



NEW ZEALAND
ALPINE CLUB

The Otago Climber

June 2018

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THEATRE

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BANFF CENTRE

**MOUNTAIN
FILM FESTIVAL
WORLD TOUR**

**The World's
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Dunedin
Regent Theatre
17 The Octagon

Tuesday 19 June, 7.30pm
Thursday 21 June, 7.30pm

Tickets: \$16 General Admission ■
\$12 NZAC Members ■ \$10 School Children

Booking fees apply

(Discounts available for both screenings)

Tickets available at www.banff.nz

Larry Shiu, Cascade Mountain, Banff National Park © John Price



NEW ZEALAND
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The Otago Climber

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

June 2018

Club Night

Wednesday, 13 June 2018

University of Otago Staff Club, 7.30pm



Steve Fortune high on Lobuche East summit ridge in Nepal.

Steve Fortune's talk this month will take us from stoats to serious summits.

As we push towards a predator free future, we expect a large expansion of trapping networks in our backcountry. In 2017 Steven Fortune worked as a trapper in Fiordland and will talk about that experience, and some of the cool places in Fiordland he visited. He will also talk about a trip to the Khumbu region of Nepal, where his team climbed two peaks, a new route on Lobuje East, and the North face of Cholutse. He will talk about the potential for smaller scale Alpine style trips in the area.

Trips and training coming up. . . .

Mid-winter Christmas at Luxmore Hut



This year's mid-winter Christmas trip on 23 & 24 June will be to Luxmore Hut. The plan is to leave Dunedin on Saturday morning to reach Te Anau by noon for a walk to the hut. As usual, people will bring far too much Christmas themed food and refreshments and a \$5 secret Santa present. On Sunday, those able will attempt to summit Luxmore before walking out for the drive home. Contact Riley on rileychallis@gmail.com to book a place on this trip.

Ski Touring 30 June

Matteo is organising a ski touring club trip on the Old Man Range with the objective of reaching Nicholson's Hut for the last Saturday of the 30th of June, snow permitting of course.

This will be a day trip from Dunedin. The tour is easy and requires a moderate level of fitness and off piste ski ability. It will suit beginners who have had previous touring experience and want to move further away into remote places. Contact Matteo

on zuccotn@gmail.com for more information, or to book a place in this trip.



Snowcraft in September

Dates for this year's Introductory Snowcraft course are planned for Tuesday evening, 11 Sept in Dunedin and the following weekend of 15-16 Sept in the mountains (leaving on Friday evening).

The course is planned to give new mountaineers the basic skills they need to get started in the mountains and an appreciation of risks and challenges involved in this wonderful sport. Skills covered include ice axe and crampon use, avalanche avoidance and rescue, camping and navigation. Reasonable fitness is needed, but no prior snow experience is required. Full details – see story on Page 10.

A very limited number of \$10 Banff tickets will be on sale to members at our Club night on 13 June.

Another great reason to come along.

Leaning Lodge – 55 years of section trips

The Otago Section Committee recently used some of our Banff funds to support the Leaning Lodge Trust to bring the hut up to spec. Trustee and Section stalwart Pete Strang says thanks by remembering a trip to the hut 55 years ago!

With all the work going on to bring the Leaning Lodge up to standard, and considering all the rules, regulations, and the “safety” requirements today, I couldn’t help reflecting on a trip 55 years ago to the old Leaning Lodge in the middle of winter. Marion and I must have had 3 to 4 days up our sleeves or perhaps we just decided to give lectures a miss...but whatever, the adventure was on.

We sent the skis up to Middlemarch on the train a few days before and headed off on my Royal Enfield 350 motorbike very early on a very wintery day, a southerly change being forecast and also snow. I still remember how cold it was and Marion, now into her 70’s, still reminds me of the discomforts of that motorbike! She was wearing my down jacket made by my mother from old sleeping bags or was it her duffle coat? We had layers and layers on under our old oil skin parkas.

In those days the road was not tarsealed but just one badly corrugated snake through a tussocked wilderness. It went on for ever and the 50’s machine had no back shockies. [a far cry from my present-day fully automatic, SYM 300 GTS Evo Super Scooter with heated handgrips, a heater, and the rest !] The Enfield’s one claim to fame, however, was that a battery was really a superfluous item and if it rattled off, as it did on one memorable trip in the Mackenzie Country heading to Cook, its magneto would keep the machine going although the lights would only go if you were accelerating.... a trifle challenging at night up the side of Pukaki! I digress however!

We made it to Middlemarch by around 11am and picked up the skis from the railway station. Marion held onto them grimly as we made our way to the old stone hut at the start of the Otago Ski Club poled route up to Leaning Lodge....now the starting point for heading up to Big Hut. However, we came off the bike in the very wet and slippery conditions crossing the field to the hut and broke the foot rest off, skis and poles going everywhere! The new foot rest for Marion became the exhaust pipe....sizzling and steam and the smell of rubber! By this time there were snow flurries coming from time to time.

