

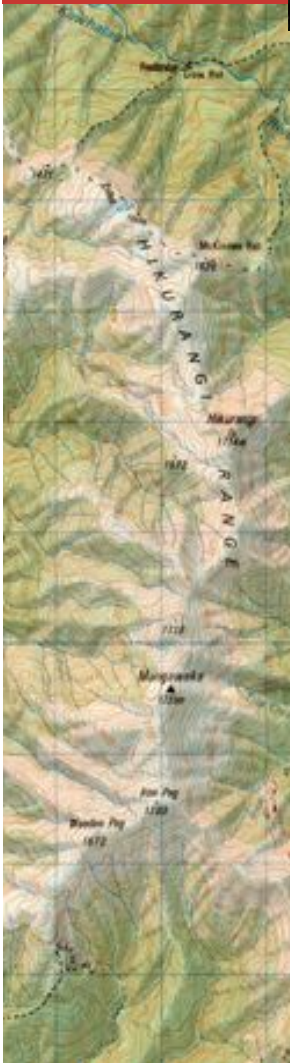
November 2009
Issue 11

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Walking along Marchant Ridge
(Photo: Jean Garman | Eastern Hut Trip | 3-4 October 2009)



Upcoming club nights

Search and Rescue + Christmas Dinner

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

3rd November - Search and Rescue in the Central Region

Sergeant Bill Nicholson, Search and Rescue Coordinator for Central District, will be speaking to us about SAR in our region. Bill is charged with coordinating exercises and real life search operations in our region. SAR largely relies on the specialist skills and time of volunteers from several clubs (including ours) and groups that work alongside police. Come along and find out all about a vital part of outdoor activities.

1st December - Christmas function

Final club night of 2009! Dinner will be at the RSA Carvery. The time and cost will be published in the next newsletter. Feel free to bring digital photos from 2009 and they will be played in a slideshow for all to see. So that we can get an idea of numbers, please indicate if you intend to come contacted our social convenor Rochelle Beaumont (email her at geoff-rock@xtra.co.nz or phone 354 4929).

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If you'd like to receive you newsletter by email as a pdf rather than by post then please let me know on editor@mtsc.org.nz.

Items for the newsletter: The deadline for newsletter items is the end of the month.

President's Report

by Ken Mercer

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

Organization. It's not something I'm particularly good at but somehow I flounder on. Twice a year the committee, in particular the Chief Guide, organize 6 months worth of upcoming trips for the trip card. It is quite a task since many people, myself included, are concentrating on what is happening next weekend and planning a trip 8 months in advance is a bit unnatural.

We all, of course, benefit from being able to look ahead to select a trip from the trip card appropriate to our circumstances but it is particularly important for newer members as they join our community and are introduced to the world of huts, bivvies, and spurs. I want to thank everyone who has offered to lead trips on the new card and especially Kim for organizing it all.

As I write the ski season is coming to a close, not with a whimper, but with a hiss and a roar in the form of 10+cm of fresh snow. Staying at the lodge a couple of weekends ago I couldn't help but be impressed with the atmosphere. Great skiing, food, conversation, and a large group of kids from several families who all seemed to get on really well together. A joy indeed.

Chief Guide's Report

by Kim Fraser

email dowson_kr@hotmail.com or phone (06) 355 5496

The summer tripcard is here and its great!!! and with that daylight savings has started and if you're like me you've made some effort to dust the cobwebs off the legs and attempt to find or create anything resembling tramping fitness. So have a look at the card, there's a great variety of trips to suit all levels and you'll probably notice that there are still some weekend and sunday gaps. So if you would like to go for a tramp and organise a trip somewhere you are welcome do so. You can let Wei or myself know and we can let everyone else know. Just a reminder to ALL trip leaders, it is your responsibility to organise a PLB and fly (or some sort of shelter) to be taken on your trip, you don't have to be the one carrying these as they can be divided amongst the group. There is one PLB and fly living in the Minibus and Peter Rawlins our gear custodian has the other PLB and more club fly's and remember the PLB's are free for club trips so there's no excuse not to have one, and remember the consequences of not having one when required can be far greater than carrying one all day and not needing it. So apart from that I hope everyone makes it out at least once this summer and i'll look forward to seeing some of you on a trip or two.

Holdsworth Lodge

Contributed by Jean Garman

From Monday 12th October onwards, Holdsworth Lodge will no longer be left open for casual visitors. This change is being carried out in order to curb ongoing vandalism and to ensure this facility is kept to a high standard for those paying for overnight accommodation. Bookings for overnight stays are available through the DOC website at <http://booking.doc.govt.nz/> or by contacting the DOC Wellington Visitor Centre on (04) 384 7770.

