



NEW ZEALAND
ALPINE CLUB

The Otago Climber

January 2018



*Dreams come true for Section Chair Raluca Ana –
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*The monthly newsletter of the
Otago Section of the New Zealand Alpine Club*

January 2018

Meetings

**Wednesday, 7 February 2018
University of Otago Staff Club, 7.30pm**

This will be our first meeting for the New Year and, as is traditional, will be a “Show and Tell” night. It would be great if you can bring along a memory stick with a few picks of your summer’s achievements. It’s a great chance to discuss your adventures and to share your knowledge of climbs, tramps, successes and challenges. All speakers will receive a refreshment of their choice from Staff Club bar – in fact everyone will get their first drink on the Committee.

Be great to see you along and hear what you did in your holidays.



Not all climbs end in success – Riley Smith on Treacherous Fingers at Mapoutahi

Dream, dare, try, come back and repeat

Section Chair Raluca Ana shares recent climbs with photos by Clément Naegelen

Being new to the South Island, I too, like every newbie in Otago, came here with dreams. Two of them haunted me obsessively for a while: climbing Taniwha, a sports multi-pitch route in the Aspiring Valley, Wanaka, that sounds as daunting in climbers' stories as the name itself, and the Grand Traverse in the Remarkables Range.



Raluca challenges the Taniwha

I knew Taniwha would be a real challenge for me, as I have been back and forth with my climbing abilities due to injuries that kept occurring when least expected. However, dreaming about a climbing route is more often than not a panacea that heals everything. It has this effect, like a switch that is flipped in the right position, and one morning, you just get up and go. Try the thing!

And so did I. And yes, Taniwha is a stunning 9 pitch route, overhanging from pitch 2, in a stunning location, with grades between 19 and 24 (hard 24, I would say), sustained, and with an exceptional rock quality almost everywhere. A very safe route, I enjoyed both leading and following every single pitch. Move after move, we unwound every crux, until our forearms decided that we haven't actually trained our endurance enough. And thus, have slowly started to make friends with the dog-bones of our quickdraws. And at the end of pitch 6, a stunning grade 24 pitch, 40 m long, with beautiful pockets on the upper part, Clément wisely uttered the words: OK, maybe it is now time for us to abseil down. I was very surprised as I really wanted to finish the climb. And then realized that, as usual, he was right. We were not climbing anymore: we were aid climbing.

So, after a year of dreaming and preparing for this route, decided to come back home with an unfinished business. Slightly disappointed, but not disheartened, the experience only made me more driven to train harder and go back again next summer.

Last winter I really wanted to do the Remarkables Grand Traverse in winter conditions. And thanks to some really eager floor neighbours in the lodge, ended up doing a mixed climb instead, due to sleep deprivation. But the so familiar voice in the back of my mind kept pestering me about this GT. Such an iconic contour against the skyline, that follows you everywhere you go, when in the Wakatipu area. How could anyone not want to get up there?!, I kept wondering for a whole year.



A great view of the latest Queenstown subdivisions below.

And, as the brain always takes the path of less resistance (they call it neuroplasticity, I believe), I decided to do a summer attempt. Therefore, after resting in the sun for a few days after having confronted with the legendary spirit of Taniwha, Clément humoured me, and accepted my invitation to go to Alta Slabs, climb the well-known route: Fat Lady Sings at the Circus, and top out on the Traverse, continue and come down the usual way, from Single Cone.

The multi-pitch route is beautiful, even though, at times, as a good friend has just confessed recently: disheartening to see that you climb up a 35 m pitch only to find out that a mountain goat has soloed that bit at some stage and decided to leave a souvenir on the ledge where the belay station is.

Even so, the lovely flowers, grasshoppers, birds, colours of the lake, and the usual show that the New Zealand sky puts on every day with clouds running around in different shapes and shades, made up for any potential performance related egotistical thoughts.

The traverse is indeed a classic: we negotiated beautiful exposed sections, interlaced with easy bits where we could catch your breath, and then continue. Having the chance to climb with a Speedy Gonzales of the Northern Hemisphere, the French version, a sort of a machine bounding up the rocks like Bambi, the whole affair of multi-pitching and traversing the famous ridge took no more than 4 hours. Plenty of time for Mexican food, a well-deserved beer and an excellent (yet very short) swim in the lake.

Not an extreme summer expedition for sure, but most certainly a very beautiful experience, that brought enough good vibes to make me come back to good old Duffers with batteries fully charged, and want to train more, only to go back next season. I realized once more that being a climber is more often than not about trying, 'failing', and going back for more every time. And even if sometimes it's amazingly beautiful, and sometimes incredibly painful, I'll have both, thanks!



