

AUSSIE-MOUNTAINEER

Newsletter of the New Zealand Alpine Club - Australia Section



Winter 2010

Welcome to the first NZAC Australia Section Newsletter from the 2010-2011 Committee.

The committee wishes to thank Rob Kettels for his efforts in editing the Aussie-Mountaineer last year.

We would love to receive your contributions to this newsletter in the form of trip reports, photographs, new route descriptions, tech tips, gear reviews, book/movie reviews, or anything else that takes your fancy. Please email contributions and/or suggestions to: australia@alpineclub.org.nz



Lachie Currie pulls an overhang on a route established using the NZAC Australia Section Expedition Grant, 'Resolution', Aoraki/Mt Cook, NZ.
Photo: Stuart Hollaway

UPCOMING EVENTS

Committee Meetings

- 18/8: Aust Section Committee Meeting*
- 20/10: Aust Section Committee Meeting*
- 15/12: Aust Section Committee Meeting*

*To be held at *The Retreat Hotel*, 226 Nicholson St, Abbotsford, Vic. Meetings commence at 8pm. Drop in early for dinner, a drink and a chat.

Social Events, Presentations & Trips

August

- 13th: SYDNEY
Social Indoor Climbing Meet
Leura Climbing Gym.
6 - 9pm. Beer and pizza...
- 24th: MELBOURNE
Social Indoor Climbing Meet:
Hardrock Climbing Gym,
16-18 Varman Ct,
Nunawading, 3131
6.30pm onwards
- 27 - 30: NSW
Four Day Climbing Expedition;
Blue Lake, Australian Alps
Expressions of Interest email
australia@alpineclub.org.nz

September

- 8th: SYDNEY
Social Meeting for NSW members
Trek & Travel, Kent Street Sydney.
6:30 - 9:30pm. Slide shows, talks etc.

Calendar Continued page 2.
Trip Descriptions and Details page 2.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Social Events, Presentations & Trips

October

- 23 - 24: MT ARAPILES
Pre Alpine Skills Weekend;
Mt Arapiles, Vic
Details TBA
- 26th: MELBOURNE
Social Climbing Meet
Cliffhanger Climbing Gym
Inside Westgate Sport &
Leisure Complex
Corner Grieve Parade and Doherty's Rd
Altona North Vic 3025
6:30pm onwards

January:

- 2 - 9: NZAC Summer Climbing Camp;
Broken River, Craigieburn Range, NZ
Details see page 8.

Subscriptions increase from 1 Oct 2010

During May the NZ Government announced a change in GST rate. Like any organisation that sells a product or service, NZAC are profoundly impacted by GST rate changes. Hence CCM resolved at its 16 May meeting that the full member subscription rate will rise to \$105, to match the GST rise of 15 per cent. The full schedule of membership rates from 1 October 2010 will therefore be:

Full members	\$105
Students & Under 25yrs	\$70
Seniors (over 65yrs)	\$70
Veteran (35yrs+ club membership)	\$50
Additional members half of the applicable rate	

The rise in GST means NZAC has also revised its publication prices (more info to come), and confirmed that all hut fees will remain unchanged. Any questions - just contact the team at National office.

TRIP DESCRIPTIONS/DETAILS

Social Indoor Climbing Meets

Various dates, various states... come along, meet and climb with fellow NZAC Aust Section Members. Look for the navy/gold NZAC caps at the venues listed.

Blue Lake Climbing Expedition

A four day expedition for members who are interested in climbing in the Australian Alps during the last weekend in August.

Suitable for those with a moderate level of ice climbing skill who are looking to climb with fellow members and enjoy the magnificent views high above Blue Lake.

Interested parties will meet Friday, 27th August at Charlotte's Pass (or Guthega TBA) and head to Blue Lake for the following three days. Members will be responsible for their own transport (car pooling an option), food and equipment.

Interested members or those with suggestions please email australia@alpineclub.org.nz asap.