New Members

The club welcomes the following new members. We look forward to seeing you out on a tramp or up at the lodge.

Patricia Inkpen (Feilding)

Marie Inkpen and family (Feilding)

Magnificent Mayor Island

Weekend Trip 13/14 February 2010

Would you be interested in a weekend tramping around Mayor (Tuhua) Island February 13/14?

This really is one trip you don't want to miss out on.

Tuhua Island lies 22 nautical miles from Mount Maunganui.

Tuhua is a dormant shield volcano with a large caldera. The volcanic crater contains two lakes both near sea level. It's been a wildlife refuge since 1953 and contains the largest concentration of pohutakawa forest in NZ.

Tracks lead through impressively tall forest to both lakes plus round the rim of the crater. This private Maori owned island is administered by the Tuhua Trust Board.

At present the island is closed to the public, however in previous summers it has normally been open to limited numbers who have obtained landing and camping permits.

I have twice before visited the island and really keen to go again. The scenery is magnificent, the views on the crater rim track of the Islands interior and coastline are quite stunning.

The weekend would start by taking a charter boat leaving around 8 am from the Mount to Tuhua, taking a little over 2 hours. On arrival set up camp for the weekend (tent or cabin option available) then until we are picked up around 3pm Sunday you can explore, go tramping, relax or do what you please for as long as you wish.

As permits are limited and the island is very popular with both boaties & trampers I need to purchase them as soon as they become available in October. I assure you this will be a weekend to remember. As the owners say it's a privilege not a right to visit this magnificent Island.

If you are keen please advise me of your interest as soon as possible. I can be contacted in the evenings on (06) 355 9143 or during the day on (027)224 960.



Interclub Photo Competition Results

Contributed by Howard Nicholson

These are the results of the interclub photo competition held on the 1st of September. Thanks go to PNTMC for organising the night and Paul Gummer from UCOL for the judging. Congratulations to all the winners!

Section	Photography (Place)	Club
Alpine	(1) Mike Archer (2) Kim Fraser (3) Anja Scholz	PNTMC MTSC PNTMC
Natural History	(1) Jean Garman (2) Kim Fraser (3) Clare Robertson	MTSC MTSC MUAC
Overseas	(1) Heather Noble-Young (2) Duncan Fraser (3) Andy Fogal	PNTMC MTSC MUAC
Scenic NZ	(1) Kathy Corner (2) Richard Lander (3) Andy Fogal	PNTMC MTSC MUAC
Topical	(1) Andy Fogal (2) Heather Noble-Young (3) Jean Garman	MUAC PNTMC MTSC
Overall	(1) Mike Archer (2) Jean Garman (3) Kathy Corner	PNTMC MTSC PNTMC

DoC News

Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

From the pages of "Keep Tracking on with DOC" Issue 18 - September 2009

A quick update on some local issue and news:

- Some repair and re-alignment work on Takapari Road was carried out in August, allowing 4WD users and mountainbikers to safely access the entire 17km length of Takapari Rd is safely accessible to 4WD's, although we recommend only the experienced venture past the A-Frame shelter.
- Tracks have been cut from Leon Kinvig to Main Range, Leon Kinvig to Toka Trig, and along the Pohangina gorge sidle.
- A temporary repair has been made on the broken window at Iron gate Hut; it will be replaced in due course.
- Dog kennels are now available at Mid Pohangina, Ngamoko, Leon Kinvig and Top Gorge huts.

Kelly Stratford

Dept of Conservation, Community Relations
Ranger, Palmerston North Area Office
Phone: 06 350 9708



Adam dealing with a dead critter at Iron Gate Hut (Photo: Gary Bevins | Iron Gate Hut Trip | 29-30 August 2009)

Upcoming trips

TRIP GRADING

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

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

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.

Around Mt Taranaki

24-26 October

Medium

Adam Matich

359 2796

We will be leaving PN bright and early, possibly as early as 7 am, to head up to Dawson falls, with an obligatory breakfast stop on the way. We will climb the Summit track for an hour to reach the Upper Lake Dive track, and will stay on the upper track system, bypassing lake Dive, to take the Brames Falls track down to Waiau Gorge hut for the first night.

Next day we take the Oaonui Track all the way around to the Stony River, completely bypassing Kahui Hut as from the Puniho track junction onwards, the upper track system doesn't really officially exist anymore, because of the encroachment by Pyramid Stream.