Useful new documents from NZAC Headquarters

NZAC HQ advise that the following new Access documents have just been uploaded to the NZAC website, Access framework, Bolting Standards, Code of Conduct for Rock Climbers and Landowner Guidelines. All can be accessed by opening the menu from <https://alpineclub.org.nz/> and going through the Rock Climbing menu.

If you just want one direct link to view them all, then this one might be helpful: <https://alpineclub.org.nz/rock-climbing/nzac-code-of-conduct-for-rock-climbers/>

This is also an opportunity to remind members about the Access Fund Grants application process <https://alpineclub.org.nz/rock-climbing/access-fund-grant-application-form/>

Restricted Licence to Climb

Riley Smith and Tanja de Wilde succeed on Ravages

After getting my restricted driver's licence, my first major road trip was to Chinaman's Bluff, in Glenorchy. Thankfully the drive was fine (apart from being rather long) and I arrived at the Dart Road end in one piece. I was especially happy that my fake 4WD Hyundai Getz made it through all the wee fords!

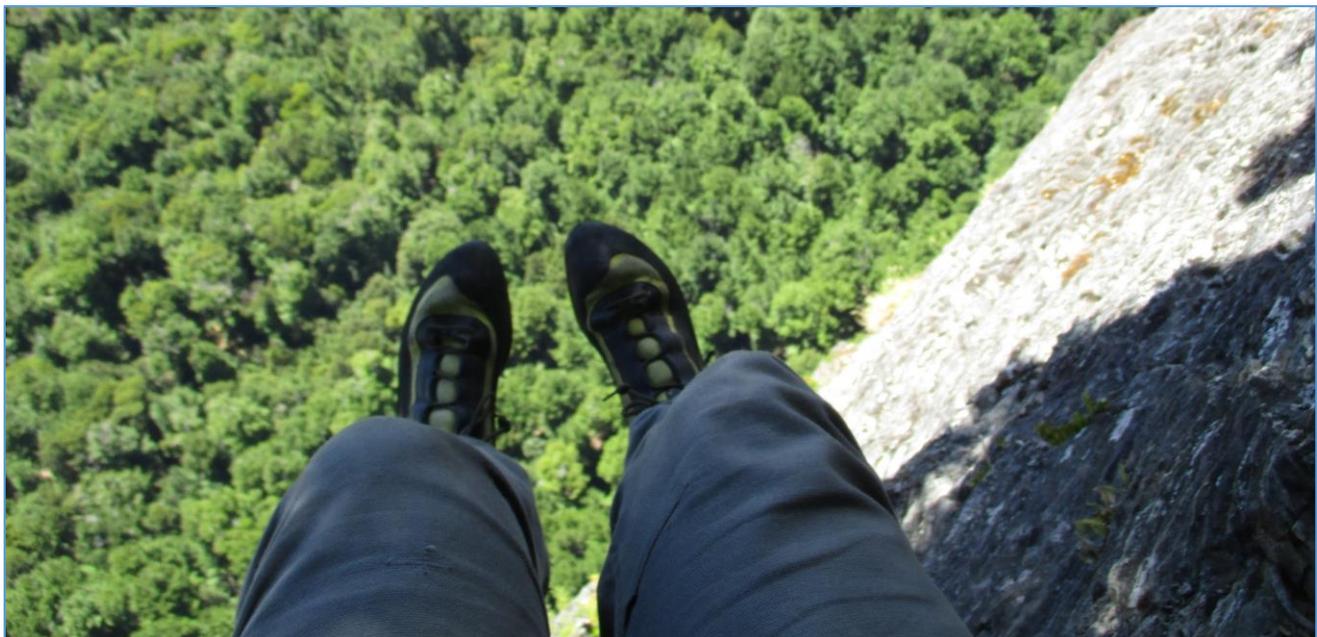


The next morning, I woke up to the biggest swarm of sandflies I've ever encountered, before Tanja and I set out to climb the famous "*Ravages of Time*". Tanja led the first pitch, which left me trembling when I realized that I had the infamous corner/roof traverse on the second pitch.

Thankfully, the climbing went fine, and it was soon time for a snack and a drink on the "Lunch ledge". The next few pitches were relaxing 16's, however it was still interesting due do the nice amount of exposure, and stunning views of the many peaks surrounding the valley.