Pre-Alpine Skills Weekend

A joint trip run by NZAC Australia Section and Melbourne University Mountaineering Club (MUMC). The course will be coached by New Zealand Mountain Guide Association Member Stuart Hollaway, and Dale Thistlethwaite, NZAC Australia Section Committee member and Mountaineering Convenor, MUMC.

Dealing with rigging, rope management and improvised rope rescue as well as introducing an alpine approach to rock climbing, encouraging flexibility, terrain analysis and awareness of multiple modes of rope use, this course features a combination of theory and practical elements to introduce and consolidate fundamental climbing skills and set direction for training and preparation to enable participants to arrive in the mountains ready to focus on the key elements of climbing and decision making in an alpine setting.

Courses are offered for participants from climbing and non-climbing backgrounds and involve a considerable volume of climbing to practise new skills and strategies.

For further details and to express interest contact: alpinism@mumc.org.au For a trip report on last year's pre-alpine skills weekend see page 3.

Trip/Social Meet Suggestions

Do you have an idea for a NZAC Australia Section trip or social meet? Please email australia@alpineclub.org.nz

Pre-Alpine Skills Weekend 2009 - Stuart Hollaway

In November NZAC and MUMC combined to provide a free skills instruction and climbing weekend at Arapiles to introduce alpine approaches to climbing and to practise the necessary rope skills to underpin safe travel in alpine environments.

The course was coached by Stuart Hollaway, a member of the NZMGA, and Dale Thistlethwaite, the Mountaineering Convenor at MUMC, and attended by 6 climbers: Ken, Claire, Nathan, Egg, Richard and Andy.

The first alpine lesson was the importance of responding to the conditions, which were blazing hot. We got up before 6am to climb *Spiral Staircase* in the shade: shortening the ropes to about 25m to speed transitions, we climbed quickly up the route looking at ways to climb efficiently by building simple anchors, responding to and incorporating the terrain where appropriate to maximise speed while maintaining security.



After a quick rappel descent, we went to hide in the picnic shelter for morning tea, glacier travel theory, crevasse extraction and rope rescue skills. If we found a crevasse we could certainly have a person out of it quickly, but heat remained the pressing risk so we went to the Wimmera River for swims and lunch.

When the sun had crossed the mountain putting the face in shade, we had a mass assault on *Tiptoe*



Ridge, with parties simul-climbing to the notch behind the pinnacle before applying a range of approaches to the final wall.

The second morning saw us on the shady side of Mitre Rock looking at different ways to climb as a party of three, which, among other things, highlights the importance of clean, systematic transitions where you always know what needs to happen next to maintain momentum. Ken led Nathan and Egg up *Guiding Light* on one rope as one might expect on steep but easy scrambling on non-technical routes. Richard took Andy and Claire up *The Mitre* using two ropes and a self-locking device, as is more appropriate to steeper and more technical terrain.

Andy and Egg then led two parties in a descent via a two-pitch rappel, selecting cheap and efficient anchors and arranging backups and security to get down unprepared and only moderately familiar terrain.

Pre- Alpine Skills Weekend Cont...

On the ground we looked at strategies for climbing securely on loose or uncertain rock and managing abseils in blocky, loose or windy conditions.

Although not yet 11am, we were sweating standing still and so retreated to the air conditioning of the Horsham McDonald's to discuss weather forecasting, basic avalanche theory and route selection, to distribute some further reading and resources and debrief the trip.

Although the heat prevented us doing any extra climbing (usually on this course we do lots more climbing), we managed to taste a whole range of important skills to climb more efficiently and respond to a range of terrain. This emphasis on the combination of technical skills and terrain analysis which makes for an effective mountaineer makes the trip valuable as a background for people going onto a course so they can focus on movement and decision making and as a refresher for climbers returning to the hills who need to consolidate their skills and be thinking about the sorts of decisions about conditions, terrain and techniques that underpin successful climbs.

