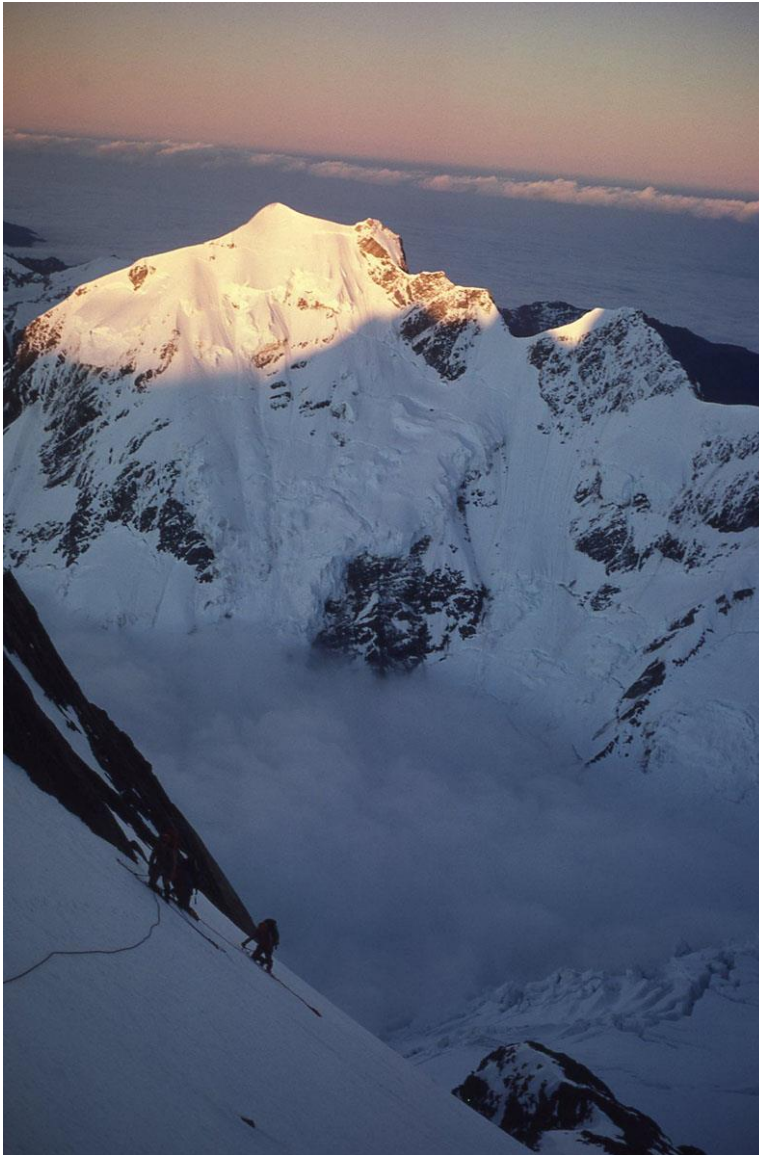


NZAC NELSON MARLBOROUGH SECTION NEWS

November 2024



Dawn climbers near "Lower Peal" (Can you guess the location?).
Photo Craig Potton

Featured in this issue:

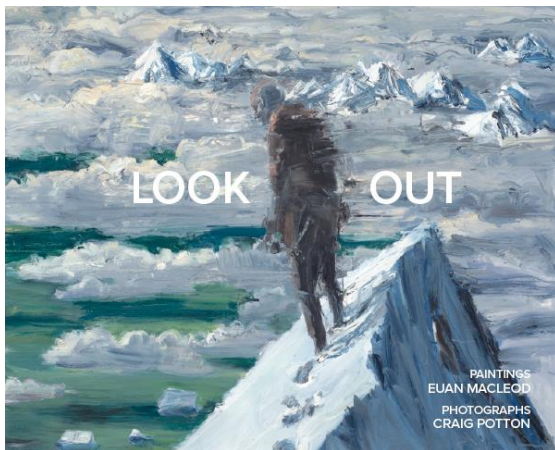
- Bruce Davies' polar epics
- Upcoming Section Meetings
- Section Leadership
- Recognising Russell
- Trip Programme
- Mountain Adventures. A Gritty Instruction Climb
- Gift Ideas for Christmas

