



Auckland Climber

Welcome to the New Zealand Alpine Club Auckland Section Newsletter.

Join us for alpine or rock climbing trips, and social or armchair climbing. Meetings are usually held at St Luke's Community Centre, 130 Remuera Rd, Newmarket on the first Monday of each month – exceptions will be published. Meetings begin at 7:30pm with announcements and usually a slide show, then tea & coffee and nibbles are provided afterwards. A gold coin donation for food and refreshments is appreciated.

*This month's meeting: **Monday February 7th***

So how was your Christmas holiday?

Bring along your slides and regale us with tall tales of high mountains conquered and far-off wilderness explored, and you might even be rewarded with a bottle of wine or a voucher for outdoor gear.

*Next month's meeting: **Monday March 7th***

Gear for sale

- **Boots** - Ladies' - 2 pairs (both worn less than 1 week) - Asolo FSN 70, GoreTex lined, UK size 6 - \$150. Merrell Sawtooth, UK size 7, Eur 40.5, crampon compatible - \$150. *John Salisbury salisj@xtra.co.nz*
- Asolo Plastic boots, size UK 7, never used as wrong size. \$250. *Ph Sarah 021 429 718*

Committee Contact Information

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Notices

Simon Yates of 'Touching the Void' to Tour NZ – 23 February 2005

Simon Yates, made famous by the best selling book and BAFTA winning docu-drama movie 'Touching the Void', is to undertake a lecture tour in New Zealand in February 2005. The tour is organised and hosted by the New Zealand Alpine Club and will feature public lectures in Auckland, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, Dunedin and Wanaka/Queenstown.

In a career spanning twenty years Simon Yates' climbing and travelling has taken him from Alaska to Australia, from the Canadian Arctic to the tip of South America. During this time he has been fortunate enough to climb with some of Britain's leading contemporary mountaineers.

He first came to prominence as a mountaineer in 1985 after the first ascent of the West Face of Siula Grande in the Peruvian Andes and the ensuing epic descent. While providing a lengthy insight into the drama from his own unique perspective, Simon will also take a humorous and philosophical look at some of the more notable experiences over his years as a mountaineer, accompanied by a stunning selection of slides collected during his travels. In a climbing career spanning two decades, he has undertaken ascents in some of the world's most remote regions. Venue is the Centennial theatre at Auckland Grammar School on Wed, Feb 23. Tickets are \$15. Please bring money to the next meeting or send cheques to:

**Simon Yates Tour
NZAC Auckland Section
PO Box 3036
Auckland**

NZAC Auckland Section Rock Climbing Courses

The Akld Section is running rock climbing instruction weekends for you to gain confidence and experience in climbing outdoors.

Weekend 1: 16/17 April Heading out into the outdoors with confidence

This course is ideal for climbers who:

- have climbed indoors before and want to know how to extend their skills to the outdoor environment safely
- want to learn how to set up a top rope in the outdoors
- are seeking to learn how to lead climbs, both on bolts and natural pro
- want to improve their rock climbing technique to the next level

Course Syllabus:

Top roping, rigging up & safety. Leading single pitch. Anchors and Pro. Superior technique – getting further before your arms pump out and your eyes bulge. Be lazy, and climb harder!

Weekend 2: 30 April / 1st May Better technique

This course is ideal for climbers who have had experience climbing outdoors and want to get more efficient at climbing. This weekend will be a climbing workshop, focused on getting you to climb 2 grades harder.

Course Syllabus:

Footwork. Reading holds. Resting. Body movement – the art of dance
Bouldering

Course Costs per weekend per person:
\$150 for instruction and accommodation.

What we provide:

- At least 4:1 Student:Instructor ratio
- Tuition from experienced climbers and NZOIA I qualified instructors
- Accommodation
- Group Rock Climbing Gear

Interested? Contact either:

Roger Mayhill (Chief Instructor), Tel: 027 455 5959 roger.mayhill@xtra.co.nz,
Sarah Owen (Course co-ordinator), Tel: 021 429 718,
sarah.owen@acnielsen.co.nz

Rental Avalanche Transceivers

The Auckland Section has decided to invest in a set of ten avalanche transceivers to be made available to section members to rent for trips into the mountains. Deposit from all people renting transceivers will be in the form of a blank cheque.

