



# 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 March 7<sup>th</sup>*

## **A Russian climber's view**

Find out how the Russians learn to climb! Alexander Scherbakov will share his tales of climbing and show slides of alpine and big wall rock climbs in the Pamirs and Caucasus mountains, on the southern borders of Russia.



*Next month's meeting: Monday April 4<sup>th</sup>*

## **Annual General Meeting**

We need **YOU!!** No, don't stop reading! We don't bite, and we do offer culinary & thirst-quenching incentives to club members who turn up for the AGM, even if just to vote their absent friend onto the committee. We also want your opinions on a few matters, for eg. Where should we have the Xmas dinner this year? Is anyone out there keen to represent the NZAC Akld section in the FMC (Federated Mountain Clubs) meetings? Does anyone know how to put a kitchen bench into the Ruapehu hut? Any cabinet-makers out there??

Energetic, hard-working, sharing & caring committee members wanted ☺.

We need a bean-counting **TREASURER** to look after our millions, a keen DIY handyman for **RUAPEHU HUT MAINTENANCE**, an imaginative and enthusiastic **TRIPS OFFICER**, a finger-in-the-pie person to be the annual **PHOTOCOMP ORGANISER**, and an **EDITOR** for this wonderful piece of journalism.

## **Committee Contact Information**

<b>Mark Roberts</b> Chairperson	630 6265	mark_roberts26@hotmail.com
<b>Dave Crofts</b> Vice Chairperson	815 1564	dave.crofts@aut.ac.nz
<b>Maurits van den Berg</b> Secretary	812 8638	maurits@mvdvdb.tax.co.nz
<b>Tristan Harrison</b> Treasurer	620 1404	tristanh@xtra.co.nz
<b>Kathleen Lee</b> Trips Organiser	630 6265	kwt_lee@yahoo.co.nz
<b>Tim Swain</b> Meetings	482 2275	tswain@ihug.co.nz
<b>Deryn Williams</b> Climber Editor	527 7689	deryn@hyper.net.nz
<b>John Salisbury</b> Membership	834 6699	Salisj@xtra.co.nz
<b>Suresh Nanu</b> Ruapehu Hut Bookings	021 815210	ruapehuhut@paradise.net.nz
Ruapehu Hut Maintenance		
<b>Sarah Owen</b> Snowcraft Organiser	021 429718	Sarah.Owen@acnielsen.co.nz

## **Gear for sale**

- **Boots** - Ladies' - 2 pairs (both worn less than 1 week) - Asolo FSN 70, Gore-Tex lined, UK size 6 - \$150. Merrell Sawtooth, UK size 7, Eur 40.5, crampon compatible - \$150.  
*John Salisbury salisj@xtra.co.nz*
  - Black Diamond **Camalots** - \$90 - sizes 0.5 - 4 inclusive
  - Beal 8.6mm x 50m **rope** -new cond - RRP \$279 only \$140
  - 5.10 UFO **climbing shoes** - unused US9.5 - \$150
  - Arc'teryx Gore-Tex Alpha SV **jacket**, Lge -\$RRP \$899 only \$550
  - Marmot Precip **jacket** and **pants** \$150 and \$75
  - Ortovox X1 **avalanche transceiver** \$500
  - Black Diamond double **portaledge** and Metolius **haul bag** - prices negotiable
- All of these are in excellent condition, Call Nick Monteith 09-6390963 or 0211404845
- 1 Small Women's Fairydown GoreTex Tramping raincoat. \$250.
  - Headlamp - Petzl Zoom. \$20
  - A selection of local and international Climbing Guide Books
- Call Vic on 021 184 1644 or vicfitz@paradise.net.nz

# **Notices**

## **Banff Film Festival**

This year the Banff Film Festival will be held in Auckland on June 19<sup>th</sup>. More details on film selection and venue soon.

## **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

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

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

Bouldering

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

Interested? Contact either:

Roger Mayhill (Chief Instructor), Tel: 027 455 5959 [roger.mayhill@xtra.co.nz](mailto:roger.mayhill@xtra.co.nz)

Sarah Owen (Co-ordinator), Tel: 021 429 718, [sarah.owen@acnielsen.co.nz](mailto:sarah.owen@acnielsen.co.nz)

## **Rental Avalanche Transceivers**

Cost will be \$3 per day for members, \$5 per day for non members. Contact Suresh for bookings.