We head up the Stony River, crossing the confluence of Pyramid Stream, to the Bells Falls track and then on to Holly Hut for the night. On day three we rise bright and early, to head around to North Egmont and Maketawa Hut, from where we take the lower track system (Curtis Falls Track) to East Egmont and then back through to Dawson Falls. Those who are afraid of the bush can always take the upper track, from North Egmont, around through the ski field to Dawson Falls. All of this is terribly weather dependent of course.

Wednesday Trampers

28 October

Easy/Medium

Bernard Cobb

328 8088

Phone for more details.

Thursday Trampers

29 October

Medium

David Grant

357 8269

Phone for more details.

Te Matawai Hut

31 October - 1 November

Medium

Hugh Wilde

356 9450

Phone for more details.

Wednesday Trampers

4 November

Easy/Medium

Margaret Foote

357 8003

Phone for more details.

Thursday Trampers

5 November

Medium

Royce Mills

358 4398

Phone for more details.

Mangahao Flats

6-8 November

Hard work/Party

Jean Garman

354 3536

In the first instance I am looking for a total of eight people for this work party. Preference will be given on the basis of number of work parties attended in the past. We will be leaving relatively early on Friday evening with the intention of flying into Mangahao Flats from the dams and flying back out late afternoon Sunday. There will be a small charge for the helo flight. If the weather is not up to flying we will be walking. If more than eight people wish to come there will be the option of walking in/out or if you are feeling wealthy paying the full cost of the helo flight.

Coppermine Loop

8 November

Easy

Tim Swale

(06) 376 6556

This is a neat little tramp not far from home and although it only takes about two and a half hours there is a reasonably steep climb involved which some would argue

is not that easy. However it is well worth the effort with great views and some lovely bush.

Wednesday Trampers

11 November

Mona Webb

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

323 4212

Thursday Trampers

12 November

Nigel Spencer

Phone for more details.

Medium

329 8738

Opawe Stream

15 November

David Harrington

From Opawe roadend follow track past Opawe Hut up to Mt Maharahara and into saddle just beyond. Drop north over the side under leatherwood and into the Opawe Stream to follow it back out to the farmland.

Medium/Fit

(06) 839 5766

Wednesday Trampers

18 November

Angela & Kel McKinnon

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

358 9025

Thursday Trampers

19 November

Gordon Clark

Phone for more details.

Medium

359 2500

McKinnon Hut

21-22 November

David Newstead

Phone for more details.

Medium

(027) 457 6175

Walls Whare Loop?

22 November

Adam Matich

This is an exploration across the river from the Walls Whare road end (Waiohine Gorge Road). Once across the new Walls Whare bridge we will head south onto the old track system, cross over Coal Stream, and head up towards the Reeves Track. A few hundred metres before reaching said track there is a trail heading off to the left, hopefully down towards the Waiohine River. I am going to explore in that direction in the hope that the trail loops north, back to Coal Stream.

We might be lucky and have a real adventure, if everything goes to custard, or we might be unlucky and make it out in time for afternoon tea at Carterton or Masterton!

Medium

359 2796

Wednesday Trampers

25 November

Marion Beadle

Phone for more details.

Easy/Medium

323 3246

Thursday Trampers

26 November

Hugh Wilde

Phone for more details.

Medium

356 9450

Mangaehuehu Hut

28-29 November

Peter Rawlins

Phone for more details.

Medium

356 7443

The Camelbacks

29 November

David Harrington

From Makahika roadend follow spur up to Marquee then along The Camelbacks somehow to Square Knob. Track back down to Waihi Stream bridge. (Expect to use hands and knees!).

Medium/Fit

(06) 839 5766

Tongariro Crossing

5-6 December

Ken Mercer

The Tongariro Crossing is a full day trip so we'll stay at the lodge which will give us the chance to have an early start and also pick the best day from the weekend. On the 2nd day we'll do another walk in the area which could be as simple as the Taranaki falls or part of the round the mountain track, depending on the group's wishes.

The cost, including food, for staying two nights at the lodge is \$50 and transport, using the van will cost about \$40.

Medium/Fit

356 7497

Ngamoko/Piripiri Loop

5-6 December

Kim Fraser

We'll be heading to Ngamoko hut for the first night via the mid Pohangina hut track then head up the river to Ngamoko hut. From there we will head up onto the Ngamoko range and head south west along the range and drop into Piripiri stream, visit the hut and continue down to the pohangina river and out to the cars.

