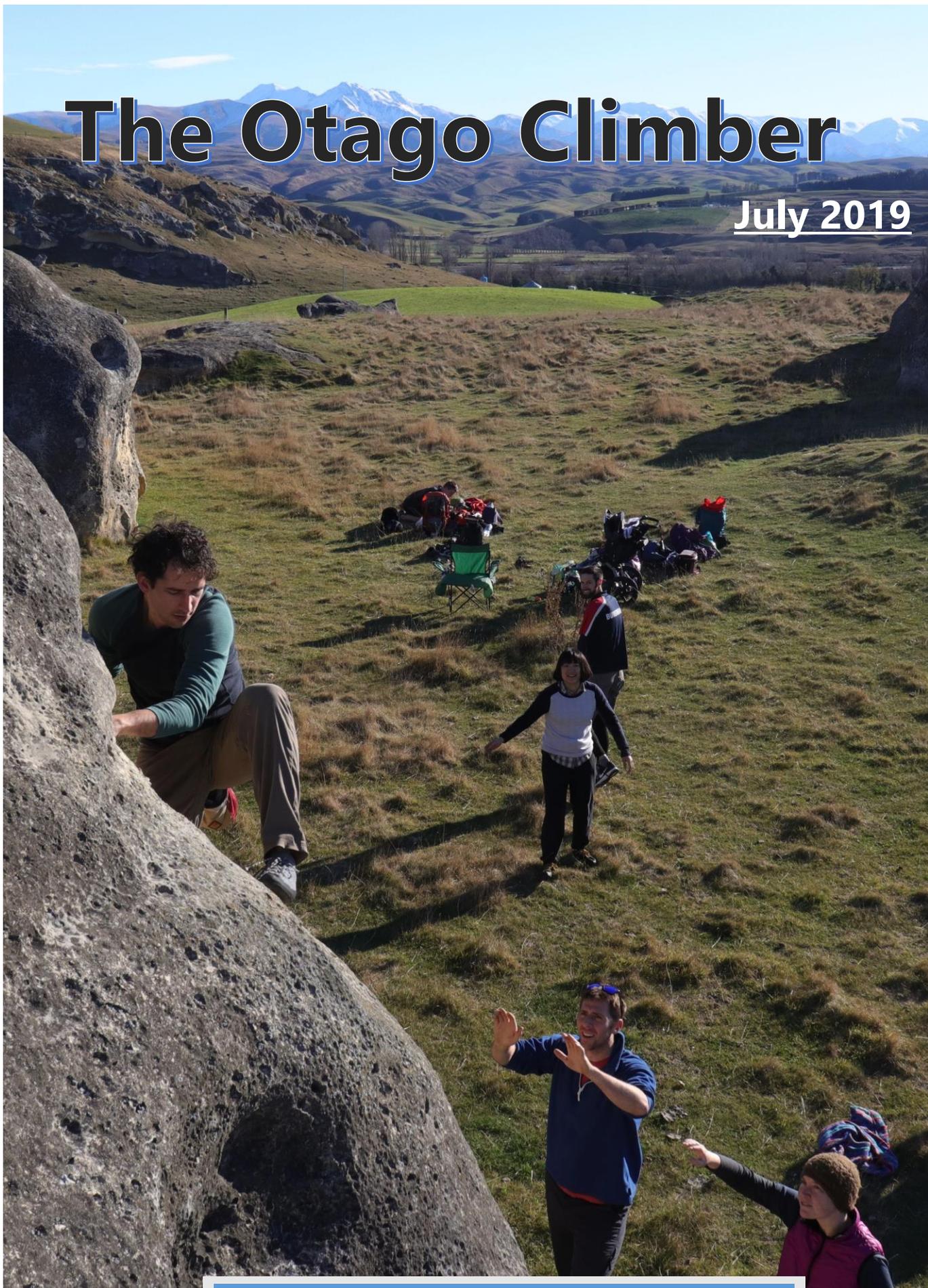


The Otago Climber

July 2019



Dave Kelbe tops out a V1 at Elephant Rocks. Story page 4, Ryan Thomas photo.

The Otago Climber

*The monthly newsletter of the
Otago Section of the New Zealand Alpine Club*

July 2019

Club Night

Wednesday, 3 July 2019

University of Otago Staff Club, Union St, 7.30pm

This month Kyla and Steph take us Coast to Coast.

