



# Auckland Climber

Welcome to November's edition of the NZ Alpine Club's Auckland Section newsletter. The section's had a really active winter – so thanks to everyone who has lead and participated in the trips, and everyone who supports the club in their own ways.

The club runs a variety of alpine, climbing and other trips throughout the year and new members are always welcome.

**This month's meeting: Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November – 6.30pm  
'BBQ & Climb' at Adventure Specialities, 4 Winston Place, Henderson**



The annual climb n' barbie is a great way for members new, old and potential to come along and chat a bit, climb a bit, and remark a bit on the blackened state of the sausages.

Bring the family and come and have a climb. \$10 a head for climbing, the BBQ, and a glass of Pak n' Save's finest vintage Vello Rosso!

**Next Meeting: The Christmas Party on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December**

Deck the halls with boughs of holly and all that because it's that time again! And this year the club will be celebrating royally at Ye Olde Horse and Trap in Mt Eden. Expect a menu fit for Good King Wenceslas including roast sirloin of beef with mustard jus (or ham, chicken or pasta options) followed by sticky date pudding or pavlova.

And, as if that's not enough, mountaineering legend Ed Cotter will be entertaining us with tales of 45 years in international mountaineering.

Ticket details over.



Cost: \$40 for members and \$45 for non-members.

Tickets can be purchased from Sarah Owen at next month's meeting, or send cheques (payable to NZAC) to NZAC, PO Box 3036, Auckland. (Don't forget to let us know if you have any dietary requirements).

For further information please contact Suzanne on 638 5349 or [suzstick@hotmail.com](mailto:suzstick@hotmail.com)

## 2005 Committee Contact Information

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## Auckland Section News

### Change to Ruapehu Alpine Club Hut Bookings System

Please note that bookings for the club's hut should now be made through Margaret Mahon, NZAC, Christchurch on 03 377 7595 or [admin@alpineclub.org.nz](mailto:admin@alpineclub.org.nz)

Suresh Nanu, the club's own hut bookings officer felt it was time to hand over the responsibilities, but has gamely agreed to continue to oversee hut maintenance.

Suresh did email 'Cimber' a full article on his decision to step-down but the editor felt that his rants about hut visitors calling him at midnight for the hut code and on failing to get a response calling the police, were purely the result of Bookings Officer Related Stress and are best left omitted.

The Auckland section wishes Suresh well in his mission to get the hut's kitchen replaced this coming summer. Just hope he remembers the hut code.

## National News

### **NZAC 2006 Climbing Camp Information**

The Rees Valley in the South Island is the location for the NZAC's annual climbing camp from Sat 31 Dec 2005 until Sat 7 Jan 2006. It's a great opportunity for climbers to get together to climb mountains, socialise, explore and enjoy the great outdoors. Non climbing family members are welcome at the camp. Members of overseas alpine clubs are especially welcome to attend. A base camp will be established that will function as an information and safety centre. Some people will choose to use the camp as a base for day walks while others will venture into the surrounding mountains for multi-day adventures.

For more info and registration go to: [www.alpineclub.org.nz](http://www.alpineclub.org.nz)

## Trips

A big thank you to all the organisers who have made these trips possible. If you'd like to contribute by organising a trip, or have any ideas for trips please contact Grant (Trips Officer). [grants22@clear.net.nz](mailto:grants22@clear.net.nz) or 09 638-3346

### **November 17<sup>th</sup> – West Coast Wobble**

A West Coast adventure day walk. Bring dry clothes and lunch and head to 5a Porter Road, Te Atatu South. John Salisbury on 834 6699 [salisj@xtra.co.nz](mailto:salisj@xtra.co.nz)

### **Last 3 weeks of Nov- Arapiles, Australia**

This is the classic Ozzie rock destination, everything from easy mult ipitch to multi gnarly! Visit for yourself and see why everyone comes back so excited about the place... and with such sore arms! Michael is on a European climbing trip and his plans include 3 weeks at the Arapiles. E-mail to catch up and arrange to meet up for all or part of the period.

Contact: Michael Thomas [where\\_is\\_sonshine@yahoo.com.au](mailto:where_is_sonshine@yahoo.com.au)

**19<sup>th</sup> Nov: Beginners Rock Climbing Instruction 1 Day Course Mt Eden Quarry.** For those who have done indoor or a little outdoor climbing and want to improve skills and technique. 9am-5pm.

**20<sup>th</sup> November: - Rock Rescue 1 Day Course Mt Eden Quarry**

For experienced climbers. Rescue techniques for injured climbers. 9am-5pm,

Each course costs \$50. Payable in advance.

*For more info on either course contact course instructor, Roger Mayhill, [roger.mayhill@xtra.co.nz](mailto:roger.mayhill@xtra.co.nz) .*

*For bookings : Sarah Owen [sarah.owen@globalreviews.co.nz](mailto:sarah.owen@globalreviews.co.nz).*

### **Nov 27/28<sup>th</sup> – Caving Trip, Waitomo**

Staying at the Auckland Speleo Hut in Waitomo from Friday night, the trip will involve a variety of caving trips. Nothing too technical but expect to get wet! Bring overalls (but helmets and torches available to hire). Cost \$30 approx.