Each person borrowing the transceiver has to provide fresh batteries for the transceivers. Cost will be \$3 per day for members, \$5 per day for non members Contact Suresh for bookings.

NZAC National news

• Bevan Col Aircraft Landings

The Aspiring National Park management plan review is coming up and the position of the Club on the matter of helicopter landings at Bevan Col was discussed recently. A national Club position was seen as important on the issue as we have a major interest with regards our Colin Todd Hut, but also regarding any changes in usage in the next ten years. A motion to the effect of the following was passed as a draft for further comment from members and sections:

“That the Club support a tightening of restrictions for aircraft landing at Bevan Col, including the possibility of banning flights during the busy summer months.”

Your opinion will be asked at the next meeting.

NZAC Journals

The club has had a set of NZAC journals donated by Dawn Everson to be sold and the proceeds to be donated to the Home of Mountaineering fund. The collection consists of every journal since 1935 to 2003 except for 1999. They are being sold by tender and you can tender for individual journals or the whole set. You should send your tender to Keith Moffat e-mail moffat.k@xtra.co.nz or post to 172 Gladstone Rd Dunedin. Tenders close on 28th February 2005. Delivery to be paid by the purchaser.

The Climber magazine 50th issue - Creative Writing Competition

The summer issue of *the climber* will be our 50th, and to celebrate we are announcing a creative writing contest open to all readers of *the climber*. There is a total \$1250 prize pool on offer and the best entries we receive will be published in the magazine. Stories can be either fiction or non-fiction, but an additional award will be given to the best pure fiction piece we receive. See the Noticeboard on the website for more info www.alpineclub.org.nz

Mountain Clean-up Day Saturday 19th March 2005

A great deal of ski season rubbish surfaces from under the snow each summer and I hope that you and your club members can assist us in collecting this and keeping our World Heritage National Park as clean as possible.

The plan for the day is to assemble outside Lorenzos Bar & Café at 9am, from there teams will be assembled, issued with rubbish bags & gloves and dispatched to cover various areas of the ski field. Scottie Barrie will be taking care of logistics for the day. A sausage sizzle and refreshments will be provided afterwards. Please contact Mark Roberts (Chairperson) for more info.

DOC news Fiordland Wilderness Research: How you can help

The Department of Conservation's Southland Conservancy is undertaking visitor research this summer focusing on users of remote and wilderness areas in Fiordland. Through the research they hope to gain some baseline information

from users of these areas about where they're going, the quality of their experience, and what aspects of their visit they particularly enjoyed or were disappointed or annoyed with. This will help to focus future management and research on areas and issues of concern in Fiordland. If you are heading into a remote part of Fiordland and would like to help with research, please contact us by email at fnpsurvey@doc.govt.nz to obtain a trip diary and more information.

Mekong From The Mountains To The Sea : 11 February 7.30pm

Craig and Ros Stewart were part of a team of 5 completing a world first expedition from the source of the Mekong River in the Himalayas to the mouth on the Pacific Ocean in 2004. Their proposal had won the \$100,000 SPARC scholarship set up to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Ed Hillary conquering Everest.

Craig and Ros will be giving an audiovisual presentation and talk about their fascinating adventure - battling immense physical challenges, overcoming logistical obstacles, encountering the most remote places and meeting awesome people of different communities and cultures. Definitely a story like no other.

Location: Remuera Baptist Church, 641 Remuera Rd.

Time: 7:30pm Fri Feb 11.

Trips

If you have any questions about any of the trips regarding itinerary or skill levels required then contact the organiser for that trip or myself. To sign up, either contact the trip organiser or sign up at Auckland Section NZAC meetings. Trips marked with "organiser TBA" means that we don't have a trip organiser for that weekend. If you'd like to contribute by organising a trip yourself or have any more ideas of how we can make our trips programme better/more interesting then please contact me on 09 630-6265 or email on kwj_lee@yahoo.co.nz
Kathleen Lee (Auckland Section NZAC Trips Officer)

February 5/6 - Ruapehu Hut Working Bee

This is a great chance to earn some free nights at the hut in exchange for some hard earned sweat and labour. A great way to contribute to the club by helping with hut maintenance.