Thanks to all the participants who helped make a great weekend (and congratulations to Egg and Claire on their summer trips to the Aspiring area). Dale and I will provide the course again for NZAC and MUMC members this year, probably on October 23&24.



Above: Responding to the conditions in best alpine fashion - swimming in the Wimmera River
Photo: Eng Wu Ong

CENTENARY of FREDA DU FAUR'S FIRST FEMALE ASCENT OF AORAKI/MT COOK

Climbing Women Photos

As part of the upcoming centenary celebration of Freda du Faur's historic climb of Aoraki Mt Cook, Carla Braun-Elwert is putting together a collection of images of women climbing. These will be displayed on a big screen at the celebrations at Mt Cook on December 4th.

If you would like to contribute an image/images towards this collection, please email:

fredaphotos@gmail.com

Images need to be of mountaineering or rock climbing, and must feature women. Historic photos of women climbing will also be very welcome.

Freda du Faur Mountain Skills for Women Course

December 3rd, 2010 marks the centenary of Freda du Faur's ascent of Aoraki/ Mt Cook- the first ever by a woman. To celebrate the New Zealand Alpine Club is hosting a **six day alpine instruction course for women at Aoraki Mt Cook**.

The course is designed for women who have good basic mountaineering skills and a good level of fitness, and would like to move towards becoming self sufficient alpinists in glaciated mountain terrain.

The dates are: **November 28th - December 3rd 2010**.

The cost of the course will be **NZ\$950**

This will include six days instruction and a helicopter flight. The instructors will be qualified female NZMGA guides.

THIS COURSE IS NOW FULL - TO BE ADDED TO THE WAITLIST PLEASE CONTACT

<http://alpineclub.org.nz/default/24>

or email pat@alpineclub.org.nz

Resolution: A new route on Aoraki/Mt Cook



Topo of 'Resolution' route up buttress and continuing onto Zurbriggen's ridge on Aoraki/Mt Cook

Photo: Stuart Hollaway

The route climbs the big corner running all the way up buttress from the base of the Bowie Couloir to the crest of Zurbriggen's Ridge. Continue across arête and up Zurbriggen's to the summit.

480m of rock to the crest climbed in 11 pitches, crux 19/20, then continue across the snow arête and up Zurbriggen's; NZ 6. High quality rock and climbing on a big mountain route – strongly recommended. The corner line would be a spectacularly good mixed route and the whole buttress offers excellent scope for further climbing.

Start below the roof and hanging corner just left of the right arête of the buttress (*the pink route, 19, climbed and rappelled by Steve Monks & partner*).

1. 30m 14 up hanging corner to small alcove of dark rock

2. 30m 15 work up red wall and arête to climb hanging corner on right to big ledge. (Pitches 1&2 could be combined)
3. 60m 14 climb right hand corner then continue up ledges and walls left of the main corner.
50m 16 slabs and walls of pink rock left of the corner. Belay near the arête below a steep wall.
4. 30m 18 traverse up and right towards corner. Climb overhang into groove left of main corner (which is blocked by loose flakes).
5. 60m 18 up easy ground then left below roof in main corner into subsidiary corner (snow). Weave up pink wall (~20m) with cracks to cross arête and make slopey traverse back to main corner. Belay off hand & fist size cams.
6. 90m 12 up nice corner, then long chimney; finally scramble to belay below steepening in corner. (There are potential belays in this pitch but they are not very sheltered.)
7. 30m 16 climb corner (or wall on right - corner may be wet) to awkward belay below next overhang. Piton high on left. (This belay is dry but the ropes will get wet - best to combine pitches 8&9 to get past wet section.)
8. 30m 17 the waterfall pitch - climb overhang using chockstones and continue up corner and right wall to a stance on the left.
9. 30m 13 up corner to gain obvious diagonal weakness heading up across right wall. Belay on flake/pedestal below smooth, steep wall with cracks heading diagonally up left and right. (Pitches 10&11 could be combined.)
10. 40m 20 tricky moves up right leading crack and the wall beyond to crest. Continue up easy arête of buttress to snow.