## **Mountain Clean-up Day Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> 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 Lorenzo's Bar & Café at 9am. Scottie Barrie will be taking care of logistics for the day. A sausage sizzle and refreshments will be provided afterwards. Please contact Dave Crofts (Vice Chairperson) for more info.

## **West Coast Ice Climbing Festival May 7-8 2005**

The glaciers have been advancing for the last year and this produces a huge playground of blue-ice crevasses and sculptured seracs to climb. Venue is either the Franz Joseph or Fox Glacier terminals, to be decided closer to the event.

If you have always wanted to try ice climbing but never had the opportunity, there are going to be heaps of top rope climbs set and we've also got lead walls and sport routes. To add to the event we are looking at getting some of the latest gear to try out and hold a mountain film festival on the Saturday evening. You'll need some crampons, stiff-soled boots, harness and a helmet. If you've got ice climbing gear, then bring it too. Volunteers, suggestions and your participation are needed for the event to go ahead. Details will be posted on the [www.mountainz.co.nz](http://www.mountainz.co.nz) forum pages or contact me directly, [glenn@mountainz.co.nz](mailto:glenn@mountainz.co.nz).

## **Alpine Instructor Training**

This course is designed for people who are looking towards NZOIA Alpine 1. Come and learn some really useful instruction techniques, the latest in what's acceptable and what's not. Join one of NZ's most current Alpine Instructor/Assessors on this very informative course. Based at Mt Ruapehu, 02-03 July 2005, \$325.00 each. Contact: Ian Ruthven, NZOIA Alpine 2 Assessor. Ph 07 3787902, info@rapids.co.nz, www.rapids.co.nz.

## **Crevasse Rescue Course**

This course is designed for people who are heading down to the South Island's glaciated terrain. Learn different rescue techniques including hoists lowers and self rescue. Based at Mt Ruapehu, 02-04 September 2005, \$375.00each (Limited to 6 people). Contact: Ian Ruthven, NZOIA Alpine 2 Assessor. Ph 07 3787902, info@rapids.co.nz, www.rapids.co.nz.

## **NZAC National news**

### ***Accommodation Update***

#### Aspiring Agreement Meeting

The huts of the Matukituki are managed under a joint agreement with DoC, with meetings held every six months to review and plan work. Some issues discussed included future hut fee increases, and long-term strategic spending priorities.

#### Unwin Lodge

The first priority for the lodge is to replace the roof of the main building, then recladding of the warden's quarters. Later renovation is planned for the bathrooms and bunkrooms

#### Aoraki Mt Cook

The three alpine huts in this area are managed under an agreement with DoC. Godley hut is in good condition but De la Beche Hut is to have its now-full long-drop toilet removed completely, and a trial system of encouraging poo pot use to handle the small number of users the hut receives. The cost of a new toilet at the site was estimated as \$40,000 and this was not considered worthwhile at this stage. Murchison Hut is to be reclad next summer in Coloursteel for a cost of between \$12k and \$15k.

#### Beetham/East Tasman Hut

A geologist and avalanche expert have reviewed sites for a new hut and a potential site was found on the southern ridge slightly above the valley floor. A full report will be given to the Club Committee in May as to the next possible steps.

### ***Membership Cards***

Members should ensure they have their current membership card with them when buying books and paying for hut fees. DoC Aoraki Mt Cook in particular is really sticking to the rules, so 'no card, no discount'.

### ***Poo Pots***

Also at the DoC Visitor Centre at Aoraki are the new Poo Pots. The Club is fully supporting this year's trial of the carry in, carry out scheme. The concept has a large following in Alaska and other areas of North America and reduces the human impact on heavily used alpine regions. Keen climbers are issued with a free white plastic 'poo pot' and several biodegradable cornstarch bags.

