

NZAC NELSON MARLBOROUGH SECTION NEWS

August 2023

Chairmans Pitch

Hi all.

Winter is off to a slow start. However there have been plenty of members out and about over the last month. I finally led a club trip to the Blue Lake area, three committee members attended instructor training and a backcountry avalanche course, first ascents of ice routes have been made, and there are reports of climbs on other peaks.

The Section has recently acquired a number of older climbing boots for members to borrow. There is a UK 6.5, 7, 7.5, 8 and 10. We have also topped up the avalanche safety gear. The Section is always open to donations of good, new or used gear - like boots, snowshoes or avalanche gear. Also, if you have a suggestion for gear the section should purchase we'd like to hear it.

The AGM will be held in conjunction with the section evening on the 18th October. Nominations will be open for all committee roles and the committee is open to creating new roles for those who are passionate about any area of climbing. Notably, I would like to see a qualified rock climbing instructor and some more Marlborough members put their hands up.

Russell Adams – Chairman

Section Meetings

July. A Marvellous Talk by Jim Davidson

A group of around 30 members and interested others heard how Jim Davidson was persuaded by close friend Penny Webster to conquer all 24 of NZ's 3000 peaks. Both Jim and Penny had part time jobs which gave them flexibility to race into climb their selected peaks whenever weather windows occurred. Jim gave us a showcase of carefully planned climbs on some of our most testing rock, ice and snow.

Wednesday 16 August,

7.30pm The Honest Lawyer, Stoke, Nelson

Nelson Marlborough NZAC Photo Competition. Convenor and Judge, Peter Laurenson.

Peter Laurenson, will present the entries and winners of our first Section photo competition. to those members who raided their photo files! Seventeen members submitted 115 images. Thankyou entrants! Come and enjoy an eclectic mix of alpine imagery. Be inspired to get out there and visually capture your own future adventures. Find out who has won two BBQs, a Turkish rug, Bunnings vouchers and Backcountry Hut 2024 Calendars. The audience will also vote to decide who is this year's overall photo comp winner. Don't miss out on playing your part!

Wednesday 20th September

7.30pm The Honest Lawyer, Stoke, Nelson

Don Bogie. Alpine Rescue and Risk Management in the NZ Mountains

Don will talk about his time at Aoraki doing alpine rescue work and subsequent work including how to get the most strength out of snow anchors. Don recently retired from DOC after 44 years. For eight years, Don was leader of the Alpine Rescue Team at Aoraki Mt Cook. His career highlights include being part of the Ruapehu Alpine Rescue Organisation, DOC manager at Nelson Lakes, Franz Josef and Tongariro and DOC's Principal Advisor Visitor Risk.



Photos. (Left) Alpine rescue team on the summit of Aiguilles Rouge.
(Right.) Inglis-Doole Mt Cook rescue.

Wednesday 18th October

7.30pm The Honest Lawyer, Stoke, Nelson

Pete Cammell, a past NZAC president, will describe his climb of La Perouse from the west. Significantly, this was his 24th NZ 3000m peak.

Bonus Feature: Russell Adams will chair the 2023 Nelson Marlborough Section AGM!

Trip Reports

Preface: A virulent “Up and Down Syndrome” has been identified affecting Alpine Club climbers in Nelson Marlborough. Apparent symptoms include restless weekend nights, rising at 2 or 3am, and delirious happiness, and even line dancing, when approaching summits of 2000 metres or more. Any members with evidence of other unusual behaviour are asked to advise the Newsletter Editor. Possible treatment is being investigated. One veteran believes that recovery is assured by a post trip, celebratory beer - and further adventuring.

Read on for case histories.

An Overnighter at Angelus Hut - 6 June 23



Photos. Left. On the ridge.

Right. Along the ridge from the Speargrass turnoff to Julius Summit

Geared up for the first winter trip of the season, having dusted off the crampons and found the ice axe under the house. Excitement simmered for a moderately early start, motoring to St Arnaud and Mt Robert car park. Our trip was an overnighter at Angeles Hut. No other plans except to build on leg fitness for 2 days. We headed up the Pinchgut Track in bright sunshine to big mountain views. On top the snow was soft. There were some plug steps to follow, though it was a game of staying on top of the crust to avoid falling in. At Angelus Hut we found the lake unfrozen and surrounded by soft, deep snow. There wasn't a breath of wind which made an otherwise cool day rather hot! With a few fellow climbers we went out star gazing as the night was crystal clear.

