

The Otago Climber

September 2019



Hopping into Wye Creek – Ryan Thomas reports on the sublime conditions they found on the most recent Section trip – page 5.

The Otago Climber

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

September 2019

Club Night

Wednesday, 4 September 2019

University of Otago Staff Club, Union St, 7.30pm

This month is our Section AGM – and our speaker is the incoming NZAC President Lindsay Smith.

The evening will begin with a brief Annual General Meeting where Section Chair Ryan Thomas will report on the year just ending before calling for nominations for committee members for the coming year. The current committee members have indicated they are happy to continue in their roles and Eve O'Brien has generously agreed to become Secretary – covering Lindsay Smith's appointment to his new national



Lindsay approaches the summit of Mt Cook

role. Although the current committee is continuing, please don't hesitate to put your name forward if you are keen to contribute – your help will be greatly appreciated.

Following the AGM, longtime Otago Section committee member and the incoming NZAC President Lindsay Smith, would like a chance to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the Club and get your views, comments and suggestions. It would be great if Section members could come along ready to contribute – as well as to be wowed by his outstanding climbing achievements (Tui).

Trips and events calendar

Ski Touring in Norway. Special evening, Thursday, 29 August. Beggs Ski Shop have organised a special presentation by Jorma Kivelä from Norway. Full details, Page4

Section AGM and Club Night. The Annual General Meeting of the Otago Section of the NZ Alpine Club will be held on Wednesday, 4 September. As is usual, there will be a brief presentation from Section Chair Ryan Thomas and elections for Chair, Treasurer and Section Committee members. Ryan's Annual Report is on page 7 of this newsletter. Please give some thought to joining the committee. Following the AGM, incoming NZAC President Lindsay Smith will discuss the way forward for the Club and will get your views on the challenges ahead.

Section book sale continues. Following the success of the recent sale of Section Library books, the Committee will continue the sale each Section Club Night. Ryan and Alex will bring along a couple of boxes of books each month – with everything for sale for a gold coin donation. A great chance to get winter reading material at hugely discounted prices. Remember to bring a few dollars when you come to Section Club Night on **Wednesday, 4 September.**

Ski Touring. (snow permitting) Saturday, 7 September. Matteo is leading a one day Ski touring Trip with the objective of Mt Koharau (2009m) via the Awakino Ski field. The tour is easy and requires a moderate level of fitness and off piste ski ability. More challenging terrain is available for the keen ones. This will be a daytrip from Dunedin- meet at 6.45am and car pool on 4WD via Kurow and access via Awakino ski field and return to town by about 7pm. Full details and registration on the Section website – www.ozonzac.org.nz If you are not already registered – “how to” details on page 9.

Social climb at Routeburn Falls. 14/15 September. Steve August is leading a low-key trip to Routeburn Falls Hut, with a possible climb of a nearby peak if conditions and weather permit. He plans for the trip to start at his Bannockburn holiday house on Friday night with a relaxed trip to Routeburn on Saturday. If you are interested 0274463356 or email steve@kiwitub.com

Bouldering in Christchurch. If you are into bouldering, there are two outstanding events in Christchurch at the end of August and in early September. Here is the link <https://nibs.nz/> for the bouldering comp on 31st August. A good excuse to go and try new Uprising. NZAC are a sponsor. The other possibility is Flockfest <https://www.facebook.com/events/469022570560534/>. It is a fun bouldering comp on the Saturday at Flock Hill and removing of wilding pines on the Sunday. Again NZAC are a sponsor.

If you are interested in either event, email us at otago.climber@gmail.com and we will look at coordinating transport if there is enough interest.

National Climbing Camp. The Otago Section are organising the National Summer Climbing camp to be based at the site of Ferguson Hut in the Hunter Valley from Saturday 1st Feb to Saturday 8th Feb. There are several peaks within easy reach of Ferguson Hut, and it is a great opportunity to explore a remote corner of the New Zealand Mountains. For full details and booking info, go to https://alpineclub.org.nz/single-event/?event_id=3413939

Special club night

Try Ski touring in Norway with Jorma Kivelä



Beggs Ski Shop, a Dunedin skiing institution, has generously organised and sponsored an exciting talk by Jorma Kivelä, an engineer at Moonlight (www.moonlight.no) in northern Norway. He'll talk about ski touring in the polar night and give us the story behind the world's lightest skis and the brightest headlamps.