# ***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 me. 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 [kwf\\_lee@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:kwf_lee@yahoo.co.nz)

Kathleen Lee (Auckland Section NZAC Trips Officer)

## **March 12/13 - 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](mailto:ruapehuhut@paradise.net.nz)*

## **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](http://www.colvilleconnection.co.nz)

*John Boon Ph: 021 616 416 [jboon@unitec.co.nz](mailto:jboon@unitec.co.nz)*

## **March 19/20 – Rock Climbing Instructors training weekend**

*Sarah Owen Ph: 021 429 718 [sarah.owen@acnielsen.co.nz](mailto:sarah.owen@acnielsen.co.nz)*

## **Easter March 24 – April 10 - Arapiles – Australia**

This is possibly the best rock climbing crag in the Southern Hemisphere. Lots of rock climbing on pro for all abilities, with a few kangaroos hopping by to add to the atmosphere. Accommodation will be camping.

*Peter Mobberley [peterm@bigevents.co.nz](mailto:peterm@bigevents.co.nz) 833-8032 (Hm), 021 662-453 (Mob)*

## **April 16/17 – Rock Climbing Instruction weekend I**

*Sarah Owen Tel: 021 429 718 [sarah.owen@acnielsen.co.nz](mailto:sarah.owen@acnielsen.co.nz)*

## **April 16 – Hunua Hard Man and Woman**

A mountain bike ride around and through the Hunua Ranges in Southern Auckland, 80km Individual or 2 person relay and 60 km Individual

*[www.hunuahardman.co.nz](http://www.hunuahardman.co.nz)*

## **May 7/8 – Rock Climbing instruction weekend II**

*Sarah Owen Tel: 021 429 718 [sarah.owen@acnielsen.co.nz](mailto:sarah.owen@acnielsen.co.nz)*

**June 4/5/6 - Queen's birthday weekend – Intermediate snowcraft refresher course – Ruapehu** – Accommodation will be at the Alpine Club Hut. Now's the time to brush up on your snowcraft skills before winter sets in. *Organiser TBA*

## **June 11 Lactic Turkey – Piha Rogaine**

See [www.lacticturkey.co.nz](http://www.lacticturkey.co.nz) for further details. If you want some team mates to compete with then get in touch.

*Kathleen Lee 09 630 6265 [Kwt\\_lee@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:Kwt_lee@yahoo.co.nz)*

**June 18/19 Mid winter Christmas dinner in Ruapehu hut** – mmm – Mulled Wine, Christmas pudding, turkey with all the trimmings and of course Christmas Cracker jokes. Also includes chance to explore various peaks on Ruapehu if the weather is good. *Organiser TBA*

## **July 2 Lactic Turkey – Cascades Rogaine**

See [www.lacticturkey.co.nz](http://www.lacticturkey.co.nz) for further details. If you want some team mates to compete with then get in touch.

*Kathleen Lee 09 630 6265 [Kwt\\_lee@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:Kwt_lee@yahoo.co.nz)*

# ***Trip Reports from Members***

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

Apologies to Michael Thomas for forgetting to put his name to last month's Ruapehu Traverse article – but of course I knew you'd guess it could only be a mad Australian who would even attempt such a crazy thing...!

## **Burns night, Mt Egmont, Akld Anniversary Wkd Jan 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> 2005**

Author: Tim Swain

Anniversary weekend began with a staggered start of cars leaving Auckland bound for Taranaki. On arrival the first task was to puff up the Puffer to Tahurangi Lodge. The night was clear enough to see our destination which got closer and closer, "this track is a doddle, we'll be there in well under DOC time". Thirty metres later the puff in the Puffer revealed itself as we learned why they had concreted this section. For the last half hour we questioned all those 'just in case' items packed the night before and whether we would really drink as much wine as we were carrying. Also worrying was the hut light that kept disappearing and reappearing, was this just the terrain or was someone deliberately messing with us? On arrival there was a quick land grab for the best bunks.

Saturday we awoke to tales of last night's walk up and a glorious day outside. The mountain with a reputation for bad weather was screaming "climb me". This meant different things to different people. For the first set this meant 'summit or bust', for the second set this meant 'the more vertical the better'.