I really wondered whether we should carry on.....no smart phones to assess the weather....didn’t need them, it was pretty obvious. We had planned a turnaround time, and let our parents know where we were headed but not all the details! We had a brew using my primus, stowed the trusty bike in the hut and headed off. The patches of blue disappeared pretty promptly as we gained height up the ridge and soon we were in a snowy wilderness and it really had the beginnings of a blizzard and became one. It was a mission breaking a trail, the markers kept coming into view, but eventually I had to get Marion to stay at a marker pole until I went on, identified the next one and waded through the maelstrom and called her on. We had the odd pause for a rest, but we were getting colder and colder and wondered seriously about turning around. There was absolutely no shelter anywhere.

By this time, we were reasonably high up and when the poles crossed a gully I realised that the hut was probably not that far away but the conditions were such that we needed all our reserves to make it. The snow was waist deep in places. We dumped the skis at the pole where we exited the gully along with some heavy tinned food...not much “dehy” in those days!



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It would not be too difficult to come back down the short distance tomorrow to pick the stuff up.....after all southerlies usually blow themselves out....you don't need a smart phone to tell you that! Half an hour later with much relief we dug our way into the hut from above the steps !unbelievable.

We got the Little Dorrit stove going. I had carried up some coal and the Otago Ski Club had a supply as well. We had a billy on the stove melting snow within minutes and it was heaven. I went back for the skis and food later the next morning. The weather was far from settled with a lot of wind, and blowing snow. By evening on the second day it was clearing a little, but we decided to exit the following day which we did through bottomless drifts, literally swimming and falling down the mountainside.



Climbing up to Leaning Lodge Aug 63

It was early afternoon when we got to the stone hut, and it was starting to snow again off and on. We chugged off to Middlemarch trying to stay upright leaving the skis at the station to be brought through to Dunedin in the next few days. We then headed off for Dunedin; no "Kissing Gate" café in those days, just a very bleak prospect ahead of us. There was some snow on the road at Sutton but the bike was easier to handle as the pack on the tank in front of me was lighter and Marion's pack was not loading her down too much as she could balance it on the back of the carrier.

There was no smart phone to check on road conditions....you didn't have to...it was pretty obvious that it was going to be an adventure and the locals we talked to confirmed that the road was "probably closed" but to have a go anyway ! Deep Stream came and went but the hill up towards Clarke's Junction became a challenge as the snow got deeper and deeper until we finally came off in a drift. We could see the hotel in the distance and we managed to get there by pushing the bike through the drifts with the motor helping us. It seemed an interminable distance but we finally made it. There was a wonderful welcome awaiting us with cups of tea and sandwiches, and a roaring fire, all "on the house." I think the proprietors were as surprised as we were that we had got that far. We have never forgotten their hospitality.

An hour or so later the local council managed to get through to the hotel from Outram, clearing the road with snow plough and truck. They loaded the bike on board the truck and took us out to Outram. It was a wonderful trip “exploding” through the drifts. As the council guys helped us unload our bike at the bottom of the hill on the Taieri Plains the sun came out, it was almost balmy, and there was not a skerrick of snow anywhere. When we got home no one believed us.

Pete’s footnote: “You will note my reference to social media. Please forgive me if I make one observation. It is that like the new hut today that has to comply with building regulations in a harsh environment [would you believe we have to replace all the galvanised bolts with stainless steel ones !] we are being told that we need to carry our cell phones on our trips to remain “safe”. I don’t have too much problem with locator beacons and telling people about your intentions and expected time out, but I think it is an untruth that you are not safe without a phone.

We are fast losing touch with the primal and my suggestion would be that if you do have to take it with you have it well and truly turned off for the trip and resist the “requirement” that you always have to check in to let people know where you are and that you are safe....unless there is an absolute emergency. Making some of your experience a secret might start the discovery of your authentic self...and your judgment much more worked out than what a txt message might tell you to do next. You gain your own “good authority” which is priceless for survival in the mountains especially when you get into the big stuff. It is called experience and gaining it is an apprenticeship which takes time over years and a ton of commitment.”



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How to get rich and famous – enter this year’s Photographic Competition

Each year FMC (Federated Mountain Clubs) run a photographic competition where Clubs affiliated to the FMC organise their own internal competition then forward the winning two photos per category to FMC for the overall competition.

There are significant prizes offered for the winners of the national competition, and there’s a Bivouac sponsored Otago Section prize for People’s Choice. See the FMC website for further information and the detailed rules or contact Keith Moffat for details of the local competition.

Each Section of the NZAC counts as a separate club and this year we are going to have an **Otago Section competition** to pick the photographs to send to the National FMC. The Otago Section entries will be shown at the 4th July section meeting where an independent judge will announce the winners and provide commentary on the entries. All photos shall be submitted in digital format with file sizes 1Mb to 5 Mb.