This talk will be held on Thursday, 29 August 2019 at the University of Otago Staff Club (next to the Leith) 90 Union Place West, North Dunedin from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm.

Entry by gold coin donation and all proceeds go to the local Search and Rescue.



Ski touring in Queenstown

Ryan Thomas reports on a trip you shouldn't have missed

An awful ski season.

An atrocious weather forecast.

A desperate need to go skiing.

What else to do but organize a ski touring trip?

And so it was that we three – Juliet, Jono, and myself – set out for Queenstown for a weekend of ski touring. I was not particularly optimistic about the weather forecast or our ability to ski anything while there. A cold front indicated that there should be fresh snow, but MetService was calling for 60 km/h winds that would lead to appalling skiing conditions. The avalanche forecast for Saturday was not very inspiring, either. And yet we persisted, leaving Dunedin after work, stopping in Alexandra for kebabs, and getting to our Queenstown hostel near 10 pm on Friday night.

On waking on Saturday morning, I was slightly more hopeful. The rain in Queenstown had stopped, and I could actually see the stars. After a quick breakfast we drove to the Remarkables ski field, picking up Heather the birthday girl on the way. We had some fun halfway



Heather and Jono make the most of Wye Creek.

up the road putting on chains in the only falling snow for the whole weekend, but eventually we made it to the parking lot where there was actual sun and almost no wind. We talked briefly with ski patrol about conditions, then proceeded to skin up the resort to Wye Creek saddle.

It was a popular day to be out and about in the Remarkables, not least because the Remarkables Ice and Mixed Festival was that weekend. We followed a rather nice skin track made by the backcountry ski touring course to the saddle, and obliged their hard work by not stealing first tracks down the other side.

While we prepared to ski down to Wye Creek, the clouds lifted and we were treated to a beautiful view of the Wye Creek valley and the undisturbed blanket of snow that lay upon it.

Skiing down from the saddle was a sublime experience. Graceful turns in perfect, dry powder on a solid base in the sunshine without wind – it doesn't get any better. Fresh tracks were available for everyone. From the lake at the bottom, we skinned over to a small spur where we did a few laps in more perfect snow, although we backed off on one slope because it had got way too warm! The clouds swept in and out like the sea and treated us with ever-changing views of Wye Creek. It was with great reluctance that we headed back to the ski field, but we arrived there after everyone had left, and it made for a great experience skiing down the empty field.



Juliet skis the powder in Soho Basin

On Sunday, we (but without Heather) skinned up Cardrona to ski in the bowls behind the ski field. If possible, Sunday was a better day than Saturday – blue skies, not a cloud to be seen. More perfect powder sitting mostly untracked in SoHo Basin. We managed almost the first tracks in the basin and certainly the first tracks on a small, cool-looking couloir near the bottom.

From the bottom, we skinned to the top of Mount Cardrona and drank in the expansive views of the surrounding mountains. We managed to make two more laps of SoHo Basin before getting way too tired to continue and heading home. It might not sound like much, but we managed to ski nearly 3000 m in a weekend – not bad for my first time out all year!

Section Chair's Annual Report, 2018-2019

Following in the age-old tradition of only last year, I have had the opportunity to chair the Otago Section of the New Zealand Alpine Club after our Chairperson went AWOL.

Many thanks to our previous section chair Riley Smith, who did a fantastic job despite still being in high school for part of his tenure! His time as section chair hopefully demonstrates the kind of contribution that climbers of any age can make to their local section, from simply being on the committee all the way up to major leadership roles.

This year has seen a major change to the governance structure of the club as a whole, with the club moving away from the club committee structure and to an elected board. After facing stiff competition, our section's secretary Lindsay Smith was elected President under the new governance rules of the club. While an exciting time for the club and for Lindsay, the section will have to do without his experience and guidance on the section committee. Luckily, we have had a number of members join the committee in addition to a number of old hands so don't worry – the Otago Section is in good hands!