When 18 months ago the Coast to Coast was mentioned around a table as a joke, who knew that “joke” would result in long months of training, tears, laughter and triumphs leading us to the start line of the 2019 Coast to Coast at Kumara beach and hopefully over the finish line on Saturday at New Brighton. Like rock climbing and horse-riding, Kyla and Stephanie Jasperse were in the amazing position of being able to share the journey as a mother and daughter, competing in the tandem category, staying within 50m of each other at all times and paddling a double kayak as they made their way 244km from West to East. “It was hard, and it hurt but we made it”.



Trips and events calendar

Indoor Rockclimbing. 1 August. Eve O'Brien has organised for us to join North Otago Section for indoor climbing at the Waitaki Recreation Centre wall on Thursday 1st of August. Their session is from 5 - 6:30pm so we would be leaving Dunedin at 4pm from usual Logan Park meeting spot and expect to be back in Dunedin around 7:30pm. Bring \$10 cash to contribute for fuel plus cash for admission fee.

Address: 43 Orwell Street, Oamaru

Admission: adult \$12.00 (NZAC \$10.00), children \$8.50 (NZAC \$6.50), family \$16.50 (NZAC \$12.00).

They have some ropes/harnesses/shoes available for us to borrow if needed also but bring own gear if possible. Could people please text Eve on 0276423211 if interested, so that we could arrange transport. She will put up a trip link on trip website closer to the time.

Ryan Thomas new Otago Section Chair

Section committee member Ryan Thomas has stepped in to chair the Otago Section of the NZ Alpine Club as Riley Smith leaves for Wanaka at the end of June to start his ski-instructor's course.

Hailing from the wilds of Canada, Ryan was introduced to hiking and climbing in high school while being fortunate enough to live in a mountain tourist town. Since then, he has made sure to always move somewhere with mountains and skiing nearby.

Ryan came to New Zealand in 2014 as a PhD student in physics, and has since stayed on as a research fellow. He has been a regular fixture at Tuesday night rock climbing and has had the pleasure of seeing the growth of new climbers who have since surpassed him in ability.

Regular trips into the mountains with other members of the alpine club have remained a highlight. When not in the mountains, Ryan enjoys stealing the souls of birds with his camera and being insufferably pedantic about toques.



Selfie: Outgoing chair

Riley Smith and new section chair Ryan Thomas on the summit of Mt Liverpool

Bouldering at Elephant Rocks

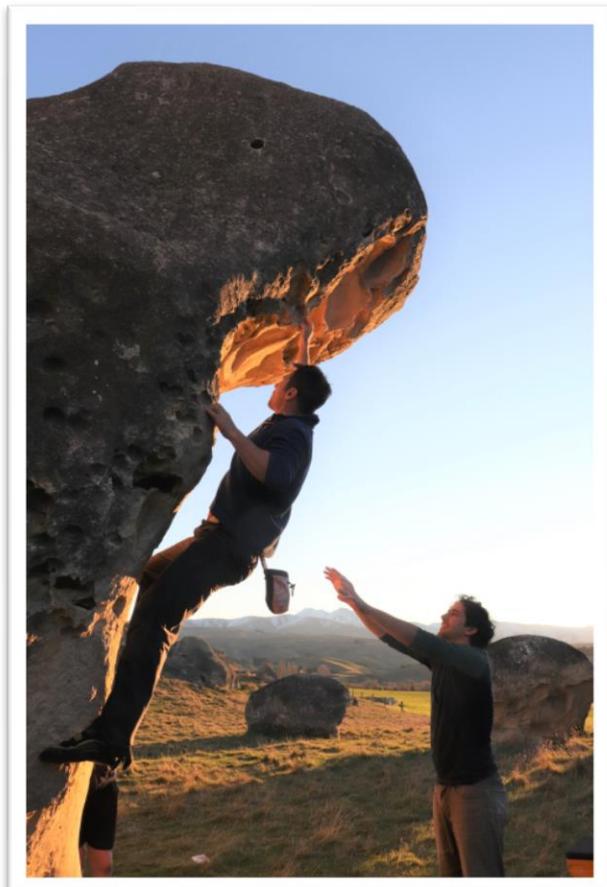
Ryan Thomas reports on a winter rock trip to North Otago

After two days of rain and snow on Queen's Birthday long weekend, a group of about half NZAC members and half new climbers (and one random Canadian tourist!) met for a day of bouldering at Elephant Rocks.

Despite the wild weather of the previous two days, the Monday was warm and calm with the snowy mountains of the Saint Mary's range clearly visible in the distance. Elephant Rocks has a huge range of bouldering problems with a few at grades below V0 – a good thing for those of us who are not boulderers!

We warmed up on some of these easier bouldering problems before moving onto slightly harder problems at grades of V0 and V1, with a V2 tossed in there for good measure. Attempts were made on a V3, but the taller climbers among us had an unfair advantage in height, necessitating a few extra bouldering pads to even the score...