Gear: ~7cams finger to fist, a full set of nuts, 1KB & 1LA (optional), draws, full alpine kit to continue up mountain or double ropes and extensive tat to rappel buttress.

Stuart Hollaway & Lachie Currie, 18&19/1/2010. This trip was supported by the inaugural MUMC adventure grant and the NZAC Australian Section expedition fund, both of which are gratefully acknowledged.

Introduction to Mountaineering course with Snowy Mountains Climbing School August 2009 - Janine Nechwatal

We started off as strangers - Andy, Philippe and I from Melbourne, Kerry from NE Victoria, and two Bens from Sydney, under the instruction of Chris Brown of Snowy Mountains Climbing School for our introduction to Mountaineering course.

Chris has over 25 years of mountaineering experience across many parts of the world and whilst we were eager to learn from his experience, equally he too wanted to impart his knowledge to us, so that no matter where our mountaineering interest led us we could commence with solid foundations.

Before setting off for a few days in the Kosciuszko main range, Chris checked our gear to make sure that we had brought the items outlined on the pre trip gear list, those necessary to keep us warm and dry in the snow along with snow shoes and crampons. Chris provided us with an ice axe, harness and shovel, and brought the group gear: ropes, snow stakes, carabiners, ascenders and a cooking tent.

We left Dead Horse Gap in beautiful sunshine and traversed through fresh snow up to our protected camp where Chris instructed us on what to look for in a camping area and demonstrated how to build angled snow walls to shelter our tents from the prevailing winds and to reduce turbulence. After erecting our tents we dug out an entrance, which allowed us to sit comfortably in our tent or vestibule whilst putting on our boots. We learnt about erecting a portable toilet, where our waste went at the end of our trip, and setting up a cooking tent. The deep compacted snow suited the construction of a central table along with seats and storage areas cut into the snow.



Intro to Mountaineering: Out and About in the Snowy Mountains
Photo: Kerry Flanagan

To commence the mountaineering course Chris led us to a bank of snow where we were to put into practice three self arrest techniques that we had learnt on a gentle slope. We started with head uphill on our back and progressed to head down hill both face down and on our back. We learnt that if you fall you need to attempt self arrest immediately to minimize the effect of momentum exposing you to dangerous terrain below you.

Following self arrest instruction we learnt different ascending and descending techniques using an axe, and how the steepness of the terrain, and type of snow conditions, will influence the technique you use. Being the lead creating the steps was the hardest position enabling the rest of the team to follow in the compacted steps.

A couple of the group had an attempt building a snow cave which we learnt should be considered as a emergency shelter due to the sheer time it takes to construct, yet it can be great if you are camping out in the one location for days at a time.

In an emergency situation either best to erect your snow tent, or dig a snow trench.

The weather turned nasty the next day with a thunder and lightning storm directly overhead resulting in our group deciding to break camp and learn the skills of snow anchors, belays, roping for glacier travel and crevasse rescue in a sheltered area off the mountain.

Chris was really patient explaining the different knots required for mountaineering and when they should be used, including fisherman's knot, overhand loop, figure eight on a bight, clove hitch, prussic knot, munter hitch and a range of anchor systems and how to achieve equalization.

We had time to practice the knots before we applied them in a rescue scenario where one of our group had fallen into a crevasse and we learnt the benefits of a three people rope team and how each person, including the person in the crevasse, could assist in the rescue effort.

We learnt that it is critical to ensure that you are safely connected before proceeding to investigate the state of the victim who has fallen in, and it is paramount that a person travelling in extreme environments needs to be cognisant of self preservation first, as falling in a crevasse in a rushed rescue attempt is dangerous for all.

Continued page 8.