**Numbers are limited and bookings need to be made by as soon as you get this newsletter!** Organiser: Kevin Jose: 624 4522 / [jose.brothers@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jose.brothers@xtra.co.nz)

### **Dec 10/11<sup>th</sup> Working Weekend at Wharapapa**

Help clean up and improve access to the climbing areas around Wharapapa South (the free access areas - not the commercial areas). A great chance to check out the different climbing areas and play with power tools, then have a few beers and burn out in the bouldering cave. Bryce will provide free accommodation and a BBQ for all workers.

Contact: Colin Megson: [colin\\_megson@yahoo.com](mailto:colin_megson@yahoo.com) 021 412 064

### **Dec 17/18 Mt. Moehau Tramping/Kayaking/Climbing Weekend**

Mt Moehau is at the top of the Coromandel. Accom based on a farm property at Port Charles, by a beach, can accommodate 6-8 people indoors, and numerous in tents, 3.5 hours drive from Auckland.

“Wobble style” tramping up the Okahutahi Stream - slightly rugged tramping for 3 - 4 km, then scaling the steepish loose face of 'Little Moehau', easy 8hrs return. Other activities swimming, snorkeling, kayaking, (not surfing ), off road cycling. Or first ascent of a new rock route at Pakau Point.

Organiser: Ron Vautier e-mail contact preferred: [ronvautier@hotmail.com](mailto:ronvautier@hotmail.com) or H 527-8554 (leave a message).

## **The Classifieds**

### **Mt Fuji Request**

Has anybody climbed Mt Fuji in Japan (and in winter)? I am attempting it this December and any advice would be much appreciated. Thank you.

ERIC MAJOR Tel. 09-266-2922 or [i8man58@hotmail.com](mailto:i8man58@hotmail.com)

### **Denali - West Buttress Expedition**

I am organising an expedition to Alaska to climb the standard West Buttress route of Denali. The expedition would be for 4 weeks, leaving mid/late May 2006, with 3 weeks physically on Denali.

The climbing, while non-technical, still requires a high level of mountaineering experience and a great deal of strength, perseverance and teamwork.

If you are interested in joining this expedition please contact Aaron Heather via e-mail at [aaron.heather@arrowinternational.co.nz](mailto:aaron.heather@arrowinternational.co.nz) or by phone on 021-765619.

## Trip Reports

### SNOWCRAFT COURSE WEEKEND NUMBER 2 – August 2005

Ian Wallace

The weekend kicked off with what, for most of us, was our first alpine start. Fortunately we were not facing an 18-hour day to some wild summit, but rather the long slog to the NZAC Hut with the greatest objective danger being spindrift from the snow cannons. The steepening gradient and cool night air soon dispelled any lethargy induced by the 5-hour drive, hot chocolates at Tiffany's and the warm fug of the van. Once at the hut it didn't take long for everyone to settle down, anxious to get some shuteye before Mark's wretched alarm clock went off.

Saturday morning saw our group walking around in ever increasing, butterfly shaped circles trying to locate our unfortunate "avalanche victims." With a number of other groups on the mountain doing similar exercises my transceiver sounded more like a frantic, high pitched X-Box game with my "victim" being found long after the designated sell by date.

On Saturday afternoon we got down to the serious business of constructing snow shelters for the evening. Warwick and Deryn's groups were frogmarched onto the summit plateau to commence tunnelling through thick, hard ice. Horror stories later emerged of exhausted students feebly putting the finishing touches to snow holes long after dark while dinner crews tried to heat mounds of pre-cooked sustenance on one tiny altitude-and-cold-challenged cooker. The pale and drawn faces at the hut the next morning said it all!

Kathleen and Craig's group were far more organised, identifying a perfect site for an igloo with a suitable quarry not far from the hut. Despite not having received resource or building consent, construction was commenced in a flurry of block cutting, laying and plastering. Kathleen and Willie were eventually entombed within the igloo until completion of the entrance tunnel. The external aesthetics of the igloo were spoiled somewhat by the snow mound added onto the igloo to extend its capacity. The Code Compliance Certificate was issued just before dinner with everyone retiring early under a still, starlit sky.

Mark and Matt's group struck rock at their site and made a strategic decision to squat in some old abandoned snow caves. Squatting is apparently a growing problem on the mountain. In an effort to reduce the incidence of squatting next winter it is understood that the possibility of registering unit titles on snow caves is being considered.

Sunday got off to a fairly slow start with anchors, abseiling and pitching being the order of the day. All too soon it was time to pack up and head off down the mountain to face the long trip back to Auckland; via Tiffany's of course.