October's Section Meeting

Veteran Welsh climber Bruce Davies, delivered an informative and thoroughly enjoyable talk to around 60 club members and friends about his trips as a mechanic and research assistant to Iceland, Greenland and Antarctica.

In the 1970's he spent two years in Antarctica with the British Antarctic Survey, In the early 80s he worked two seasons for Cambridge University in Spitzbergen, skipping a small vessel, taking geologists to areas of interest around the island coast. In 2005 he went to Greenland, at first working at the National Science Foundation's science station on the icecap, and later hauling fuel and cargo 1,000 km from the coast to the icecap researchers. In 2017 Bruce went south again this time to assist New Zealand researchers on the Ross Ice Shelf Drilling Project, and support the first long distance Antarctic traverse (1,200km), since Ed Hillary's 1958 expedition.

Next Section Meeting



Wednesday 20th November

7.00pm at the The Honest Lawyer, Stoke.

Craig Potton, NZAC life member, climber and landscape photographer, will speak about his new book *Look Out* on climbing at Tasman Saddle.. This is a collaboration of a climber with an expressionist painter, Euan McLeod. Their work is an artistic take on New Zealand's high mountain environment and humans' place in it.

Early 2025 Club Meetings

Wednesday 19 March.

Andy Buchanan, will talk about his book, *A View to a Climb* – and climbing 100 named peaks that can be seen from the Port Hills above Christchurch.

Wednesday 16 April.

Pam Henson, committed environmentalist, experienced tramper, caver and kayaker, will discuss her experiences as an English teacher in the foothill dog the Karakoran Range in northern Pakistan over six seasons, and her long term commitment to helping local youth.

Recognising Four Years of Leadership by Russell Adams

Share an ale with Russell. And no doubt, a tall story or two..

A gathering has been organised at the Sprig and Fern, Mapua at 6.30pm on Friday 15th November to recognise the contribution to the Nelson Marlborough Section by Russell Adams in the four years as chairman. Even more as a committee member

To help plan the evening, please email your RSVP to Marie Holland.

mareeholland9@gmail.com

How you could contribute to our Section

Join the Team!

Share the satisfaction of working in a friendly group and producing satisfying results: organising successful trips and instruction courses, boosting club funds through the Banff Film Festival, helping programme talks and other social activities, and communicating section news with members and the recreation community

With Russell Adams stepping down from leadership after 4 years as chairman, Hamish Brown, Jerome Waldron and Forest Paynter stepping back from their committee involvement, there are opportunities for others to step up.

If you would like to contribute and share the fun of shaping section activities, talk to a committee member or email

Section Secretary Maree Holland: mareeholland9@gmail.com

2024 End of Year Trip Programme

23-27 November Mt Lambert via Lambert Tops Route.

This is likely a fly in, pack raft out trip on the wild West Coast. The terrain is semi-glaciated and participants will need to be ready for big days, technical terrain, rough weather and adventure.

Grade 3 - Contact Hoss olympicfun@xtra.co.nz

Late Spring. Date to be confirmed). Dog Trip – Mt Starveall or Ben Nevis

A pioneering trip for club members with K9 companions. Nelson/Marlborough is fortunate to have a large amount of dog friendly conservation land - Grade 1 - Contact Forrest

forrestpaynter@gmail.com

2024 NZAC Instruction Courses

If you would like to participate in one or more of the Club courses you should check the NZAC website: <https://alpineclub.org.nz/courses>

Trip Report: A Gritty Ascent

With a big, messy southerly bringing rain, wind, and snow at altitude one weekend in early spring, the mountains were nowhere most sensible people would choose to be.

