh of relief when we reached the bush edge to have a brief stop and then back to the minibus. Time 4.5 hrs. We were Gordon Clark, Nigel Spencer, Christine Scott, Gill and John Thornley, Julie and John Gilbert, Ann Green.

## Okataina & Tarawera Walkways – Rotorua 15-17 February

by Adam Matich

On Saturday morning Trip Leader's son dropped us off near the end of Millar Road, 13 km ESE of Rotorua, and then deposited the car at the other road end for us. We started at the beginning of the Western Okataina Walkway. This area is all pretty flat and easy going and the walkway appears to be on old logging tracks. The climbs were gentle and stream crossings non-hazardous. The vegetation was thus varied, ranging from swampy Toitoti through regenerating forest to older more established forest. About 1 hour from the road end in one of the open areas we got a glimpse of what, after some discussion, we decided was a wallaby. It was shy and didn't stay around for very long to help with the discussion. Although it did rain on Saturday, the weather was merely being playful and so for the most part we were dry. Our first notable stop for the day was lunch atop the highest point of the trip at Whakapoungakau Trig, a 10 km, 3.5 hr, 280 m climb from the road end. From up there we had views over Lake Okataina and beyond. Fortunately, one of the few, heavy rain-showers didn't sweep across us until we were packed up and heading off again.

After lunch it was effectively down-hill all the way to the head of Lake Okataina (6 km, 2 hrs). This descent was through some more substantial forest down onto the flat swampy area at the head of the lake. We had a nice sunny afternoon tea on park benches that overlook the boat ramp and beach where the sound of children playing "nicely" made for a pleasant experience. Lake Okataina is ideal for boating, swimming and canoeing, and it wasn't crowded. No camping, but there is a Lodge. It is an interesting lake, being volcanic in origin. There is actually no outfall into Lake Tarawera to the South. Lake Okataina is 20 m higher than Lake Tarawera and drains into it through fissures in the rock of the lake bed. Thus, during heavy rain Lake Okataina rises and in dry weather it falls. Earthquake activity has been known to effect rather sudden drops in the lake level. The local Maori abandoned the area because they found the lake levels too flaky.

We felt that travel down the Eastern Okataina Walkway was better than the Western. In places the track dropped down to the water's edge where it was very possible to have a swim. Although we had time constraints so we moved on. Reluctantly. There is one climb on the Eastern

Walkway, but the map lies. the track only climbs 100 m and not the advertised 160 m. A great disappointment to be sure! The forest was different from that on the western side of the Lake. Here we tramped through some very tall dry Kanuka forest. Finally, 2.5 hr (7 km) from the lake-head we reached Ontangiomoana Bay at the base of the lake and we were hot and tired and all "sceneried" out. So we headed up (50 m) and over (1.5 km, 30 min) to drop down to the shores of Lake Tarawera at the Humphries Bay (not on the map) campsite just before 6 p.m after a 9-hour day. This put us on the beginning of the Northern Tarawera Track.

After dinner we were able to watch the fish jumping and people in boats trying to catch them, before going to bed upon darkness. By 4 a.m. everyone was well and truly awake again though because of the wildlife. Earlier on Jean had been able to frighten off a couple of possums by hissing at them and others of us managed to avoid notice by curling up in our sleeping bags and pretending to not be there. But Tony wasn't so successful and made a terrible racket in the early hours while doing battle with the possums and the rats. Even throwing his boots at them didn't really seem to give them the message. By the end of the exchange, Tony had lost his breakfast and some biscuits from his previously unopened packet of Shrewsberries.

Come daylight, we headed off along the Northern Tarawera Walkway and this proved to be the best section of the trip. After some really nice travel along side the lake we headed inland and slowly climbed about 120 m over a distance of 2 km, through some very open, tall Kanuka forest. We spotted another shy wallaby on the way. Even though the forest was dry, the ground was still covered in moss. Also the birds were very noisy in this region. Eventually the track dropped back down to the lake edge, but on the floor of what was like a little canyon. It was cool and dark in between the rock walls and a bit dim for photography. We have never encountered anything quite like it before. From the terrain we expected it to be a water course, but there was no sign of there having been running water. In fact all of the streams on the eastern side of these lakes were bone-dry. Once back down by the lake edge we had a fast 2 km to the outfall of Lake Tarawera 8 km and 2.5 hrs from our campsite.

A vote was had and trip leader was delegated to mind our packs while the rest of us did the trip down (130 m, 3.5 km) to Tarawera Falls, which flow from fissures in a cliff face. On the way down there are some cascades and good looking swimming spots. Although it is advised against swimming near where the river disappears underground. Tony was certainly difficult about the whole matter, even when we offered to tie a rope to him so we could get some cool footage of him going under. It was on this section that we finally encountered significant numbers of people. Perhaps too many for the misanthropes amongst us. A 2.5 hour round trip saw us back at the jetty to wait for the water taxi to take us across the lake to the end of Spencer Road where the car patiently awaited us.

Upon discussion, we thought that a really good trip in this region could be had by the use of two tramping parties (to make transport cheaper and easier). The first to be dropped off at Tarawera Falls, from where they could



Above: The beginning of the Tarawera River.  
Right: Lunch under the Whakapoungakau Trig radio mast

Photos: Adam Matich (Okataina & Tarawera Walkways | 15-17 February 2008)



do a 5-hour tramp through to Humphries Bay campsite, and the second group to drive around to the end of Lake Okataina Road at the head of said lake, from where they could tramp for 3.5 hours to meet up with the other group at the campsite and hopefully remember to give them the vehicle keys. There are plans to put a walkway right around lake Tarawera, which could make it a serious rival to Lake Waikaremoana. Especially given its easy proximity to Rotorua.

We were Tony Evans, Adam Matich, Jean Garman, and Mark Learmonth.

## More Wed & Thu Trampers Trips

### Wednesday Tramps

Waihohonu Hut (Jan 30 | 23 trampers)

Apiti Track (Feb 6 | 17 trampers)

# Club Information

## Annual Hut Passes

Buy your Annual Hut Pass through DoC. The full price of an Annual Hut Pass is \$90 but is reduced to \$63 with your Federated Mountain Club (FMC) card discount. Jean Garman will provide you with a form to fill in which will be sent off with your cheque and FMC card (if you have one) to DoC Waikanae who will post you an Annual Hut Pass. Note that MTSC family memberships only pay one FMC sub so only one FMC card (and therefore discount) is available per family. Contact Jean at [jeanandivan@value.net.nz](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 power, hot showers, and is stocked with food. The lodge phone number is (07) 892 3860. Lodge bookings can be made between 9:30 am and 9:30 pm on any day. Do not call outside of these hours.



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

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

## Booking and use of the MTSC Transit Van

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

1. Book preferably by 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.



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

## Club Equipment

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

## Articles for the newsletter

Send by the 15th of each month to Wei-Hang Chua at [mtsc.editor@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mtsc.editor@xtra.co.nz). Please contact me if you'd prefer to receive your newsletter by email only. Send changes of address to the Membership Secretary at P.O. Box 245, Palmerston North or email [mtsc.memsec@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mtsc.memsec@xtra.co.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 2007-08 Committee

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