### **TRIPLE PEAK CHALLENGE - 24<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> September 2005**

Ian Hinds

Attendees: Ciprian, Chris, Grant, Grace, Greg, Gerald, Joseph, Jon, Eric, Emma, Rosemary, Ron, Marcus

Saturday morning was inspiring: bright and clear. Driving up Mountain Road from Ohakune the spindrift swirling around the tops signalled lively conditions on high. Otherwise the weather looked perfect. Some chose to warm up the legs on the lower slopes while others queue jumped the skiers and rode the chair lift up. Eventually we all regrouped and set off together, heading first through the upper ski field and then traversing towards Girdlestone.

Girdlestone is a sexy looking peak. It looked good this particular morning with a fine tail of snow crystals pouring off its pointed summit. Ciprian did a fine job of trailblazing through the soft crust on the Mangaehuehu Glacier to lead up under the steeper upper slopes of the 'stone. A short section of two-tool work and we gained the small airy summit.

Despite the view the breezy top soon encouraged us on down the undulating narrow snow ridge towards Tahurangi. Reaching the low point we then dropped down the steeper right hand slopes in front of a large gendarme towards the Wahianoa Glacier and our next objective, Mitre Peak. A long plod again took us on a traverse towards the white bulk of our second peak. Once on the broad main ridge stunning views opened out across the whole of the Ruapehu Massif, under bright blue skies. More of a range than a mountain the 8 or so main summits were all visible from this vantage point. A short stroll to the top of Mitre gave more fine views down over the olives and browns of the Rangipo Desert. Retracing our steps we were now on the home straight heading towards our third peak, Tahurangi. Once on the crater rim the final section of the ridge was fun: undulating narrow ridges with short steep icy steps. For the first time the blustery wind dropped and we had a belated lunch admiring a new perspective on the graceful Girdlestone.

Standing atop Tahurangi on a sunny, clear winters day with the crater, summit plateau and steaming lake below reveals one of the finest views in New Zealand, if not the world. There is never enough time to take these things in.

It was about now that that the evolving plan began. I'm not quite sure who suggested it, but feel Grant may well have been involved. First it was suggested that, as it was such a fine day, we should continue over Pere (tetaitonga) and

make a descending traverse back to the cars at Turoa. A sensible majority decided to stick to the original plan and head straight down. Those of us tempted by Pere quickly descended Tahurangi on our rumps into the crater basin. A short while later 'evolution' occurred again and a traverse of the fine cornice on Pyramid Peak was agreed. It would after all be a shame not to on such a day. An easy climb took us to the narrow, graceful and exhilarating ridge between the subsidiary top and Pyramid itself. I later found out this ridge is the predicted failure point during this years spring melt with the resulting lahar likely to flow forcefully down the eastern slopes of the mountain.

As the shadows on the western slopes started to grow, we were heading towards Pere when a quick detour to include Dome was suggested. This suggestion attracted less interest than the previous ones and only two hardy soles made their way over Dome. The rest of us headed for Pere as the slopes started to show the orange tinge of alpine glow. We shared the final top with a couple of late snow boarders. They didn't hang around to share our long walk down though as they threw wide sweeping curves to make the return to Turoa in a fraction of the time it would take us. I think finally I understand ski mountaineering!! Pausing on the 2-hour descent we watched the sun sink over a distant Taranaki and a sea of purple and orange cloud. We then plodded the rest of the way down with very tired legs. Late night dancing was not on the agenda tonight.

The long tiring day on Saturday led to a little indecision on the Sunday morning. Eventually three plans were agreed, one group to Tukino for ice climbing, another group back up to the ridge between Girdlestone and Tahurangi and a final option of a relaxed morning in Ohakune.

Our group headed to Tukino, which looked well formed as we reached the road end. Chris managed a valiant effort to get his 2WD to the end of the 4WD road, even resorting to reversing his car over the trickiest bits to gain traction. Half an hours easy walk had us to the top of the climb. What looked like a well-formed icefall from afar actually turned into a snow covered, somewhat slushy climb. It was good fun though and we spent 3 hours or so climbing before heading homeward. The other group made their way up to traverse a section of Tahurangi's SE ridge before the changing weather eventually chased them down in the afternoon. Finally I understand that the weather and coffee were pleasant back in Ohakune!!

This proved to be my best trip of the winter; I think it was the same for a few of the others in the group. Thanks to Ciprian for the inspiration and the organisation. Maybe next year we can go for all 8 peaks. Did I say that out loud?

## **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, Suzanne, at [suzstick@hotmail.com](mailto:suzstick@hotmail.com).



Snowcraft Course: this snow cave needs curtains.



Triple Peak Trip: Ciprian on Pere & Pyramid Ridge

## Change of Address

For any change of address, or to request to receive your newsletter by email (better for us and the environment!) contact [subscriptions@alpineclub.org.nz](mailto:subscriptions@alpineclub.org.nz)  
NZAC Auckland Section, PO Box 3036, Auckland