Medium

355 5496

Waitewaewae Headwaters

11-13 December

Jean Garman

This is an exercise in long days and bush navigation. Friday evening will see us walk into YTTY hut; on Saturday we will travel up the Oriwa ridge then carry on following the ridge line all around the headwaters of the YTTY catchment. This will involve a couple of long days, some careful navigation, at least a little scrub bashing and camping at a random point along the ridge line.

Fit (Essential)

354 3536

Top Maropea Hut

12-13 December

Bev Akers

This hut is beyond the famous Sunrise hut, on a not too difficult track, except if its really windy. After a break at Sunrise hut we will venture out along the exposed ridge to Armstrong Saddle. Up another bump then its along with a slight down to a cozy hut for the night. Camping out is good too. We retrace our steps on the Sunday passing all the day trampers heading to Sunrise.

Easy/Medium

325 8879



Nicola Wallace, Bev Akers, Ding Li-Ping, John Doolan, Sarah Leakey and Adam Matich at the Whakapapa Hut
(Photo: Sarah Leakey | Whakapapa Hut Trip | 12-13 September 2009)

Trip Reports

Roaring Stag Overnighter 1-2 September by Liz Flint

Tuesday's weather forecast was not the best but certainly not the worse when this hardy group set out. A stop for coffee at Eketahuna was a must for all.

The river was an angry brown and the track covered with water meant a real splash to the second swing bridge.

Climbing up the ridge to the junction with Herepai was broken only by huge claps of thunder and heavy breathing. The junction, its usual windy self, encouraged us to venture down the Roaring Stag track for a bit more shelter for lunch. Once seated it started to hail and the leader was talked into producing that large cake of chocolate she had mentioned carrying. Luckily it was of an acceptable flavour to all.

Arriving at the two streams before the hut meant carefully picking a spot to cross as they were flooded but due to a lack of rain in the day weren't bad.

A mixture of goodies came out of the packs and all Dave's new purchases were scrutinised and given the thumbs up (Dave's new to overnighters). Dinner was at a civilised 7.00pm, no one rushing in the lovely candle lit room. Later in the evening Margaret announced to all that the river had gone down to an answering "Yeah right" from us all. However morning showed she was correct and at a very leisurely time we rose for breakfast making sure we would meet the first of the Wednesday tramps day trippers back at the junction.

The streams had receded meaning we didn't even get our feet wet and the lakes we had splashed through to get there had gone. We had a quiet chuckle at the day group's comments that it was a bit muddy and wet.

Coffee was once again on the books. We were Liz Flint, Dave Pollard, Don McDonald, Bev Akers, Judy Callesen and Margaret Foot.

Herepai Hut 2 September by Andrew Brodie

Once again the Wednesday trampers split into two groups. Eleven of us, who had not joined the Tuesday overnight trip to Roaring Stag, set off for Herepai Hut the following day. I always enjoy the walk along the river to the swing bridge before the anticipated steep climb and today was no exception. Being relatively new to geocaching, Carolyn and I were keen to locate the cache along this trail, which we did quite easily. Later on the way back I filled out its logbook noticing a well-known Thursday trumper had been there in May. Being with the back group now, I got to the swing bridge and after crossing it, expected to see the last two waiting to cross. After about 15 minutes I starting thinking I better go back to see what had happened when one of them appeared saying the other had felt a bit faint and they had decided to turn back. (They were taken home early in the club van by the Roaring Stage group.) This left me to carry on by myself and just as I reached the Herepai – Roaring Stage

intersection met up with Liz Flint's group. They reported that the rest of the Wednesday trampers had joined them for a break and were not far ahead of me. I got to the hut soon after they had – funny how much more you hear of the sounds of the bush when by yourself. A couple of our group amused themselves successfully retrieving the hut book biro with sticks – it had fallen down inside the holder. Some of the more energetic trampers went a short way above the hut to get good views while the rest of us went started back. Overall a pleasant day without the expected rain. We were Marion Beadle, Patsy Inkpen, Denis Hansell, Kelvin McKinnon, Anne Rush, Carolyn Brodie, Pam Wilson, Bev Charlton, Rita Hodson, Arthur Hodson and Andrew Brodie.