We made it to the "usual" top after about four and a half hours of climbing and decided that we would scramble up and give the next pitch a go. Up here the views were unbelievable, and the nice crack lead to an easy slab, where Tanja who was on lead, thought it was all over. However after the crack the climb changes to slab, then

to overhanging, leaving us pumped out of our minds by the time we were at the top! Overall, we had an excellent day out, we took our time, and enjoyed the views, and climbing - the way it should be!



Section Treasure Upgraded

Keith Moffat updates Martin Curtis' project to care for Cascade Hut



The upgrade to Cascade Hut has been completed by Martin Curtis and helpers and it is looking great.

This is a great place to stay if you want to avoid the crowds at Aspiring Hut and at only \$5 a night for members it is a bargain.

You can book and pay on-line, via the NZAC website. You will then be e-mailed the combination number to the lock box that contains the keys to door padlocks.



TARANAKI Section Climbing Meet

The Taranaki Section have invited us to join them for a climbing meet late February. They will be staying at Manganui Lodge, which is a great base to climb from. Whether it is summer mountaineering up the East Ridge or rock climbing in the Organ Pipe Valley, it is all within a short walk from the Lodge.

Friday evening 23th-25th February, Stratford Mountain Club's Manganui Lodge.

\$60 per person for Accommodation and food, Saturday breakfast/dinner and Sunday breakfast provided
Limited to 30 people

Contact Phill Davies ascent.phill@gmail.com to book your spot or if you have any questions

FMC Discount – Interislander Travel

The 15% discount off easy-change and saver-change fares have been extended. The discount has been extended to restart from 1 Feb 2108 to 30 Nov 2018 (i.e. not available for travel during Dec/Jan). An online discount code is viewable when you log into the Club website and you need to show your FMC discount card at the check-in: <https://alpineclub.org.nz/company/interislander/>

Section Safety Gear Rental

Our eight sets of avalanche equipment and eight sets of snowshoes are now available for rent from the new Hunting and Fishing shop, now at 141 Crawford Street, in Dunedin. The new shop is open seven days till 5.30 weekdays, 5pm Saturday and 4pm Sunday. More details at www.huntingandfishing.co.nz.

The rental costs are \$5 per day for an avalanche set of transceiver, probe and shovel and \$5 per day for snowshoes for all Alpine Club members. You MUST show your current membership card to receive that rate. Not a member, or don't have your card? Then the fee is \$10 per day and you will be required to pay a \$20 deposit.



Members are welcome to collect gear on Friday and return Monday and two day's rental will apply. If you wish to make other arrangements, please contact Keith or any of the committee and we will sort things out BEFORE you go into the shop. If you have any issues with the gear or rentals, please don't hassle the staff at Hunting and Fishing as they are doing us a huge favour by running the rental scheme for us

Rock climbing instructors needed – great pay offered!

This year this has been a huge interest in Tuesday Rock Climbing, with almost 30 new climbers registering their interest. The Section is keen to have these potential new members come along but we do need to offer a safe and enjoyable climbing experience.

The Section is planning a comprehensive course for new climbers early this year but before that we need to have a good-sized pool of experienced climbers available to assist with running the course and with weekly supervision of the new climbers at the Tuesday climbing.

If you are an experienced rock climber with a real interest in passing on your skills and supporting new climbers, we'd love to hear from you. In return for your regular support on Tuesday nights, or Club Rock Climbing trips, the Section will offer training, a First Aid Certificate, and the Section will pay your NZAC Membership for each year that you help.

If that offer interests you, just email the Committee on Otago.climber@gmail.com and we'll be in touch to discuss the next steps.



PLB Hire – free for NZAC members

We have two PLBs available for hire, and this service is free for current NZAC members. Contact Keith Moffat moffat.k172@gmail.com or 027 664 4037 a few days in advance if you want to hire a PLB. \$5 per day for non-members.

Section Sponsorship Grants available

The Otago Section are again calling for applications for three, personal sponsorships for 2018. We expect to contribute around \$500 per grant but could go higher for something spectacular! The rules are simple: the winning sponsorships must contribute to climbing in the Otago Region and the project must have wider benefits – not just for the individual concerned but also for the wider climbing community.

In recent years, we have funded Alpine Training for a climber who went on to lead section trips, helped fund a trip to Nepal in return for on-going contribution to the Section and funded a young rock climber's winter training costs; he has gone on to develop and run a youth training programme attracting new climbers to the section. Your project could be next. Send us an email to otago.climber@gmail.com and tell us about your personal project; who's involved, what it will cost and how your sponsorship will benefit both you and the section.



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