Next morning, we followed the true ridge back all the way, avoiding the track where ever possible. This involved some fun scrambling. Both of us had summited Angelus Peak numerous times before, so it was an easy call to traverse the Robert Ridge skyline instead. The best bit was Julius Summit between the 4th and 3rd basin. It was a delight. Thoroughly recommended!

A fast exit put us back in Nelson for friday beers.

Seb Head & Bruce Davies



Photos. Imagining avalanche rescues at Tahunanui

Cunning Plans Evaluated for Avalanche Recues

Monday evening, 10th July, saw seven warmly dressed participants gather for a transceiver search down at Tahunanui Beach. Everyone had a turn burying a bagged transceiver in the sand (above the tide mark) for others to find. A few cunning methods were employed to hide the items including creating false mounds, but these couldn't fool the astute searchers and thankfully all "victims" were found in good time.

It was good to review different search methodologies including group verses individual, and coarse verses fine searching.

Hopefully everyone left more confident with their avalanche rescue knowledge.

Liam Sullivan

Bold Climbers Tested on Franklin

With a marginal weather forecast for the long Matariki weekend 15 bold climbers made an attempt on Mt Franklin, the highest point in the Nelson Lakes National Park.

Most leaving work at midday on Thursday rallied at the boat ramp at Lake Rotoroa. The number of people, timing and cost made using a private boat the logical decision and 3 trips up the lake were made in overcast but calm conditions. All participants were safely at the hut just before dark and the boat was tactically triple anchored just off the shore, facing the prevailing wind.

A comfortable early morning saw the group leave Sabine Hut in threes and fours by 7am. In all, the walk to Blue Lake Hut took between 7 and 8.5 hours.

All 15 participants felt up to climbing which was impressive. With a scheduled departure of 4am we were out of the hut by 3:30am. The group split into several smaller parties crossing the moraine wall above Blue Lake (Rotomairewhenua). As the first 8 stood at the beginning of the incline Seb said. "I hope we get to see Matariki. My friends were waking up at 5am to go paddling this morning". "3, 4, 5... 6," I muttered, counting the headlights making their way across the last of the moraine. "There's your 7 stars Seb!" exclaimed Bruce as the second half of the party materialised below us.

Josh Laidlaw and I took the lead up the ridge and around into the gully. I had descended this gully before in the daylight, however, in the dark our sidling turned into boulder hopping and constant twists and turns through a snowy maze, often sinking up to our waists.

After some serious leg work, we made the basin described in the guidebook. The cloud above us was clearing and we were making good time despite poor snow conditions - and interesting route finding. The couloir up to the saddle below peak 2291 was still soft but a good place to put on crampons. We regrouped at the top of the couloir. A short sidle to the saddle between 2291 and Mt Franklin revealed that the ridge we had expected to be quite mellow was in reality, rugged and wouldn't be quickly passable. Given this, most participants opted to summit Point 2291. This has an elevation is higher than Mt Kahu, Cupola or Hopeless. Blue Lake Hut is also at a lower altitude than most starting points for these climbs, so the approach and climb to this point had been no push over. The whole group had definitely proved themselves efficient and capable climbers.

Five young and fit (or maybe brave and reckless) climbers decided to look further and descended into the basin, east of the ridge. We plugged through more soft snow to the base of Mt Franklin. A stiff breeze blew, and grey clouds drifted overhead. Wisps of cloud billowed from the summit. With signs of a long afternoon before us, we made the hard decision to turn around. Rather than back tracking, we slipped over the ridge at an easy saddle and found a decent chute on the other side. With a reasonable amount of daylight, we decided to check out another route suggested in the guidebook. Spooking a mob of 8 chamois on the way down, we followed a steep gully into the Sabine Valley. Avoiding a vertical gorge, we entered steep bush and descended through open beech forest. We skirted the northern edge of Rotomairewhenua across deep moss covering the forested boulders, back to the hut at the dry outlet. We arrived just as the last member of the other party did. Mt Franklin's summit was now shrouded in grey clouds, and we were thankful for our prudent decision making.

