



NEW ZEALAND  
ALPINE CLUB

# The Otago Climber

*November 2017*



This month's Club Night speakers –  
details on Page 2



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ALPINE CLUB

# *The Otago Climber*

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



**November 2017**

## Meetings

*1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the Month, Staff Club, University of Otago (Leith St).*



### **Wednesday, 1 November**

Exactly a year after heading off, Allan Brent and Lydia McLean will give a talk about their four-month traverse of the South Island. They walked, climbed, paddled and biked from Cape Farewell to Foveaux Strait via the Southern Alps – during one of the worst summers in recent history. In spite of this, the team crossed the Main Divide 18 times and summited a number of peaks along the way

## Trips and Training

### **Buchanan Peaks and Mt Alta, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> November.**

This month's first trip is to climb the Buchanan Peaks (2002m) and perhaps also Mt Alta (2339m).

These peaks are to the West of the Matukituki valley and overlook Wanaka.

It is proposed to walk into alpine tarns at about 1400 m on the Saturday morning where we will set up a camp. On Saturday afternoon we will climb Buchanan Peaks and return to the camp site.

On Sunday those with energy to spare can climb Mt Alta. Both climbs are easy grade 1 routes ideal for a beginner but a good level of fitness will be required.



Contact Keith Moffat at [Moffat.k172@gmail.com](mailto:Moffat.k172@gmail.com) if you want to come and you will be sent a link to a registration form. If you have any questions contact Keith on 03 4738903 or 027 6644037.

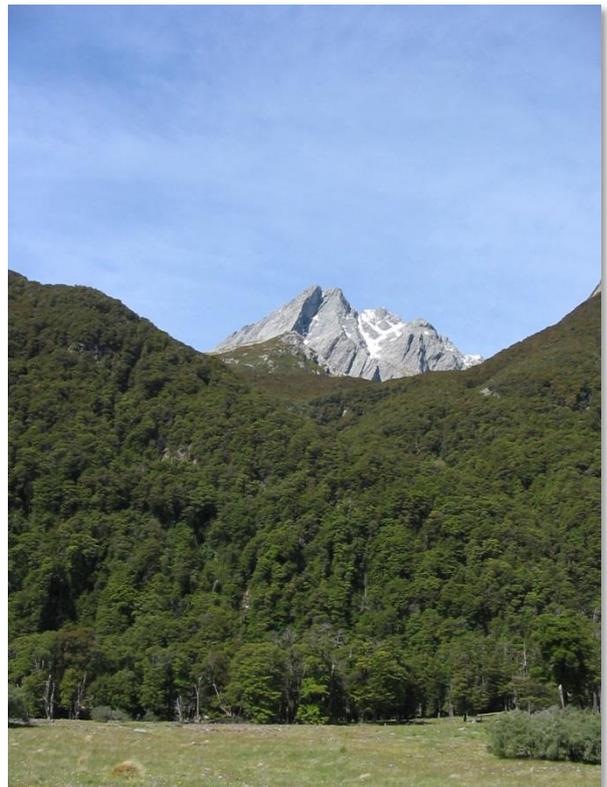
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### **Dasler Pinnacles, 24-26 November**

The section's second November trip is to the Dasler Pinnacles, which besides being a great viewpoint in the Hopkins Valley, is a straightforward scramble, and has a cute old bivvy at the bush line.

Suitable for recent Snowcraft attendees or those without substantial ice axe and crampon experience, but a head for heights is essential and numbers may be limited.

Get in touch with Jaz Morris to join - [jaz.n.morris@gmail.com](mailto:jaz.n.morris@gmail.com) or phone 0274069173



## Walking into the night, The Footstool - *As told to Christopher Tipper by his pet Penguin*

I know it's early but working in the evenings has begun to force my hand. I'm here for this and I need this activity, life simply would be bland without the experience of climbing mountains. Walking into the night, under a blanket of stars and surrounded by the highest mountains in the country is an experience that every person should have at least once. Although a place not to be taken lightly, it is a fascination that I've had for a while now.