To enter contact Keith Moffat at moffat.k172@gmail.com and he will send you an entry form.

The Categories are

1. **ABOVE BUSHLINE** (With no Human Element)
2. **ABOVE BUSHLINE** (With a Human Element)
3. **BELOW BUSHLINE** (With no Human Element)
4. **BELOW BUSHLINE** (With a Human Element)
5. **HISTORIC**
6. **NATIVE FLORA & FAUNA**

Rules

1. Definition of a “human element”

The definition of a “human element” is flexible but the general intention is: Where the photo contains as anything other than as a very minor feature: people, a hut, a track sign/marker, bridge, ice axe and anything else that has been introduced by humans into the environment then we would define that as having “a Human element”. But if a photo has what could be called a Human Element but that element is very small, inconsequential and not a feature in the photo then you could count it as “No Human Element”.

2. Entries for the contemporary categories must be taken after 1 Jan 2016. Any photos taken prior to this date will automatically be entered into the historic category.

3. Definition of “historic”

The intention for the historic category is for entrants to go back through club and individual archives to select “old photos” rather than “photos of old things”. As an example, a recent photo of a hut built in the 1950’s is not a ‘historic’ photo. However, a photo of the same hut taken in the 1960’s certainly is a ‘historic’ photo.

Photos for the historic category must be taken before 1 Jan 2016. The prize for any winning photo from a club archive by a deceased member will go to the club. The prize for any winning photo from an individual archive by a deceased person will go to the person who entered the photo, whether through a club or as an individual supporter.

4. All photos must be taken within New Zealand, which is defined as within our Exclusive Economic Zone. This includes the following islands; North, South, Stewart, Chatham, Kermadec, Sub-Antarctic.

5. Rules on post processing:

- Adjustments for exposure, white balance, contrast & levels are allowed.
- Cropping is allowed
- Stitching for panoramic shots is allowed
- Removal or insertion of features not in the original image is not allowed.

For the full rules relating to the competition are on the FMC website at <https://www.fmc.org.nz/photo-competition/>

Riley Smith new Otago Section Chair

When Section chair Raluca Ana returned to Europe for family reasons recently, her understudy stepped in to head the Dunedin based committee. Although he hasn’t yet finished NCEA, Riley is passionate about climbing and supporting NZAC in any way he can.



Last month’s Spanish Crags Talk



At the May Section meeting it was great to have long-time section supporter Sarah Tiong talk to us about her trip to Spain to sample their rock climbing and tourist spots.

Sarah’s talk was no simple “we climbed this, then we climbed that” tour of Spain but a full-scale travelogue of everything you need to know. From transport to food, accommodation to gear shops, and locations to climbing partner websites; Sarah’s talk gave us everything we needed to know. Not only did she explore a range of crags – she even gave each a score on her newly invented scale.

Another way to summit



Section member Pepijn Wyffels reports on his recent summits. *“A wonderful cold Autumn evening flight after launching my paraglider from Minor Peak, next to Lake Wakatipu close to Glenorchy. The subtle first snow on the tops of Major Peak, Mt. Larkins and Ben More contributed to a fantastic scenery from the air. The landing was on Pigeon Island to camp for the night in the middle of the lake”.*



Book now for Snowcraft Course

Dates for this year's Snowcraft course are confirmed (weather dependent) for Tuesday 11 Sept, and the weekend of 14-16th September (Friday evening to get to Queenstown). The course is an intro to using ice axe, crampons, and avalanche rescue gear, so that you can safely more around in snow-covered terrain. If you've never used crampons, you need to do this course before you come on any club trips to snowy peaks. There should be a straightforward trip or two planned for the few months after the course, so doing the course and then a couple of trips would be a good grounding if you're wanting to get into doing more mountaineering.



2014 Snowcraft Course members

We run the course at the Remarkables ski field, where there is some great terrain and there are beautiful places to get to. The course may involve camping at Lake Alta on the Saturday night, but this is to be decided closer to the time - otherwise there will be two day-trips, for which we drive up from where we stay. The course costs \$160, much of which is the cost of two nights at the motor camp in Frankton.

If you are interested in going, please e-mail Heather Rhodes (heathermayrhodes@gmail.com) and Danilo Hegg (danilo_hegg@hotmail.com) to discuss whether the course is suitable for you.

Include details of your outdoor experience, and also what gear (including clothing) you have access to for an overnight trip in the snow (the course fee does include hire of crampons, ice axes and avalanche gear, if needed). We look forward to hearing from you! We have three instructors, with Rowan Cox also, so there is space for 12 participants. NZAC members from other areas are also showing interest, so get in quick.

New 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



2017-18 Otago Section Committee			
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