The party packed and dribbled out of the hut, returning to West Sabine Hut, to gain a head start for Sunday's walk out. The group arrived around 4:30pm. Some swam in the river. Dinner was well deserved. Not a soul was awake by 7:15pm.

A deteriorating weather forecast (and 2:30am start for work on Monday) motivated me from my sleeping bag at 5:30am. The rest of the group followed shortly. Egress from the valley is pretty good going in the lower Sabine and I made to Lake Rotoroa in just over 3.5 hours. I waded out to the boat and prepped for the afternoon ferry service. A wicked westerly blew from the Tiraumea and cut up the lake. The final boat run was unpleasant beating into a stiff headwind. Both captain and passengers were pelted by sleety rain.

Mt Franklin requires a long approach and some convoluted climbing. This had been my 4th attempt at organising a club trip to the area, and first to get off the ground. It was my 5th attempt on the Moraine wall route and a new high point. Despite missing our objective, the trip was a remarkable success. The trip was a real test for a large groups Dedication from all participants in the face of adverse weather and unknown climbing was impressive. It was great to hold the trip on the country's first Matariki long weekend. Cheers to failure and long weekends well spent. I expect many of us will return to have another go!

Russell Adams



The B Team on Point 2291 From the left. Liam Sullivan, Moira Pryde, Megan Callaghan, Neil Seaman, James Lowe, Ellie Strong, Seb Head and Jerome Waldron.

Instructor Training Course NZAC Lodge Arthurs Pass July 2023

Highlights from Josh, Vicky and Maree

Walked up to the top of the Craigieburn Range, finally getting on snow to run through rescuing and snow skills.

Walked the Otira Valley, with instructors highlighting aspects, angles and avalanche signs.

Had an effective crampon session, even walking on grassy banks!

Takeaway; when on the mountain Think **TIGHT FIVE!**

1. What could we FALL OFF?
2. What could FALL ON US?
3. How is the WEATHER?
4. How are the PEOPLE?
5. How is our EQUIPMENT?

Then **ACT** - Adjust, **continue** as planned or Turn back

Ate heaps of great food.

Lots of chatter and questions and stories.

A big thank you to the Alpine Club. Looking forward to helping out ...

Maree Holland

Avalanche Skills Course 2

What a fantastic 4 days. Joshua, Maree and I have just completed the Avalanche Skills Course. During the course we had the privilege of traversing and climbing areas at Temple Basin and over into the Mingha and multiple other locations at the Arthur's Pass. Intense instruction learning about types of avalanches, snow packs, weather, trip planning and movement through avalanche terrain. Time of foot enabled us to improve our crampon and ice axe skills, discuss slopes and terrain traps and finally find enough snow to so some extended snowpack column tests. Great company, excellent learning, stunning terrain and just enough snow...

My favourite learning came from the avalanche rescue scenarios. This, without a doubt, taught me that understanding the environment around you and staying out of an avalanche is definitely "Plan A". It was great to become familiar using the rescue equipment and working as a team to search for survivors in an efficient and timely manner. Personally I have to work on my shovelling!

Thanks Nelson Marlborough Section for contributing to this course, we hope to pass on the skills and knowledge at the snow craft course.

Vicky Shelling





Course photos.

Top. Going up and coming down.

Bottom. Profiling snowpack and a very focussed Vicky.

Searching for Ice Gullies at Molesworth

Glen, George and I headed in to have a look at conditions up on Molesworth Station and had some hope finding some ice to have a "session" on. Sometimes its just about going to see what you'll find. We didn't have super high hopes considering the warm and wet conditions, but a good excuse to throw the pack on and get some training for the legs. The road is still in pretty good condition and the trip in passed quickly, which was lucky as we saw another vehicle coming the other way just as we turned off to the hut. Seems to be a bit more use in there over the last couple winters with 4WD club trips etc.

Next morning we woke to rain and decided to sleep in, followed by a full cooked brekky. Not exactly an alpine start, but no complaints heard. The rain cleared just as we finished eating so we threw the packs on.