The climbing at Elephant Rocks is markedly different to



climbs around Dunedin. The rock is all limestone, not basalt, and there is a distinct lack of large jugs. Most of the holds are either slopers or crimps, although there are enough "Oh, God!" holds around to keep you grateful.

There is even an easy crack climb, at grade V0, for those who want to try out their hand jams. Just watch out for descent from the top, as you have to down-climb the route. Jumping down is not recommended!

Thanks to Dave Kelbe for organizing this unofficial trip!

Ryan Thomas pics –

Above: Ben on a V1.

Left: Mike Garrett fooling round on an overhang.

A Christmas Mission up French Ridge

Riley Smith retraces the Christmas Spirit

Eleven years ago, a group of hardy Otago climbers grunted up the Matukituki Valley during a light snow storm after a comfortable Friday night at Aspiring Hut. As they emerged from the bushline, the snow eased and they eventually made it through the low cloud to the brilliant sunshine at French Ridge Hut. This year, for our annual Mid Winter Christmas we decided to retrace those footsteps of the early pioneers, and enjoy a weekend in the sun with brilliant food and warming drinks.



We began the weekend by leaving the Raspberry Flat carpark as a group of 18, gawking at Sharks Tooth and other clogged in mountains up the valley. Four of the group stopped at Aspiring Hut, so they could do some easier day trips and have a more authentic Christmas around a fire, while the rest carried on up the valley. After having lunch at the base of French Ridge in clouds of sand flies, we headed up the big hill! This year the weather was exceptional, however rather warm. There was patchy snow at the bottom of the valley which turned to slush in the afternoon, but no real frozen ground as you might expect by this time of year.

The climb was good, we all made it to the hut in a few hours, despite one big rip in Alex's paragliding bag (expertly stitched up by our trip Doctor, Juliette!). By the time we reached the hut, we were definitely ready for a hot drink and a biscuit!



The festivities began with cheese and crackers, (minus the cheese that was forgotten in the fridge at home!) devils on horseback, and a variety of soups. We then began to devour the mains... curries, pasta salad, ravioli, just to name a few. The Christmas spirit was reinforced with a stunning playlist of Christmas music from Spotify, tinsel and fairy lights.

Then it was time for Secret Santa, a must have at Christmas time. And this year, the presents were awesome! Chocolate, Honey, frost scrapers, hand warmers, even rat traps... handy!

Plenty of banter, dad jokes, and climbing stories were shared before pudding; cheesecake, chocolate, and a stunning selection of Russian Fudge and other slices, all washed down with whiskey, rum and red wine. Obviously, we didn't have a good time.



The next morning, we awoke to a brilliant clear, still day. Alex, who was to paraglide out was stoked! After finishing the leftovers for breakfast, we headed down the hill. Dry snow made the decent fast, until the ice slowed us down. Eventually we made it to the river, where everyone decided to cross instead of using the bridge upstream.

After meeting the others at Aspiring Hut for lunch and exchanging stories, we headed back to the cars where the group was greeted by a layer of frost on the windscreens. The ice scrapers were a great present! We also noted the fact that despite taking off from French Ridge on his paraglider at 2pm, Alex had left the carpark already!

Thanks all for a great weekend!

New Section Website for easy trip booking

Sign-up now to get fast and simple trip information, booking and info.

Just a reminder to section members that the Otago section has introduced a new trip planning system at our section website www.ozonzac.org.nz. On the website, you can organize and join section events and events organized privately by members, and you can subscribe to email notifications when certain types of events (rock climbing, mountaineering, etc.) are posted to the site. Our aim with this site is to increase the number of trips organized by the section and improve our members' ability to connect with each other. To sign up for an account, please visit <https://www.ozonzac.org.nz/SigningUp.php>. Non-members are also welcome. **For those who have already signed up:** please check your email preferences. The default setting is that you will receive **no** notifications. A number of people have requested accounts but not changed their email settings from the default.

Process for PLB hire

The Otago Section has two PLBs for Section members to use when heading outdoors. Rental is free for NZAC members but \$5 per day for non-members. So that we can track the rentals, and respond if something goes wrong, the Section has created an online booking form at <https://goo.gl/forms/TQJrhMZxacHf30qP2>

When the form is completed online the results are automatically loaded into a spreadsheet in the Section's Google Drive, so we have a record of your rental and planned trip details. All that you do then is to arrange to collect a unit from either Keith Moffat Moffat.k172@gmail.com or Riley Smith rileychallis@gmail.com. Further contact details in the newsletter.

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



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