Starting early, walking through the night and beginning to feel comfortable in a harsh world. A world that in itself is not malicious; but a world that is raw and follows a set of simple rules. Being a penguin isn't a simple life all the time. I used to live in an ocean of wool then I came to life woven into the shape



I am now, and lived in a shop until someone bought me as a gift. I had no understanding of what was happening to me, but I enjoyed the fact my life was going to give meaning in some way or another. Little did I know I was about to move to Mt Cook, and start climbing, but being the penguin I am, I was intrigued. I lived on the dashboard of the car and slid around, I was warm in the sun and cold in the evening which I

liked. I enjoy living here, but I miss eating fish from the ocean, but I'm sure there is a fact of life tied up in that, that sometimes we need to leave things of ourselves behind in order to become a better or a replenished version of ourselves

I've been here for three weeks now and am starting to feel pretty fit, I have managed to flap all my way out to the carpark of the accommodation where I live, I've free soloed the stairs and clambered over a few rocks, but all this was just preparation for the real peaks I was about to experience for the first time. I am ushered into a small pack and the world was plunged into darkness but told this was normal and the apprehension I was feeling wasn't something to be afraid of. The darkness does weird things to your mind and it really forces you to assess your life.





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As I thought of these deep things, I slowly moved up the Hooker track to what is called the Stocking Stream, where I was able to bathe in the cool refreshing river for a bit before I was back in the pack. After the short break, I was able to relax into the journey and 2hrs later we neared the Sefton Biv. The door was open and as I gazed out at the stars, I could faintly make out the Milky Way, which was amazing and as the sun began to come up. I lusted for the opportunity to see that sight again



Wow, the next day was fast! Crampons and ice axe and I was off. I was flapping like crazy to keep up. Roped to this guy was relentless but mainly because I am only about 6inches tall. I found hopping to be quite efficient. After a few minutes I stumbled back into the pack for rest and the time slowly moved out. Every so often I'd peer out the top of the pack and see the glorious vistas. Mt Wakefield over to the East looked really cool and I could see that a full traverse of the Cook Range was possible, if not very long and involved in the crux sections. After a couple of hours we were up the main divide looking at the West Coast. I couldn't see the sea, as it was blanketed in a layer of cloud. As I scanned around and down into the Copland Valley, my eyes lifted to the lofty heights of the Sibyl Peak, The Unicorn and Dilemma. I tried to imagine all the different stories that I could conjure around how and why they were named but soon the time for day dreaming was over and preparations were made for the final summit push.

When you've been pushing hard for a few hours, the last slope can be hard going. After about 30mins I was on top and exhausted. I staggered onto the summit and looked all the way down to the Hermitage. For the first time, I could climb a mountain and see my house. Actually it was the first alpine trip I had been on, justifying that I call myself a penguinist and fast becoming a multi-potentialist. I was Penguinisting at a high level.

After a short while we were making our way down and to the relative safety of Sefton Biv again. The snow was soft and wet on the Eugenie Glacier which made for a horrendous time trying to safely walk down. However it makes for really good skiing at this time of year. The crevasses were filled in really well and it makes for safe travel. As we neared the corner to come onto the Tewaewae Glacier tiredness was starting to set in and I was beginning to feel safer about moving on this terrain. I made sure to be careful on the decent before the lower angled terrain where I was able to just walk down and then it was good going to the hut. All that remained was the walk back down to the car from the Biv to finish a long day.

The day comprised of a

0030	start		
0300	at the hut	2.5hrs	360m/hr
0530 – 0830	hut to summit	3hrs	370m/hr
0835 – 1105	summit to hut	2.5hrs	440m/hr
1115 – 1315	hut to car	2hrs	450m/hr



## Trip Report - Spring Adventures – *story and photos Jaz Morris*

At the end of September 2011, I handed in an Honours dissertation and immediately left to climb the South Face of Mt Tutoko with Danilo Hegg, where we snatched a rare spring weather window. At the end of September this year I handed in a much larger thesis and found myself two days later at Lake Alta, thinking about this coincidence and wondering where the time went. One thing hasn't changed: in six years, I'm still convinced there is no finer sound than the crunch of crampons on perfect frozen névé.



*Penzy Dinsdale enjoying Single Cone*

On this occasion, I was off to Single Cone with a few friends - Lottie Armstrong, Rowan Cox, Penzy Dinsdale and Jamie Gardner - and the plan was to see if we could scratch our way up the 'South Face Classic' route. This involves climbing the short ice route Touchdown, and then apparently making a rising traverse for a few hundred metres through snowy ramps that lead up and left, to wind up reasonably close to the summit. Remembering Touchdown being about 40m of easy WI2 ice (in winter), the ice conditions on this occasion left me with more than I bargained for, running out 55m of WI3/3+ brittle, late season ice with only 8 or 9 ice screws.

