

Masterton Tramping Club (Inc.)

www.mastertontc.org.nz

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41 Perry St, Masterton

Newsletter September 2022

Club Nights

Club nights are held at the Masterton Community Centre, 41 Perry Street on the first Wednesday night of each month except January. Meetings start at 7.30pm and visitors are welcome to attend.

Welcome to this month's newsletter. As you will see from the Trips Done reports below, this month it is all Blue Blue Blue.

A very good turnout at this month's Club meeting held on 7 September. Welcome to new Club member Jenny Bradley. Also, welcome to visitors Andrea and Sue (apologies if I missed anyone else). Nice to see a couple of new faces, we hope you can join us on a few upcoming trips and also next month's Club night.

Guest Speaker

A big thank you to Kevin from Wairarapa Hunting and Fishing NZ. Kevin brought along a couple of packs and explained to us what we should be looking for and how to set up a pack so that it fits correctly. A well fitted pack makes the world of difference between enjoying your tramp, whether it be an overnighter or multi day expedition, or making your trip absolutely miserable with a sore neck, shoulders, back and everywhere else for that matter.

The key takeaway (for me anyway) was that when buying a pack, make sure you get it fitted in the shop and that there is some weight in the pack at the time of fitting to try and replicate what you would carry.

This will enable correct fitting of the pack to you personally (then never lend it out otherwise you run the risk the borrower adjusting the straps etc. to fit them and you will never get it back to what it was when it was fitted in the shop to suit you !!).

Kevin fielded a heap of questions in regards fitting of the pack but also sleeping bags and other gear in general. Maybe we need to get him back at a later date to cover off more tramping related gear.

Graeme Lenihan gave us an update on TARHC, work completed, being done etc. There is a change in name in the process of happening and also an election of a new committee coming up which we will confirm at the next Club meeting. It was agreed we won't have anyone standing on the new committee, Graeme explained we will still have a voice and vote in what goes on etc.

There is some great work being done out on the tracks, with Derrick Field and others having just completed cutting and clearing of tracks between Arete Forks and Cow Creek and in the immediate surrounds.

To date 120kms of track have been cleared by Derrick and his team of volunteers which is a great effort by anyone's standards. If anyone is interested in helping Derrick, please contact Graeme or email MTC and we can provide contact details for you.

Trips Done

As indicated earlier it has been mainly all blue this past month in regards trips done;

14 August

Blue Range Hut – led by Tony

With the early morning temperature said to be minus 4, Nigel and myself set off from Kiriwhakapapa carpark at just after 9am on a clear, very crisp sunny morning heading up to the Clubs hut for a recce ahead of September's planned spring clean. Gloves were a must, my fingers were freezing. The first section of the track is always good to stretch your legs and get your leg muscles warmed up before hitting the hill.

We made steady progress up the hill stopping to take a layer off as we warmed up, stopping again to talk to a group of 3 then stopping again to chat with another couple who had all stayed the night at the hut. Another stop at the lookout shortly before the hut to admire the snowcapped ranges before heading down to the hut which looks as good as ever.



First order of the day was lunch and a cuppa sitting at the picnic table enjoying the warm sun and surprisingly no wind. We were shortly joined by two ladies over from Wellington visiting the hut for their first time. They were suitably impressed with the hut and especially the quirkiness of the signs, even rating the “outdoor facility” as one of the best for cleanliness and being odour free.

After replacing the rat bait, we did a check of the interior and exterior of the hut taking note of minor works required for the September spring clean coming up which will include giving the mattresses a wipe over, same with the benches, windows etc.

Outside some weed pulling, flax trimming otherwise hut is looking pretty ship shape.

After leaving the two ladies to their long lunch, we headed back down the hill to the carpark arriving back around 3.30pm. While there was no snow around, there was still a very small bit of ice evident early afternoon as seen in one of the ferns.



Another good trip up and back to the hut, a great asset for the Club to be associated with.

21 August

Manawatu Gorge – postponed due to weather however this trip was replaced by a trip to Rewanui instead, led by Nigel.

As an alternative to the postponed Gorge trip three of us had a shorter walk around Rewanui Forest Park. First, we did a combined Totara and Matai loop, the tracks were in good condition, not too much mud, although we did do some minor track clearing of debris and hanging branches. We heard a few Tuis and the occasional Warbler during our walk.