There was a glimmer of hope as we came around the corner and had a look at our planned climb. There was still some ice there, but hope was dashed pretty quickly with a look through the "binos". It looked pretty thin and not well attached in places.

So it was on to plan B. We headed further up the valley and up a gulley.

It was fairly easygoing crossing a scree field and picking a way up through the gulley and into the rock above. One good thing about Marlborough rock is you can kick steps if you need to - it's that crumbly. We scrambled our way up to the ridge. Other than the loose rocks and making sure you didn't kick anything down to the others below was pretty straightforward. Once on the ridge on the other side we got some great views back towards the climb we had hoped to do. This gave us a great sense of scale to the place.

Back at the hut early afternoon, we decided to pull the pin and head out early. Not the most eventful trip, but great to dust the gear off and get the legs working.

Cautionary note. There had recently been a 1080 pre-feed drop with a lot of green pellets everywhere. There should be signage. Be worth taking you own water in, for the other trips coming up.

Josh Knox

Molesworth Picture Gallery courtesy of Josh Knox



Attempt on Mt Tapuae-o Uenuku

The Alpine Club grapevine has alerted the Newsletter that Hoss Kouhestani, Maree Holland and Neil Seaman had a fine weather trip up the Hodder Valley.

More intel next month.

How to Get Into More White and Pointy Stuff

2023 N/M Section Trips and Courses

Coordinator : Hamish Brown

Email: hamishbrownnz@gmail.com

Phone: 027 418 3124

August

12-13th Manakau. Grade 2.

The highest point in the Seaward Kaikouras, Manakau is a large non technical climb. Good fitness needed. Saturday climb Surveyor Spur and camp in reach of snow to melt for water. Sunday climb Manakau and return home.

Contact: Neil neilseaman79@gmail.com

September

2/3rd and 9/10th Basic Snowcraft Course

16/17 Peel Range Traverse Grade 1+

A walk up the beautiful Cobb Valley to camp at Round Lake. Then an early start to traverse the Peel Range back to the carpark, climbing as many of the four peaks as possible on the way. A good level of fitness required.

Contact: Forrest. forrestpaynter@gmail.com

14th-21st Temple Basin. Arthurs Pass. Ski and Climb Week.

We have a great opportunity to join Wellington section members at Temple Basin for a week in the mountains. Pack your skis and crampons!

Contact Hamish. hamishbrownnz@gmail.com

16/17th Basic Snowcraft Course Follow up Trip.

Just completed your basic snow craft course and now wanting to put some of those skills into practice, Join Russell for a great weekend.

Contact Russell. r.a.guns.70@gmail.com

23/24th Mt Kahu 23/24th –

Ben Winnubst Memorial Trip.

Join us for a trip to Mt Kahu to remember Ben and all that he did for the alpine community. Kahu was Ben's favourite peak for good reason. Options for all abilities. Camping. Good level of fitness required.

Contact: Jerome. jjwaldron@xtra.co.nz

October

13/15th Mt Adams A fine weekend trip on the West Coast. Commence south of Hari Hari. Easy scramble up to a campsite, then snow plod/crampon onto a snowy summit. Terrific views to the Main Divide – south and east; and west to Tasman Sea.

Contact: Seb. sebastian.head@gmail.com.

20/21/22nd Hopeless/Cupola Combo. Grade 2-3

No plans for your long weekend, come join us on a trip to climb Hopeless and Cupola from Cupola Hut. Experience on steep exposed terrain essential.

Contact Hamish, hamishbrownnz@gmail.com

November

Faerie Queen and Gloriana - Dates To be confirmed.

Join us on two classic Spencer mountains peaks.

Contact Liam. liam_sullivan@yahoo.com

Mountain News Breaks



Cupola Hut Maintenance Progress

There has been a healthy response to the call for help with the maintenance of Cupola Hut. Thanks to the 15 who have volunteered. The Section Committee is now in a position to discuss how Club members will be able to work with DOC. We will keep you posted on progress.

Russell Adams & Rob Mitchell

Tupiki Trust Helps Finance Climbing Video Series

Te Ara, The Pathway, is a four-part documentary which starts playing on Stuff. The ten-minute video series tells the story of Holly Beckham's progress from years of drug addiction to mastering the our mountain summits. It pairs Lydia Bradey one of New Zealand's top climbers with one of the country's newest mountaineers - Holly. You can join them on The Pathway by streaming the episodes on your phone, tablet or smart TV.