Adventures At Home

A section designed to promote, climbing, backcountry skiing and adventures of an alpine flavour in Australia.

Send in your photos and/or stories about your adventures in Australia's great outdoors, to: australia@alpineclub.org.nz



*Andy Green on the second ascent of 'Aztec Gold' (7), Isla da Muerta, Cape Woolamai
Photo: Stuart Hollaway*



*Lincoln Smith on the first ascent of 'Ahab' (18), 1st pinnacle
Cape Woolamai
Photo: Stuart Hollaway*



*Lincoln Smith attempting the crux of 'Here There Be Monsters' (20), in the abyss, Isla da Muerta, Cape Woolamai
Photo: Stuart Hollaway*

From Page 6.

Having said this, Chris showed us how we could quickly self arrest, build an anchor and then safely investigate the victim to ascertain their status. From this point we were then shown how to prevent the rope from plunging deeper into the crevasse edge (making rescue more difficult) with the placement of an ice axe and, in some cases, putting in place a second pulley system.

Finally, travelling in a rope team can get very tiring as you may be stopping, starting, and reversing, aiming to always maintain appropriate rope tension, and you can become complacent as you are coming into camp. However, as people relax it is important to keep your wits about you, check the area surrounding the proposed campsite for any crevasses, and peg out the safe area so that you can safely walk around to set up camp.

Thanks Chris for your expert guidance and giving our group the motivation and confidence to commence our mountaineering ventures.

MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNTS

Arapiles Mountain Shop, Natimuk, VIC:

10% off retail prices http://www.natimuk.com/arapiles.net/arapiles_mountain_shop.html

Bogong Melbourne CBD, VIC:

10% off retail prices <http://www.bogong.com.au/>

Cliffhanger Climbing Gym, Altona, VIC:

Concession rate entry for adults <http://www.cliffhanger.com.au/>

Jindabyne Climbing Centre, Jindabyne, NSW:

NEW Concession rate entry for adults <http://www.snowymtns.com/?id=indoorclimbinggymjin>

K2 Basecamp, Brisbane, QLD:

NEW 10-15% discount, access to special offers, sale and promotions as a VIP Client
<http://www.k2basecamp.com.au/>

OutdoorGearStore.com.au:

NEW 15% off retail prices, (use coupon code NZACA) <http://www.outdoorgearstore.com.au/>

Wilderness Shop, Box Hill, Melbourne, VIC:

10% off retail prices, invitations to Mega Buying Nights.

Other New Zealand-specific discounts are detailed at <http://alpineclub.org.nz/membership/benefits>

If any other retailers around Australia would like to offer our members discounts in exchange for publicity please drop us an email to australia@alpineclub.org.nz.

2011 NZAC SUMMER CLIMBING CAMP

The N.Z.A.C 2011 Climbing Camp will be based at the Broken river ski club in the Craigieburn range from Sunday 2nd January to Sunday 9th January. The camp is being hosted by the Canterbury/Westland section of the N.Z.A.C.

Broken River will provide an ideal base and offer opportunities to all levels/ages of Climbers, Trampers, Rock climbers and Mountain bikers.

The lodges will be available to all and can hold up to 80 people, there is also a public area with toilet, shelter and water 10 minutes drive back down the bottom of the access road for campers.

We plan to have an opening night bar barbeque on the evening of the 2nd with quest speakers and slide shows arranged. There will also be plenty of entertainment available during the week for those who stay on the hill and those with children but we will be encouraging all who attend to get away from the field for half, day and multi day adventures while the weather is favourable.

Further Information as well as a full Climbing Camp Pamphlet will be available in the upcoming months. Registration forms can be obtained and downloaded from the N.Z.A.C Website or contact National Office on 03 3777595.

A Camp Manager is still to be appointed but local contact for any questions/Information is Clayton Garbes on claytongarbes@hotmail.com or 0274461562/03 9607646[eve].