But a dozen new Alpine Club recruits, who had recently completed the Basic Snowcraft Course at Rainbow Skifield, were keen to put their new skills and knowledge to the test, and trip leaders Ronnie Baker and Glen Aspin made an admirable effort to *magic up* some time on snow.

The original plan had been to stay at Angelus Hut on Saturday night and climb

Angelus, but with an early Sunday morning forecast of high wind and rain, the long and exposed approach along Robert Ridge was nowhere anyone wanted to be. With wind expected to drop overnight, a day trip up Mt Arthur looked much more feasible.

By 8am on Sunday our group arrived at the Flora Carpark, ready and raring to go. We warmed up quickly as we climbed through the beech forest and encountered a light dusting of snow in the last 400 metres before Mt Arthur Hut. There we meet up with two Blenheim members of our group who had stayed the previous night. Despite the forecast, the hut had been busy with several small groups and conditions above the bushline sounded ominous.

After a quick stop to refuel and adjust our layers, we decided to “have a look” above the hut and reassess if necessary. When we popped out onto the open tussock, the path changed from a generous well-graded walking track to a rocky single trail and we were greeted with sideways wind and icy snow. While we couldn’t see any of the surrounding peaks due to the persistent cloud cover, the poled route was easy to follow. With hoods up and heads down, we turned our faces into the southerly, and walked up the undulating rocky track towards the summit. Visibility may have been limited, but the ice-encrusted tussock and snow-covered spaniard and hebe was very pretty. On the odd occasion the sun almost broke through, lending welcome moments of warmth and vibrant colour to the landscape. Intermittent stops in the lee of the odd rise were very brief, ensuring everyone was warm and feeling good. It wasn’t a day for hanging around, with the cold temperatures and wind quickly stripping our hard-earned warmth..

Glen popped his head over the saddle between Winter Peak and Mount Arthur at about 1700 metres, to see if there was any decent snow on the south face for us to practice our crampon work, only to be sandblasted by wind and snow. As we picked our way upwards through rock, ice and some deep pockets of wind-driven snow, our chances of finding any decent snow on the northern face seemed slim. However, our persistence was rewarded just below the summit, where the snowpack was just firm enough for cramponing.

Crampons were donned and instead of heading straight up to the obvious saddle and the summit, we made the most of the opportunity to practice our crampon work and traversed across the slope until we came to ‘the keyhole’, located 60 metres below the Mt Arthur summit on the north east spur, at 1735 metres elevation. On a good day, the keyhole – a natural tunnel that spans between the north and south faces of Mt Arthur – can provide an interesting, alternative route to and from the summit, and must be a fun place to explore. On a day like this however, the wind funnelled through at a great rate and we satisfied ourselves with a quick peek, before retreating back to the relative shelter below the ridge for lunch.

Not wanting to sit around for long, we made our way back the way we’d come, kicking steps and daggering our way to the summit up a short, steep chute of snow. Hunched beneath the pile of boulders at the top, we took a couple of photos before quickly descending down a different chute that dropped back to the main track. Crampons off, we made quick work of getting down the mountain. With the southerly buffeting us and whipping bullet-like snow into our faces, we were pleased to get off the exposed tops into shelter below the bushline. While it was a cold day to be on the mountain, it was fantastic to get out of our comfort zones and test our gear and capabilities in less than ideal conditions, which are a reality of mountaineering in all seasons.

Chatting with Glen on the way down, his approach for the entire day had been a focus on ensuring everyone felt comfortable and feeling confident we could all get back down again. He said, if the weather escalated, someone wasn’t feeling up to it, or wasn’t confident to climb safely, we would have turned back. For beginner mountaineers with the myriad of dangers to consider, not to mention fears and

anxieties of the unknown, that philosophy is a great message to bear in mind, akin to the old expression: 'How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.