Rather than climb to what looked to be a windy summit we drove around to the second car park and had a walk around the Exotic Loop, stopping for lunch at the memorial seat. We were not the only visitors, with three other vehicles in the car park and one arriving as we left.

A pleasant short walk on what turned out to be a fine day in the east, it was still wet in the Tararuas as we returned to Masterton.

Those on the trip: Nigel, Brendan and Lorelei.



27 August

Blue Range - Te Mara - Mistletoe Ridge -Mikimiki saddle report by Conrad
27/08/2022

Meeting at 08.30 at the Kiriwhakapapa road end, the weather was clearer than on the drive in, light drizzle, with a forecast predicting improved weather, maybe some sunshine even?

5 Members of MTC, Tony, John, Nigel, Gail and Conrad and 2 guests from Temuka TC, Rhys and Shona, set off on the first part of the tramp, up to the MTC Blue Range hut. Easy paced and with a lot of chat, getting to know each other, the steady climb seemed less steep than usual, stopping infrequently to take a quick breather, and to take a layer on or replace it as necessary.

The junction at the top of the climb was reached in the predicted 2 hours, and then a turn to the right (North), led us to the hut in about 15 minutes.

Rhys was previously a member of MTC, and he and Shona had not been to Blue range for about 20 years, so a welcome return, although Rhys was convinced that the hut MUST have been moved further away, than it used to be!

Arriving at the hut, 2 members of the Whanganui TC, were already into a hot cuppa, having walked up a little ahead of us. This was to be our late morning tea or early lunch depending on the whims of the individual, as decided by the trip leader, since the chances of a dry spot later were unlikely.

Discussion ensued with regard to the relative merits of flask Vs stove, John using a combination method! Further to this, cups were also debated, Nigel and John weighing up "does size matter?"



A quick tidy up then we headed back up the track to the junction, as we started up to Te Mara peak. Height difference of this leg was approx. 200 m, so a steady climb again. Past the junction we started along the trail toward Cow Creek, until we reached the small aluminium arrow showing the start of the ridge to the top of the peak. A slight footpad was mostly visible, though the track remains slightly overgrown. After a couple of small bumps, a slightly steeper climb took us to the top of the ridge and within the hour of leaving the hut we reached the very unassuming peak of Te Mara, 1104m. John told us a few stories of the Bannister boys being here in the 1880's, though he denies having been with them. The peak unfortunately doesn't now have the views that the Bannisters would have had.

Unfortunately the weather hadn't improved, and slight drizzle, along with a cool wind persisted.

From the peak a couple of minutes further along the ridge track led to the start of a footpad that begins to drop off down the Mistletoe spur, taking us back down to the Kiriwhakapapa track.

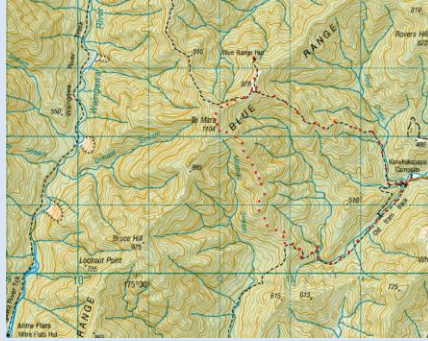
Amazingly, and to Conrad's surprise, this was to be a red line track for John, which is why he was keen to join in the trip.

The footpad was easily followed, ably led by Shona and Rhys, despite its little use. Its heading was mainly South, but actually swinging anywhere from SSW to SE.

Occasional pockets of dense new growth were generally easy to travel through, and after about an hour and a quarter it was decided by those who "only had morning tea" at the hut, that we would take another break. Cool and damp, meant not too long was taken.

Toward the end of the track, and with about 400 m to travel to meet the main track, we slightly veered to the North of the spur, and lost the footpad, requiring a bit of navigating back on to the originally planned route. A little over 2 hours from the high point, we stepped on to the Mikimiki saddle. 45 Minutes later we were back at the cars, slightly damp, but pleased to have had a fine day in the hills, with some fine conversation, and fine company.

Total time out 7 hours.