Kelly Knight, Wooden Peg Track 3 September by Graham Pritchard

Eleven Thursday trampers followed the Kelly Knight hut track above the Pourangaki River to the junction point just beyond the second major side stream. The sun was still shining so rather than go to the hut we climbed the ridge track leading to Wooden Peg. Time did not permit going the full distance to Wooden Peg but from the lunch spot near the top of the leatherwood belt we had a great panorama of central Ruahine high spots from Ohuinga, the Sawtooth Ridge, Te Hekenga, Maungamahui right round to Pourangaki, much of it snow covered. The weather was clearly about to change and by the time we got back to the minibus snow showers were sweeping down the Pourangaki catchment.

Wellington Skyline Walk "Jim - and others" 6 September by David Newstead

I have often looked up from the Cook Straight ferry at the bare hills along Cook Straight, behind Wellington, and thought "I must walk there some time". A couple of years ago I mentioned it to Chris. As chance would have it Chris was already fired up over the great walk he and his wife Glenice had just done along the Wellington Skyline Track. So, when Bev rang about the coming trip card and suggested "something in the Wellington area, like the trip we did with the Wednesday Group to Eastbourne a while

back", the Skyline was on. Now, a trip in a place like that, in spring, is obviously a chancy business. When Chris and Glenice did it at the same time of year, they were well cocooned against the wind and cold, and needed to be. So, as everyone checked in they were reminded to bring full storm gear.

With the whole potential of the Wellington Skyline on offer we did not want to restrict ourselves to an 'out-and-back', therefore we follow Chris's and Glenice's original plan: we book the minibus and drive to Khandallah Park (below Mt Kaukau) (there is a nice café there). We walk around to Johnston's Hill, drop down to Karori (about 4 or 5 h). From there take the bus down town, and then take the Johnsonville train back to the start, have a cuppa at the café, and home. (However, there being much uncertainty, with Sunday timetables, not to mention being blasted by frigid hill-top winds, we were like to be bedraggled, and get back after the café closed; nice thought, not to worry.)

The scene was set. The week started with a text from Peter saying his ski trip was off. We could have the minibus after all (Thanks Peter). Tuesday's long range weather forecast looks as good as we can expect, maybe overcast, SE wind, rain unlikely. Everyone is reminded about wind gear. Chris and Nicola had checked in earlier, with Bev and Adam already committed. That made five, but Chris would already be in Wellington, so that makes four to Wellington. Then Liping calls in, now five from PN, but not really a load for the minibus. Sunday; as we make our first pick up in town Adam realizes we have 5, not 4 (I'd miscounted at that stage) so as 5 is break-even for the minibus (on cost) we go back to Adam's place and pick it up after all. We pick up Bev from Linton, we buy stuff for lunch in Otaki, we get an agitated call from Chris already at the Khandallah Park car park; he is informed we will be about half an hour late, (he sounds resigned, if not too impressed). I take us off the motorway one exit too soon, so we lose another 5 min driving through Porirua. Now I misread a street sign and we lose yet another 5 min. In the end all is well, we get there. Chris informs us that there are no trains because of track work, so it will be the Johnsonville bus at the end of the day.

At that point I note Chris and Adam in conversation with a passer-by who seems to have taken an interest in us



The Wellington Skyline

(Photo: Adam Match | Wellington Skyline Walk | 6 September 2009)



Enjoying the Wellington Skyline and sunshine.

(Photo: Chris Saunders | Wellington Skyline Walk | 6 September 2009)

(it is evident that they don't know him). When he finds out our intent, he offers to pick us up in Karori and bring us back to the minibus! ("Not a problem," he says, he lives in Khandallah). Wow! It turns out that Jim was just dropping off his son (visiting from the SI) and spotted the Club's name on the minibus. [Now you see why I have put in all that intricate preamble about uncertainty, pickups, general mucking about and delays – timing was everything.] Jim has been a member for about 30 y; though he now lives in Wellington and let his subs lapse, Wei still e-mails him the newsletter (good for you Wei!). He had been intending to come on the trip, but for his son's visit. Thanks to Jim's very kind offer the logistics plan was now finalized and we had at least an extra hour through not having to use public transport.