With very little experience to draw from, it's easy for novice mountaineers to be overwhelmed by the mountain ahead of them. But by tackling the mission one bite at a time and breaking the mountain down into manageable chunks, that seemingly monumental task becomes more doable.

Massive thanks to Glen and Ronnie for taking us out, when they'd have much rather stayed home by the fire - in their slippers. And shout out to Leah for keeping us going with the delicious Whittakers chocolate and ginger slice. Find the recipe here:

https://www.whittakers.co.nz/en_NZ/recipes/chocolate-ginger-and-almond-no-bake-slice

Trip leaders:

Glen Aspin
Ronnie Baker
Leah Parker

Participants:

Isaac Allen
Jaci Miller Bennet
Merthyr Braam
Julie Buunk
Erica Chapman
Jasper Davidson

Alena Dwerryhouse

Nick Oien

Kat Pickford

Oliver Sipkova

John Welford

Wishing you a Mountainous Christmas!

Before you go lurching into the Amazon website looking for a Christmas gift, why not check out options available on the NZAC website? Gift ideas range from the Club's 2025 Calendar, guide books, beanies, hangers and eye bolts, to a range of corn starch bags and alpine poo pots.

Check out the range at: <https://alpineclub.org.nz/products>

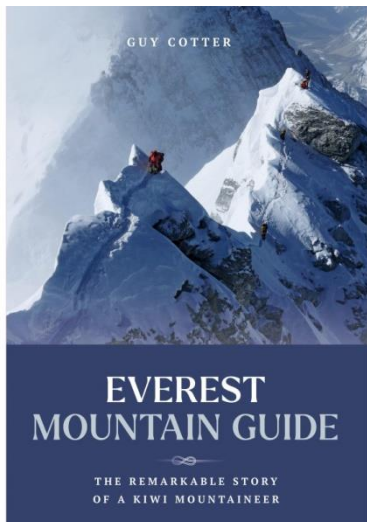
If you are looking for something in print, here are some other fresh ideas.



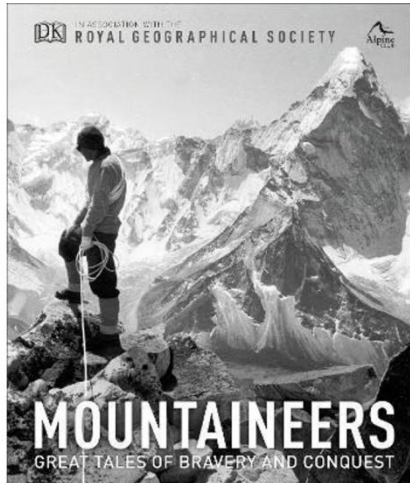
Missed out in ordering a copy of Peter Laarensens' 2025 Calendar? Never fear! Here is another option. The 2025 NZAC calendar has images from photographers and supporters of the club. All were entries in this year's Photographic Competition. Calendar candy includes photos ranging from alpine nature to alpine and rock climbing. Price \$25 including postage.



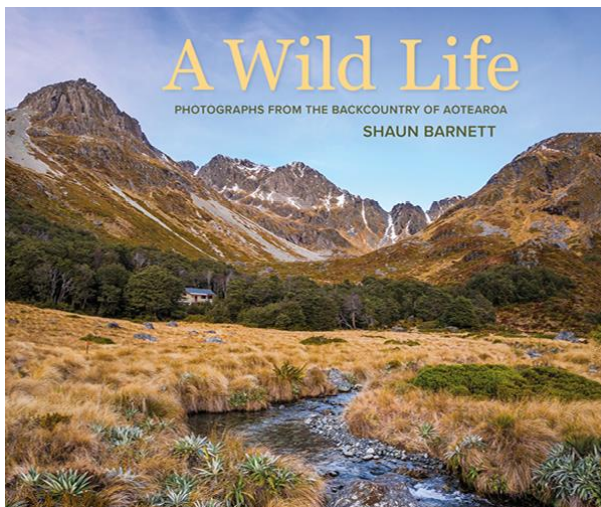
The Aspiring and Otago Alps take in mountainous country stretching from Tioripatea Haast Pass to Lake Wakatipu. It includes the magnificent Tititea Mt Aspiring, New Zealand's only three thousand metre peak outside of the Aoraki Mt Cook region, as well as the popular Pikirakatahi or Mt Earnslaw. This new and revised edition includes up-to-date information on climbing routes, detailed access descriptions, topographic photographs and background information. Enough to enjoy a lifetime of climbing opportunities in just one region. Price \$85.