The summiteers left and started the climb, only 1500 vertical metres up a 40° slope; again DOC time looked a tad conservative. The first half hour was along convenient wooden steps and a nice firm path. At 8.30am we passed a group descending from the top, "What is the climb like?" "Great, scree from here and then a scramble up a rock ridge." The scree doesn't look too long so off we plod, 10 minutes later we are experts on volcanic scree. The stones are pumice which means that they will float on water but nothing will float on top of them, therefore even the lightest members of the party are sinking deep into it. The plod is now a

slog, and what didn't look too long is now a country mile. The group begins to string out as we get into our 50 steps REST, 50 steps REST routine, all except Shirley, who defies the laws of gravity and pumice and skips off in a cloud of dust. "She'll hit the wall pretty soon!" someone quips.

We eventually hit the rock ridge where we are faced with a dilemma, scramble up on the rocks or continue on the scree on its side. This is certainly no easy walk and we wonder how the trainer-clad day trippers we had passed will manage. The ridge goes on and on and begins to get steeper; we now have snow on either side as we begin to employ our hands more and we reference the altimeter more often. We are making faster upwards progress, only 350m vertical to go. Finally we reach the crater, on the other side is a dark patch in the snow, according to a local guide up here with his children, this is where the plane crashed recently, a sobering thought.

So we are now faced with a short scramble up to the summit where we find a rather cold-looking Shirley. "Tim and Sonoe, you are team number two!" The summit is actually a large flat plateau with room for hundreds, which is lucky as there were hundreds snaking their way up. We find a spot in the sun and out of the wind where the party regroups, as one by one we all arrive.

The descent is no stroll either, with a lot of sizeable rocks being dislodged and sent downwards, so the scree brings a welcome, if dusty, respite. We are all up and back to the hut almost exactly on DOC time, all rather weary.

The other set of climbers had been to Humphries & Warwick's Castles and the Organ Pipes to take on the excellent Taranaki rock. For those who haven't been, there is a lifetime of top quality basalt rock and only a handful of local climbers, something to do with the walk up that puts off most aspiring climbers. A good day was had by all with everyone returning unscathed.

This left the other reason we came, a night dedicated to the life and works of one Robert "Robbie" Burns. The previous night we had cursed the weight of three haggis and a garden full of turnips "neeps" and potatoes, tonight we toasted them with a glass of single malt, poems and speeches. Matt Robinson led with a toast to the lasses where we were informed of the frailties of the fairer sex and their propensity to shop. This was countered by Suzanne Stickney with a toast to the lads whose brains appear to be in their trousers. It would appear that men and women are all as hopeless as each other and can't live without the help of the other sex!

The evening was topped off with a ceilidh called by Kathleen and Suzanne, just what those with tired legs needed. With the lasses outnumbered by the lads it was a long evening for the girls so a big respect goes out from those of us who were able to take a rest. Congratulations to the two honorary lasses Paul-ine and Ian-etta for helping to redress the imbalance in such stunning style.

Sunday the roles were reversed with the rock climbers heading summit-wards and the summiteers heading to the rock. The Saturday summit veterans were intrigued by the goals of 'up in the morning and then a spot of rock in the afternoon'. Suffice to say that none of the Sunday summiteers made it out to the rock in the afternoon.



Monday we all drifted off back to Auckland for a short week at work. A HUGE thank you must go to Kathleen for organising such a wonderful weekend, it all went like clockwork which is a credit to her. Book early for next year! Word has got around the locals



and they want in next year and with a full hut this year we could well end up with floor dwellers next year.

### **Website Watch**

[www.alpineclub.org.nz](http://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](http://www.doc.govt.nz) - track and park information, weather and maps.  
[www.mountainz.co.nz](http://www.mountainz.co.nz) - share your mountain adventures.

### **Climber Content**

Deadline for each issue is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding. Send any content for the climber to the Editor, Deryn Williams, PO Box 4043, Auckland or [deryn@hyper.net.nz](mailto: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](mailto:subscriptions@alpineclub.org.nz)

New Zealand Alpine Club  
Auckland Section  
PO Box 3036, Auckland