From the car park, at the head of Woodmancote Rd, it's a pleasant climb (or a bit of a slog, if your mood is different) up through the green belt, at this point through 100-year regenerated native forest (a well-formed path, with the odd clamber over a fallen tree), to break out onto the open top of Mt Kaukau (about 20 min). Now, what about all this storm-gear carry on? There's a clear sky above, it is a sou'easter, (you can tell, when the dead calm is disturbed by the odd light breezy gust), spring sunshine so not even a threat of sunburn, and startling views all round. To the south we look down on the Aotea Quay, across Hataitai and Miramar to the Straight and the Pacific beyond. To the SE are, Tapuae-o-unuku, Alarm, Mitre, of the Inland Kaikouras, all snowy and white looking as if just across the water, but 140 miles away. To their left their Seaward brethren and to their right the more hazy peaks around Nelson Lakes. East, across a scattering of toy windmills (mostly stationary in the light airs), Terawhiti, Makara, and the narrows of the Straight, with, to NE, The Brothers at the head of Queen Charlotte Sd (the S. head of the Tory Channel is discernable to their left if

you know the coastline). To the NE, the whole length of the Tararuas are compressed into single silhouette with the main peaks all regimented in order. And so we amble on our way, marvelling at the day, greeting the fellow travellers (on foot and on mountain bikes). Below us on either side the grassy gullies are colourful with patches of yellow gorse and the deep fiery orange of Darwin's barberry. We lunch scattered about around the Crow's Nest (above Ngaio) watching the Blue Bridge ferry sailing out, the day so calm you could spread the map out on the grass and not have to hold it down!

Eventually we trudge on, over the hills and far away, eventually down to Johnston's Hill. At this point the scheduled call is made to Jim, and we amble on down through the Inner Green Belt into Karori to the arranged meeting place (corner of Fancourt and Karori Rds) to find we are right beside a café-bar. Well, how did that happen? (Dame Fortune is still smiling.) Jim arrives within minutes and takes Chris and Adam back to the minibus, so the rest of us fill in time reviving over coffee and chocolate cake until Adam arrives for his portion. What a civilized way to go tramping! Many thanks to Jim Gordon, whose kind gesture (with some help with the weather from Hughie) turned a great day in to a perfect day. (We got back soon after six, as I recall).

Mangahao Valley 10 September by Stuart Malcolm

Eleven trampers went on this trip to Harris Creek and return on a nice early spring day. The first half (distance-wise) is fairly easy going but after crossing the Mangahao to the true right bank there is much more climbing and dropping of altitude. For a number it was their first time on this track - the Thursday group last accessed it in early 2003.



Christine about to launch her dog Shilah on a search

(Photo: Christine Scott | LandSAR Dog Training | 11-13 September 2009)

LandSAR Dog Training 11-13 September by Christine Scott

Having decided it was time to get a puppy and being active in LandSAR I thought it would be quite neat if the puppy could be trained for search and rescue. I was keen to get a Border Collie (having a few sheep on our block of land who were always a bit tricky to chase into a yard) and a few enquiries suggested that some Border Collies could be quite successful as SAR dogs. I found a breeder I liked in Otaki but had no real chance to choose the most likely SAR dog from the litter as they need to be at least 6 weeks old before they can be tested to assess their potential. I had to make a choice when they were only a few weeks old, so went solely on markings.

The local SARdog guru's (Grant Cooper and Cooch), then had to show me how to really play with my pup – if you want see a cop make a dick of himself (their words), just watch them play with their dogs. After talking with them I decided to go for 'air scent' training as opposed to 'tracking' – air scenting is easier with your first dog, plus it is probably more valuable than tracking when out on a search as few searches happen less than 24 hours after a person goes missing.

I went along as an observer to an assessment camp in Waiouru in May and came away with the message "just concentrate on consolidating that play drive

and get a really good bark to get the toy". (I now have a border collie that prefers to chase a ball than chase sheep!!).

Our first SARdog training camp was held at Sika Lodge at Taupo from 11-13 September. Now was the time to see how successful the basic training I had been doing with Shilah (my pup) had been. Along with about 15 other dogs (of all ages and abilities) and their handlers (also of all ages and abilities), we gathered to absorb as much knowledge and advice from our three instructors: Cooch (Ian Watson), Grant Cooper and Chris Martin as we could in 3 days. These guys put an unbelievable amount of time and energy into our 'wanabee' search dogs, running, yahoing and rolling on the ground all to convince the dogs what wonderful toys humans have. Shilah quickly progressed from a runaway (victim runs away with favourite toy and hides – dog finds them and after loud barking gets her toy), to a pop up (victim pops up from hiding place yahoing and waving toy), to sound (yahoo only) to a blind runaway (victim hides not far from previous hiding spot). It was a real thrill to see her rapid progression and her absolute focus on finding the victim out there who would play this neat game with her toy. She was so focused she disappeared over the hill looking for a second victim after playing with her first victim. The ultimate goal for an air scent dog is to find a lost person, bark at them because they think they have a toy and keep barking till the handler arrives.