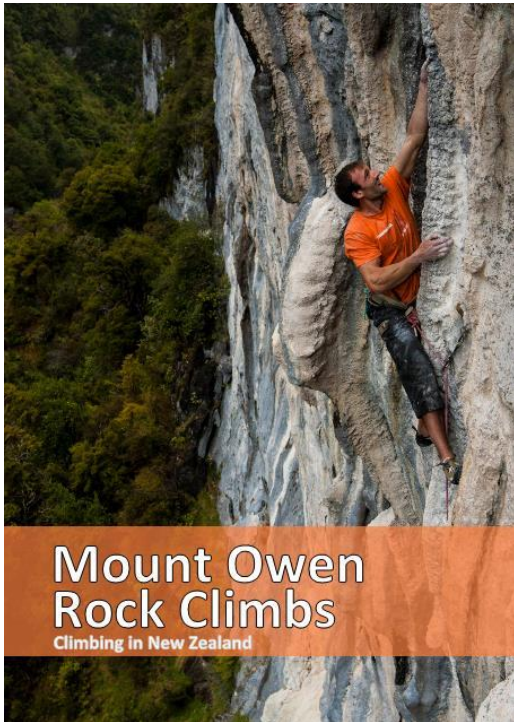
The book follows the career of Guy Cotter, Kiwi mountaineer and mountain guide, who has lead guided ascents of Mt Everest since the early 1990's. *Everest Mountain Guide* is behind-the-scenes insight into the huge challenges faced by both guides and climbers, and the inevitable dramas. Wanaka based, Guy Cotter is one of the most respected and experienced Everest guides internationally. Price \$50.00



This book, published in association with the Royal Geographic Society, features files for over 100 famous mountaineers and stunning photography of mountains they scaled. It includes previously unpublished photographs, and specially commissioned route maps to recreate the greatest ascents. It also charts the development of technology, equipment, and techniques from the alpenstocks, tweed hacking jackets and pipe-smoking of the early mountaineers to the sophisticated kit of the 21st century. Price \$48



A Wild Life is a tribute to Shaun Barnett; an inspiring collection of photographs that illustrate a life devoted to New Zealand's outdoors.. For 30 years Shaun Barnett wrote about and photographed his beloved backcountry and was the leading tramping author of his generation. He has written and photographed many significant books on tramping culture, including the bestselling guides, *Tramping in Aotearoa* and *Daywalks in New Zealand*. Anyone with affection for NZ's mountains, and backcountry will relate strongly to this beautiful book. Price \$60.00



Mt Owen Rock Climbs. This is a guide to the three main climbing areas established on Mt Owen: Fyfe River Gorge, Gold Strike and Granity Pass. More than half the climbs are in Fyfe River Gorge. Climbers have been active there for over 15 years and the Intergalactic Wall offers some of the toughest, steep limestone test pieces in New Zealand. A must purchase to those inspired by Al Mark's recent Section talk on rock climbing in Kahurangi National Park. Price \$53.

Suggestions for Future Talks

Section Evening Convenor, Peter Laurensen welcomes tips for future Section evenings and social activities. You can meet Peter at almost any Section evening, or contact him by:

Email: occasionalclimber@gmail.com

Phone: 021 446 725.

Make the Newsletter an even more Gripping Read.

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