Our section ran another successful Banff Mountain Film Festival in June and gave members the opportunity to see some of the best mountain films from the comfort of the Regent Theatre, and it also allowed us to recharge our section coffers. Unfortunately, profit from our screening of Banff was down yet again this year due to, among other things, increased costs at the Regent, availability of screening dates, and competition for people's attention and money from other film screenings and festivals. While we are still making a profit from Banff, if trends continue, we will have to look at downsizing to a single screening and/or moving to a smaller, less expensive venue.

Despite the reduction in Banff profit, our section's finances are in healthy shape thanks to our dedicated treasurer. Our major expenditures for this year have been in support of local climbing

and local climbers. We have continued to support the Dunedin Climbing Club, an initiative started by local guide Tim Bartholomew to get young people into rock climbing in a safe and fun way. Our support has allowed Tim to keep the cost down, allowing those from less advantaged households to participate. Local crags have seen a lot of development over the past year by Steve Carr, Murray Judge, and many others, and we have contributed to the cost of new bolts and anchors.

Our summer Tuesday night rock climbing has seen continued popularity over the past year but without the craziness of some nights in the past. To improve safety at the crag, we have revised our policies regarding our social climbing night with the major change being that we no longer allow complete beginners to attend. On the other hand, we have tried to offer a number of inexpensive introductory rock-climbing courses to make sure that everyone who wants to come can come – after suitable training. Tuesday night rock climbing remains one of our best programs, as it offers a chance to climb, socialize, and learn from old and new members alike.

Over the past year, the section has run roughly one section trip per month with nearly all of these trips being run by members of the section committee. While not necessarily a problem, the range of trips on offer is limited by the interests of those on the committee; this is why we saw many rock climbing trips this year and few mountaineering trips. To try and increase the number of trip leaders, and thus the number of trips, the section committee has clarified and simplified our policy on who can lead section trips, and we ran a trip leader's information night earlier in the year.

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We also launched our trip planning and dissemination service, located at www.ozonzac.org.nz, to improve the ability of trip leaders to plan trips and to communicate them to interested members on short notice. After some initial growing pains, our new tool is working well and we currently have seventy people signed up for the service.

In closing, I want to thank all the people who make the NZAC successful: the staff at

headquarters, the executive board, the section committees, and, most importantly, the members themselves. Without you, the club would not be the vibrant, friendly community that it is. I'm proud to be able to give back to a club that has given me so much during my time in New Zealand.

See you in the hills.

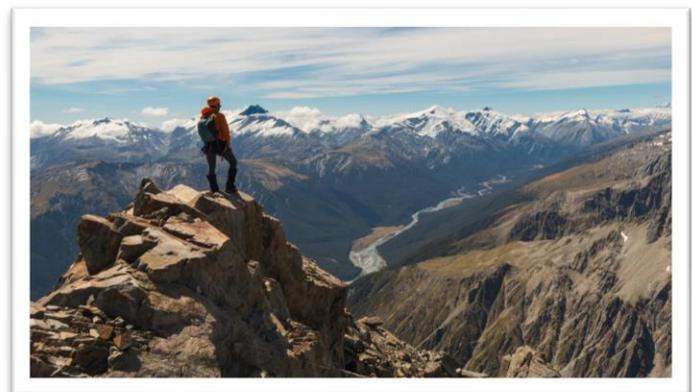
Ryan Thomas

Otago Section Chair

New "Ohau-Landsborough" New Zealand Alpine Club guidebook underway!

James Thornton, Nina Dickerhof and Ross Cullen are working on this title which will replace the Barron Saddle – Mt Brewster guidebook in spring 2020; with more than 100 new climbs since the current edition.

The authors are requesting colour photographs for publication and information such as errors and omissions in the current edition, changes to existing routes, access, huts, and of course, new routes.



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Go Native is a Wellington-based company which makes ready to eat casseroles and curries for the outdoor market and natural slow-release energy fruit bars.

Go Native are also going to support the NZAC Club Hut Fund with an annual donation equalling 10% commission from all purchases you make. To get your discount, and add to the club's funds, log in to see the checkout code

www.alpineclub.org.nz/company/go-native/

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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

2018-19 Otago Section Committee			
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