A couple of the dogs there had high drive for finding things but no bark so had to go back to square one in training and establish a bark for a toy. Other air scent dogs were already operational or very close to it and dogs and handler were searching quite large areas to find the lost person. There were also a number of tracking dogs there from beginners right through to operational dogs with tracks being laid each day of varying degrees of difficulty. The more advanced dogs were following tracks that were over 4 hours old.

With the next training camp in February/ March, its going to be a challenge to see how much more we can progress, and then maybe, just maybe, we will be ready to have a go at being assessed to become operational in May.

Currently there are 11 operational Avalanche dog teams and 14 operational wilderness dogs in New Zealand. Of the

14 operational wilderness dogs, 8 are tracking dogs and 6 are area search dogs. One of these dogs is operational in both tracking and air scenting (Sue Chesterfield and Matai from Wellington who some of you will have been on a SAREX with).

Whakapapaiti Hut 12-13 September

by John Doolan

The promised views of Ruapehu did not eventuate :-(. It rained from the time we got out of the van to start our tramp and continued until 20 minutes before we got back in the van at the road end at the end of our trip. But our spirits were not dented and we all had a great time. We split into two groups: them fast guys and us slow guys. The fast guys were dropped off at the Mahuia car park on State Highway 47 beside the Mangahua Stream and had a 3 hour slog uphill in very wet conditions underfoot (could have been mistaken for the Tararuas in mid winter). Us slow guys took the conventional track from the Whakapapa car park.

The river crossing at the end of the day was a little testy for both groups and a good route choice and crossing techniques were required. Adam was the Master Chef for our group and even carried in all the food! He cooked up a wonderful meal and many of us went back for seconds (Sarah, Li-Ping and Nicola even managed a third serving!). On the way out we reversed our way in routes which gave the fast guys time for a coffee at Whakapapa before they

drove around to the Mahuia car park to pick up the slow guys.

We were: Sarah Leakey (England), Ding Li-Ping (China), Nicola Wallace (ex-Australia), Adam Matich (ex-Australia), Bev Akers (Linton) and John Doolan (Milson). PS: My fancy Telecom Nokia 3G phone just 2 months old, had no cell phone coverage on the mountain nor at National Park, Ohakune or Waioru :-(. Anybody else experiencing coverage problems with the 3G series of phones? Little use as an emergency tool!

Matiu/Somes Island 16 September

by Pam Wilson

On this day the weather was ideal for the party of twenty-two to explore Somes Island. Our previous planned day was thwarted by the ferry cancellation due to a rough sea. For those holding a gold card the ferry is free. For others, \$10.00, return.

After the short crossing from Days Bay, we entered a shed for bag inspection to ensure that no mice, rats or South American ants were introduced to the now vermin free island. A DOC field officer gave us an informative talk on both the history and the wildlife.

From the early 1880's Somes served as a quarantine station for animals for over one hundred years. From 1870-1920, it was used for human quarantine. There is a monument to those who lost their lives on the island during this period. Finally, in both World War 1 and 2, the island was a camp for enemy alien internees who were



The stream crossing was a test for all.

(Photo: Gary Bevins | Whakapapaiti Hut | 12-13 September 2009)

considered a security threat. And now to happier times:

We found the four hours between the 10.30 and 2.30 crossings to be just right to walk the island: past the lighthouse which is still operational, the wooden buildings which have been home to so many, to the highpoint where the gun emplacements were built in 1942, and to enjoy some birdlife - the kakariki, bright green with red crown. Along the way are several tables and seating with good views, pleasing lunch spots. Time was left to enjoy a few peeps at the penguins in their nesting boxes a short walk from the wharf. A big thanks to our drivers: Don, Kelvin and Ken.

No. 1 Road Pohangina

23 September

by Judy Callesen

Twenty one of us ventured up the Ruahine forest track at the end of the No 1 road. (Pohangina Valley) Certainly, a good, short, sharp, tramp. How are we to fill in the rest of time? It was easy with the lovely Songbird Gardens down at the bottom. Raewyn had a busy time making us all a devonshire tea. The gardens are well worth a visit with plenty of birdsong.

Sunrise Hut

27 September

by Linda Campbell

The day dawned wet and dull in Pahiatua but there was a glow in the sky toward the mountains so we were off. It turned out to be a lovely warm day and we enjoyed the walk up to Sunrise. There was still quite a bit of snow on the track after the heavy fall on the Thursday and we noticed quite a bit of damage to the vegetation.