Following this initial excitement our large party, initially climbing independently, more or less coalesced as a few bare patches of snow combined with suboptimal route selection saw us heading up a different line to wind-up more or less directly above Touchdown. Despite a few challenging steps of unconsolidated snow over short bluffs ("faith-based climbing"), and options for decent anchors spaced at inconvenient intervals of about 61m (with 60m ropes), we eventually topped out on the face on dusk and wandered back down the ski field after an excellent day out.

After this rather good start to post-PhD life I decided to embark on a bit of a road trip with the excuse that I was waiting to hear back about some work possibilities. After skiing closing day at Treble Cone and then running up Breast Hill near Hawea, I wound up tramping in the rain for a few days in the Victoria Forest Park near Springs Junction, with Laura Doughty and Tom McKellar.

This most excellent tramping area, composed of granite and beech forest, is essentially a northern outpost of Fiordland, complete with scrub, steep bluffs and (after a suitable effort) some excellent and occasionally quite challenging tops travel. After traversing north from the tops above Duffy's Creek we climbed Pt. 1573 above Shaw Stream and descended into Lake Stream to stay at the excellent biv at the valley head.



*Laura and Tom - Victoria Range Forest Park*



Then, following an afternoon climbing back in Christchurch and the CMC's mountain film festival I drove up to Hangdog for a few days climbing at Paynes Ford. Frequent rain meant that I mostly climbed at



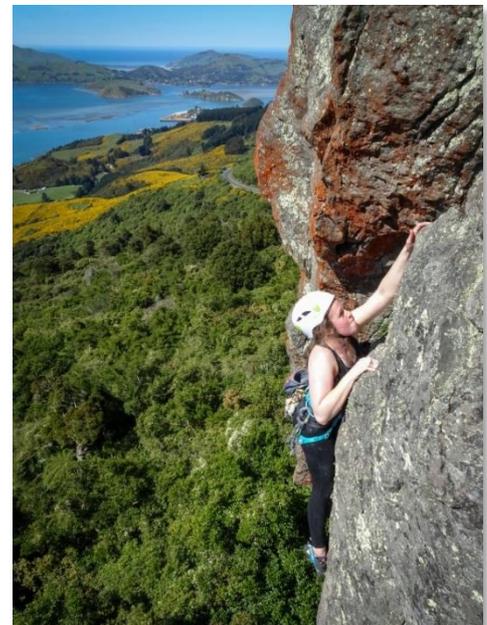
*Tenuite Wall, Payne's Ford*

Pohara, but an excellent day was had running the Abel Tasman track in 5.5 hours or so from Totaranui to Marahau. I was climbing with Meg Buddle but was surprised to bump into Danilo who also happened to be in the area.

Subsequently, I drove back down to Christchurch again for a day of climbing at the Altar Crag in Diamond Harbour with Pete Harris and Rose Pearson. From Christchurch the final leg of the trip was Ben Dare's stag do at Wyn Irwin Hut, Mt Cook, where he was made to (among other things) drag a ball and chain of ice (harvested from the Tasman Lake), and crash the NZMGA's AGM happening at Unwin Hut to enquire about guide biscuits and someone to take him up Aoraki. Following this I was, naturally, a tad tired, and I returned to Dunedin after two weeks away and 3200 km on the road.

Post script: Huey hadn't been altogether kind during that fortnight and naturally the good weather coincided with my return to town. A day at Mihiwaka in the sun was a satisfactory excuse to stay away from work, and so I went off and climbed several of the classics with Beth Scott and Lottie Armstrong.

Appropriately, Beth managed a good onsight of Aqualung with the eponymous song echoing loudly around the crag from my portable speaker. In nice weather, in my opinion Dunedin has no finer crag than Mihiwaka!



*Beth onsights Aqualung at Mihiwaka*

I was very pleased to see that the crag remains inviolate with respect to its complete lack of bolts, and the memorial plaque to our late friend Calum Hudson is a good reminder that this is how it should stay

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## Vodafone emails to end . .