Suresh Nanu Ph:021 815 210 ruapehuhut@paradise.net.nz

February 12/13 - Wharepapa Rock Climbing

Nice easy rock climbing on bolts, in superb Waikato location. Accommodation will be at Bryces.

Organiser tba

February 26/27 - Kaweka Challenge

The Kaweka Challenge is a weekend mountain marathon event, which involves a cross country run of 42km with an ascent of 3,800m and a nights camping gear on your back. If you're interested in participating or looking for a team mate to run this race then contact me.

Mark Roberts Ph: 09 630 6265 Mark_roberts26@hotmail.com

March 6 - Caving at the Nikau Caves

Nikau Cave is less than 90 minutes drive southwest of Auckland, New Zealand, and has thousands of glowworms and amazing formations, but no crowds. This is a commercially run trip costing \$25 (or less depending on numbers) and a great afternoon out for the family. No effort involved in co-ordinating this one, except for organizing transport there and back to AKL. See <http://www.nikaucave.co.nz/index.htm>

Organiser tba

March 12 - Colville Connection

This is a solo 70km mountain biking race with 500m vertical ascent. For first timers there is also a 24km option. Get in touch with me if you want some people to participate with. See: www.colvilleconnection.co.nz

John Boon Ph: 021 616 416 jboon@unitec.co.nz

March 19/20 - Rock Climbing Instructors training weekend

Sarah Owen Ph: 021 429 718 sarah.owen@acnielsen.co.nz

Trip Reports from Members

Snow on the Mountain, Full Moon, Summer Solstice ...

Climbing is a game – we make up the rules to define what we consider to be a suitable level of challenge. During the 2003 Snowcraft course the idea was hatched to attempt a north to south traverse of Tongariro National Park via the summits of Tongariro, Ngauruhoe and Ruapehu. The only rules we set for ourselves were to ascend all 3 summits in a single 24hr push and to go from north to south i.e. Ketetahi to Turoa because this was harder by an additional 900m of ascent compared to going south to north. A quick study of the map revealed that the horizontal distance to be covered was about 50km and the total altitude gain was about 3500m. Since I had never done more than 40km or more than 2000m elevation gain in a day the challenge certainly seemed suitable. To put these numbers into perspective it is a similar elevation gain from Fox Glacier town to Mt Cook summit, or from the Khumbu base camp to Everest summit, although there is a lot more oxygen on Ruapehu.

In Nov 03, Marcus Gibson, Liz Tier and I had our first attempt at “The Traverse”. We ended up bailing out at the Top of the Bruce because Liz and I were trashed although Marcus was going great and I think he could have made it that day. And so I waited patiently through 2004 for the next coincidence of good weather on a weekend near to a full moon. As the days ticked by Liz returned to England, Marcus had limited free time due to work commitments, and no other volunteers stepped up. However, Marcus made a solo attempt one weekend in Sept 04 when I was unavailable, but he bailed out to Whakapapa after summiting Te Heuheu.

On 26 Dec 04, I consulted the weather oracles (Met Service, MetVUW, BoM) and it looked like the weather window would open briefly. On 27 Dec I woke up to see

dark grey clouds to the south and west of my Ruapehu base camp, but since the forecast said it would clear during the morning, I chowed into a big breakfast – 10 Weetbix plus a bowl of muesli. Eating this much for breakfast requires years of training! After a bit of a wait, the cloud started breaking up and evaporating. Time zero (10am): I lace on my boots, shoulder my pack and leave Ketetahi (750 m elevation).

T+2 hr: I get quizzical looks from the hordes doing the Tongariro Crossing at Ketetahi Hut, possibly due to my choice of attire – short-sleeved shirt, shorts and plastic boots. Shortly after that I leave the track and head up onto the north crater – an unusual flat plateau, 1 km in diameter.