The NZAC Tūpiki Trust was delighted to make a significant contribution to the project with the help of John Nankervis' estate, with the balance of the funding coming from New Zealand on Air, Bloom Pictures, and Stuff Media.



Photo: Holly(Left) with Lydia; ready for action

New Zealand Mountain Film Festival 2023

The 2023 Mountain Film Festival National Tour is coming to Nelson as a fundraiser for the Nelson Marlborough Rescue Helicopter Trust. Enjoy this award winning selection of short and long International and New Zealand made films. The screenings will be at:

- Suter Art Gallery Theatre Nelson: 208 Bridge Street, Nelson, 7010
- Thursday 17th & Friday 18th August (separate, unique programmes)
- Doors open 5pm, screenings begin 6pm
- Tickets \$25
- Buy tickets online
<https://www.heli Rescue.co.nz/product/nz-mountain-film-festival-ticket-august-2023/>

Reminder. Arthurs Pass Climbing Meet in September

The Wellington Section of NZAC is holding a spring alpine meet at Temple Basin Lodge from 14-21 September 2023. There is a 4 night option and a 7 night option.

Whilst there will be qualified instructors leading this trip, there will be no structured courses or training during the week. This trip is for climbers to meet up, and pair. Ideally, you will come already in a climbing pair. For new and consolidating climbers there will be trip leaders for your groups who will organise appropriate climbs. The minimum requirement is NZAC Snowcraft Level 1. You will need to bring all your own equipment. It is recommended that you bring avalanche equipment.

The meet is open to 20 NZAC members. Places will be awarded on a first-paid basis but the trip leaders reserve the right to obtain the appropriate mix of skills and experience.

Contact: Wellington Section. wellington@alpineclub.org.nz

Suggestions for New Section Activities

Section Evening Convenor Peter Laurenson welcomes tips for future Section evenings and social activities. See Peter at any Section evening or contact him by:

Email: occasionalclimber@gmail.com

Phone: 021 446 725.

Share Your Ideas, and Adventures in the Newsletter!

Contributions and ideas to improve the Section Newsletter are always welcome:

- Epic, unusual and interesting trips
- Satisfying climbs
- Gear recommendations,
- Conservation ideas. or concerns
- Book, video and film discoveries
- Amazing alpine photos.

Please send your contributions to: Rob Mitchell

Email: rmitchl28@gmail.com

Phone: 0274 764 824

Nelson Marlborough NZAC Section Committee 2023			
Name	Responsibility	Email	Phone
Russell Adams	Chairman	r.a.guns.70@gmail.com	022 097 6336
Glen Aspin	Snowcraft Co-ordinator.	aspojay@gmail.com	---
Hamish Brown	Trip Co-ordinator	hamishbrownnz@gmail.com	027 418 3124
Ross Cullen	Board Member	ross.Cullen@lincoln.ac.nz	021 294 6819
Bruce Davies	Section Evenings	daviesrobin@yahoo.com	021 238 3733
Seb Head	Trip Leader	sebastian.head@gmail.com	027 357 0050
Maree Holland	Secretary	mareeholland9@gmail.com	027 333 6947
Brandon Kay		braknn007@gmail.com	
Josh Knox	Banff co-ordinator	joshknox@yahoo.com	021 169 9905
Hoss Kouhestani		olympicfun@xtra.co.nz	027 408 6191
Peter Laurenson	Section Evenings	occasionalclimber@gmail.com	021 446 725
Reuben McCormack		mccormackreuben@gmail.com	---
Rob Mitchell	Newsletter	rmitchl28@gmail.com	0274764824
Forrest Paynter	Social Media, Trips	forrestpaynter@gmail.com	---
Neil Seaman		neilseaman79@gmail.com	---
Vicky Shelling	First Aid	vashelling@gmail.com	027 542 3533
Liam Sullivan	Treasurer, Gear	liam_sullivan@yahoo.com	021 144 3792
Jerome Waldron	Marlborough Rep	jjwaldron@xtra.co.nz	027 572 9214