Vodafone customers will be aware that they are ending their email service. If you have one of the email accounts listed below, can you please let Margaret know your new email address so that she can update the NZAC database before Vodafone shuts the emails down on 30<sup>th</sup> November, please?

vodafone.co.nz, ihug.co.nz, quik.co.nz, paradise.net.nz, wave.co.nz, es.co.nz, clear.net.nz, pccconnect.co.nz, vodafone.net

If you have one of these Vodafone email accounts, please email your new address to [margaret@alpineclub.org.nz](mailto:margaret@alpineclub.org.nz) Otherwise you are going to miss these excellent Newsletters and other important information from NZAC.

## DoC to trial booking system

An online booking system for Siberia and Brewster huts will be trialled for the period 1 December 2017 to 8 April 2018. **The booking system will be accessible online from 13 November 2017 through the DOC website.**

According to Annette Grieve, DoC's Senior Ranger in Wanaka, the intent of the trial booking system is to "provide a quality visitor experience at these huts through not consistently exceeding their capacity, provide users with good information to plan and prepare for their trip by being well informed on availability of beds at these huts and provide for the safe use of these huts. Shelter in a storm is guaranteed if trampers are caught out." Doc advise they will be reviewing the trial after the end of April 2018 to decide whether to implement it with or without any changes, at one or both huts. Feedback from hut users will be sought through a simple survey during the season. "In addition, feedback is being sought from commercial operators and others." If you would like more info, or would like to comment to DoC directly, contact **Annette Grieve**, Senior Ranger/ Supervisor – Community, Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 93, WANAKA

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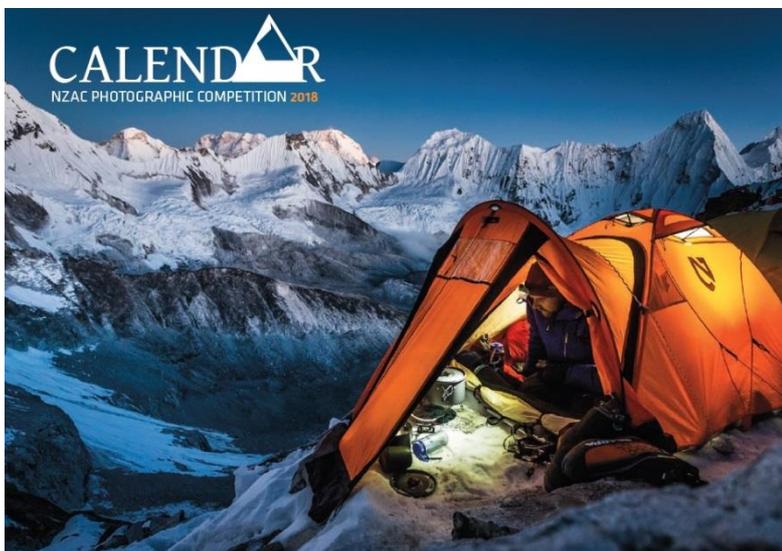
## Trust applications now open

Applications are now open for the Inspiring Explorers' Expedition for 2018! The expedition will attempt a 560-kilometre crossing on skis of the Greenland ice cap and organisers are looking for three young New Zealanders or Australians (20-35 years) to participate.

The expedition will honour Norwegian explorer Fridtjof Nansen, who made the first successful crossing of the Greenland ice cap in 1888. Nansen is regarded as an icon of polar exploration and his innovations and expeditions inspired explorers of the Antarctic heroic-era, including Scott, Shackleton and Amundsen. View a video here: <http://bit.ly/InspiringExplorers2018>

The Antarctic Heritage Trust is looking for young people with an adventurous spirit, resilience and endurance to be a part of this special team. Applicants do not need to be seasoned polar explorers and more information and the application form is available on their website:

[www.nzaht.org/inspiring-explorers/inspiring-explorers-2018](http://www.nzaht.org/inspiring-explorers/inspiring-explorers-2018) Applications close Sunday 19 November.



The 2018 calendar with all the winning images from the 2017 Photo Competition is now for sale online.

The perfect alternative to a Christmas Card with \$5 postage to anywhere in the world included in the online price. Pick-up from National Office less this amount.

<https://alpineclub.org.nz/product/nzac-alpine-calendar-2018/>



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