T+4 hr: Tongariro summit (1970 m). Taranaki is clearly visible to the SW. Then it's down to the south crater and up Ngauruhoe. There is no wind and sweat is stinging my eyes. A wisp of steam is rising dead vertical from the hot-spot on the NE crater rim of Ngauruhoe.

T+7.5 hr: After peering into the impressive crater, I arrive at the summit of Ngauruhoe (2290 m). Then descend off the south-side towards Tama Lakes.

T+9.5 hr: Upper Tama Lake. By this stage I am starting to appreciate the short rest I take every 2 hours for a snack break. Prior to this walk, I had realised that I could keep my energy levels feeling good all day if I had regular food and drink breaks. So I set my alarm to go off every 2 hours to remind me – otherwise sometimes I get too absorbed in the mountains and climbing and forget to eat and drink.

T+11.5 hr: After crossing Tama Saddle (1300m) and re-filling my water bottles, I stop for a snack and to watch the full moon rise. I'm starting to feel some pain in my right knee, so I pop an anti-inflammatory – better living through modern chemistry!

T+14 hr (midnight): Snack break at the base of the Grand Pinnacle (east side). It is starting to get cold and each time I stop, I throw on my down jacket. The Pinnacles and Te Heuheu are bathed in bright moonlight. I only use my headlamp for about one hour the whole night, and that was to cross a boulder-filled gully and to find my way up through a break in some bluffs.

T+18 hr: Te Heuheu summit (2730m). The wind picks up as I climb towards Te Heuheu, so I stay on the lee side of the Pinnacles Ridge. A bit of cloud swirls briefly around the summit, but most of the time I can look up and see the Southern Cross blazing brightly. Great cramponing conditions on frozen snow, and I can really appreciate the warmth of my plastic boots now.

T+20 hr: It takes 2hrs to get from Te Heuheu to the Dome – slow going. I can barely keep my eyes open and I'm feeling pretty tired. The eastern sky is just starting to get light. I have a feed, put on all my clothes and curl up for a cold, 3hr kip in the ice-encrusted Dome shelter. The sun has risen when I wake up and I go outside to warm up.

T+24 hr: After warming up and having another snack, I feel alert and energised, and I leave the Dome. I am obviously not going to finish the trip in 24 hr, but it is another day of immaculate weather so it is impossible to be disappointed. The crater rim between Paretaitonga and Tahurangi has a thick layer of frozen snow with a bit of sastrugi and is pretty straightforward.

T+26 hr: Tahurangi summit (2797m) – all the climbing is done! Unfortunately the snow is too hard to bum-slide, so I have to walk downhill.

T+28 hr: Finish at Turoa (1600m). It's warm again and I have stripped back to short-sleeves and shorts. Both my knees are sore from the descent. I'm sure there are fitter people than me who could do it in less than 24hrs, but it was a great 2-day adventure for me.

It takes 3 hitches and a couple of hours to get back to the car at Ketetahi. The drive back to Auckland is sponsored by Red Bull and chocolate.

Calorie tally: You may have noted that food was a bit of an obsession, and when I returned home I rummaged through the food packaging and did a calorie count. Including breakfast, it came to 9,000 Cal or 38,000 kJ for the journey!

Website Watch

www.alpineclub.org.nz - subscription forms, alpine & rock climbing guidebooks, information about huts, regional and national club news, and inspirational articles.

www.doc.govt.nz - track and park information, weather and maps.

www.avalanche.net.nz - check the avalanche risk before heading out there.

www.mountainz.co.nz - share your mountain adventures.

Climber Content

Deadline for each issue is the 20th of the month preceding. Send any content for the climber to the Editor, Deryn Williams, PO Box 4043, Auckland or deryn@hyper.net.nz. Send any photos for inclusion as a jpeg or tiff image, 300dpi at print size (up to 200mmx150mm/8"x6").

Change of Address

For any change of address, email your new details to NZAC headquarters. subscriptions@alpineclub.org.nz

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