Party Members;

Conrad (leader and Scribe), Gail (and Boots the Pooch), Shona, Rhys, Nigel, John, Tony (EI Presidente).

4 September

Sunday 4th September - Blue Range Hut - Spring Clean trip Report by Tony

Nigel and I set off just after 8.30 am from Kiriwhakapapa carpark for what would be our 3rd trip in 4 weeks to Blue Range Hut. The purpose for this trip was the annual spring clean of the hut as required under our Huts Agreement with DOC. We arrived at the hut at 10.45 and first order of the day was a hot cuppa / late smoko.

We were joined shortly after by Sandra. It was certainly cold and windy coming across the top and it was good to be in the hut out of the wind.

We commenced work by wiping down the mattresses during which time we were joined by three members of the Palmerston North Tramping Club who had driven over for a day trip. We continued with the cleaning of all surfaces of the hut as well as the toilet, checked the water tank, cleaned out and checked the fireplace, trimmed the flax bushes close to the hut, checked the rat bait etc. Within a couple of hours we were done and it was time for lunch before heading down at 1pm.

The wind had picked up and was really blowing a gale as we walked up and over from the hut. Hat, gloves and jackets were a definite requirement due to the cold and extremely windy conditions. At times we were being rocked off our feet by the wind so it was good to be going downhill where it was more sheltered from the wind.

We arrived back at the carpark at 3pm and headed home. Apart from the PNTC visitors, we did not come across anyone else on the track during our travels.

Another good trip and a great hut to visit but I think Nigel and I will leave it a couple of months before heading back to the hut anytime soon.



“Cleaners” - Nigel, Sandra & Tony.

Upcoming Trips

Trip Grades

Grades allocated to each trip, Easy / Easy + / Average etc, depend on several factors including weather, terrain, your own fitness and experience. An averagely fit person could expect to do the below trips as per the following times;

Easy	3-6 hours, little climbing, suitable for beginners to help them assess their fitness
Easy +	3-6 hours, probably some short hills
Average	5-8 hours, some experience required, fewer rest stops, almost certainly some hill work
Fit	6+ hours, Good fitness required, may go off track. Stops for lunch and smoko. Suitable for experienced trampers.

Trips coming up include (but as always, subject to change at short notice for a variety of reasons so check the below website for up to date information);

Atiwhakatu Hut day trip, check out a pest control trap line at Holdsworth, the Pukerua Bay – Paekakariki Escarpment Track and also a day trip to Sayers Hut.

For full up to date details of trips scheduled refer the Clubs website link

<https://www.mastertontc.org.nz/#upcoming-trips>

If you have an idea for a trip, or would like to lead a trip, please let your committee members know so they can consider and include in an upcoming trip schedule.

Search and Rescue Report

Good news – Nigel had nothing to report.

You may have seen photos of a recent LandSAR training exercise undertaken at Mt Holdsworth about a month or so ago. Plenty of snow and ice requiring crampons and ice axes but the team all looked as though they had smiles on their faces or was that just their camera pose?

MTC Photo Competition

A number of photos were presented in their various categories and were voted on by those present at Club night. There were some great photos shown with a good number in some categories, only a few photos in some other categories and none in one category which was a shame. It would be good to see even more photos submitted next year so get clicking. Winning photos will be submitted to the FMC photo competition and we will now sit back and await the outcome, and hopefully success of these, in due course.

Personal Locator Beacon

The Clubs PLB is currently held by Tony. If you require the PLB for a Club trip, do not hesitate to contact Tony to arrange pickup. Contact details 0224541107 or

tony.spittal@xtra.co.nz

When using the Club PLB, you must email the trip details to the three RCC contacts as per the trip leader's sheet including where you are going, dates in and out including # of nights if applicable, and details of who is going on the trip. The same RCC contacts must also be advised when you have returned from your trip.

Coming up in next month's Club night meeting.

Peter Laurenson will be joining us for a chat and bringing along copies of his Tararua calendar for those of you have pre-ordered and paid.

The next club night is Wednesday 5th October, same place, same time. Again, we look forward to seeing everyone, including visitors, there on the night.



Tony Spittal
President
Masterton Tramping Club

Sandra Burles
Club Captain
Masterton Tramping Club