The snow had gone from around the hut and we sat outside to enjoy our lunch and the views. The hill behind the hut was calling so we took a quick walk to the top. On our return to the hut we decided to go out onto Armstrong Saddle and to the top of the hill. The views were stunning but the wind was picking up. Tim decided it was a good opportunity to try out his new Bothy Bag. It was very warm with the four of us inside but it certainly kept the wind off.

It was a fantastic day and I thank Tim Swale, Ian Algie and Li-Ping Ding for joining me.

Eastern Hut

3-4 October

by Gary Bevins

A leisurely start, meant we arrived at Kiwi Ranch, ready to start tramping at 10 o'clock. The trip included a stop in Otaki at the bakery and the route over the very narrow Akatarawa Road. There is a track from the Kiwi Ranch Youth Camp, which joins the main track, that heads up Marchant ridge, from the Kaitoke car park. It was a brisk day, as we headed up pass the old Dobson shelter, climbing Marchant Ridge. In the open we donned raincoats, to break the cold strong wind, mixed with the occasional shower.



The camp site.

(Photo: Adam Matich | Eastern Hut Trip | 3-4 October 2009)

Just passed Marchant peak, we headed down a spur, ending up about 50 m downstream of the hut. We noticed the hut was occupied, although the residents were out in the field. We placed an entry in the book and headed off to find a spot to camp. We headed downstream for a little over half an hour and then after a climb, set up camp, next to a small stream. We had just finished erecting the two flies when it started to rain. As Jean had once again, excelled in the main course and dessert department, we hardly noticed the heavy rain and drop in temperature, as we downed our food. With tea finished and the temperature dropping, it was decided to let Jemma sleep under the fly, next to my bedroll. I ducked out under the fly for a pee and on my return found Jemma gone. The traitorous mutt had crawled between Adam and Jean, deciding it would be warmer there. I called her back, but she just turned her head, as to say, you must be joking. In her guilt, she did turn around and crawl towards me during the night.

By morning the rain had stopped. It was warm, very still and quiet. We backed up the wet gear and started our climb up Marchant ridge. We came out south of Marchant peak at point 967 m. On the trip out we had hail and light snow. As we travelled it got progressively colder, so by the time we reached the vehicle, we were all frozen. Out of our wet gear and with the heater on full, we soon warmed up. But the outside temperature continued to fall and at one stage was only 4 degrees. Back over the Akatarawas (with plenty of nervous remarks about how narrow the road was) and home. We were Gary, Adam, Jean and jemma.

Wed & Thu Trampers Trips

Wednesday Tramps

Sept 1-2	Roaring Stag Hut (7)
2	Herepai Hut.
9	Hunters Hut beyond Gordon Kear Forest (Scotts Road) (20)
23	No. 1 Line Pohangina (22)
30	Manawattu Gorge

Thursday Trampers

Sept 3	Kelly Knight track towards Iron Peg
10	Harris Creek Track
17	Tunupo Track
24	Blue Range

The number of trampers in each trip is listed in brackets.

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 made by e-mail where possible (lodge.bookings@mtsc.org.nz). If for some reason you cannot e-mail, then phone between 9.30 am & 9.30 pm on any day. Please do not call outside these hours. Please also note that bookings are not confirmed until all fees are paid. Payment is to be made in advance by personal cheque, bank cheque or cash (in person). Don't send cash through the post. There is no internet banking for lodge fees. Contact Liz & Hugh Wilde on (06) 356 9450.

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

Booking and use of the MTSC Transit Van

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

1. Book preferably by Thurs day, and certainly no later than 6 pm Friday.
2. Cancel bookings by these times so others needing the van have time to amend travel arrangements.
3. A fly should be carried on every tramp, there is always one in the passenger door of the club van and they are available from the Gear Custodian at no charge. There is a Personal Locator Beacon, in the glove box, for people using the van to take with them.



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

Club Equipment

We have two personal locator beacons (PLB), packs, 2 and 3 person tents, fly-sheets, snow mats, sleeping bag cover, gas cookers, size 8 and 9 boots, billies, two bivvy bags and two big tent flies. Ice axes, crampons, and helmets are also available. Food Dehydrator: ideal for drying large and small quantities of fruit, vegetables, and meat for tramping rips. Easy to use, works well, and is available for hire from the Gear Custodian. Hire cost for members, \$1 per day (no charge for PLB). Contact the Gear Custodian: Peter Rawlins on (06) 356 7443.

Articles for the newsletter

Send by the **end** of each month to Wei-Hang Chua at editor@mtsc.org.nz. 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 2009-10 Committee

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