



December 2014



## General Communications

All members are encouraged to communicate their opinions and to drive CNI forward. Share your ideas via:

- [Facebook](#) – Official news. World news. Announcements.
- [Section Website](#) – Official news.
- [Google Groups](#) – Ad hoc email, quick trip plans, rock or alpine, anything, any time. NZAC membership not required. Includes a [calendar](#) of upcoming events.
- Social Indoor Climbing – For those into Rock and are close to Hamilton, stop by [Extreme Edge](#) Tuesday evening and you'll most likely run into club members as it is a regular event. Don't forget to bring your NZAC club card for a discounted rate.
- After Work Rock Climbing – Send an email via the Google Groups email list and invite yourself to the semi-regular weekly after work climbing events.
- E-mail, text or call – For when you want to talk to a specific individual.

If you have had a great trip or a special idea you want to share, get some pictures and a story and send it to the Newsletter contact below.

Section Chairman	Mike Greer	<a href="mailto:chairperson@alpinecentral.org.nz">chairperson@alpinecentral.org.nz</a>	021 619 564
Snowcraft Coordinator	Ray Long	<a href="mailto:snowcraft@alpinecentral.org.nz">snowcraft@alpinecentral.org.nz</a>	027 461 8336
Treasurer	Marcus Bai	<a href="mailto:treasurer@alpinecentral.org.nz">treasurer@alpinecentral.org.nz</a>	027 305 4533
Secretary	Scott Robertson	<a href="mailto:secretary@alpinecentral.org.nz">secretary@alpinecentral.org.nz</a>	021 221 8448
Gear Hire	Dennis Sanders	<a href="mailto:gearhire@alpinecentral.org.nz">gearhire@alpinecentral.org.nz</a>	021 130 2245
Banff Coordinator	Marcus Daws	<a href="mailto:banff@alpinecentral.org.nz">banff@alpinecentral.org.nz</a>	021 262 7549
Newsletter	Mark Smith	<a href="mailto:newsletter@alpinecentral.org.nz">newsletter@alpinecentral.org.nz</a>	021 418 694
Social Media	Norbert Abel	<a href="mailto:website@alpinecentral.org.nz">website@alpinecentral.org.nz</a>	022 185 7046
Committee	Cliff Ellery	<a href="mailto:c.ellery@nda.co.nz">c.ellery@nda.co.nz</a>	027 455 3256
Committee	Lars Brabyn	<a href="mailto:larsb@waikato.ac.nz">larsb@waikato.ac.nz</a>	07 855 8344

## Upcoming Events

- CNI Meeting is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm: December 10. As always, the venue is the scrumptious [Good George](#), 07 847 3223, 32A Somerset Street, Frankton, Hamilton. Click for [Menu](#) or [Directions](#).
- If you haven't heard the news yet, the annual NZAC Summer Climbing Camp is happening at Tukino Lodge this January. This is only the fourth time in the past 30 years the camp has been held in the North Island. We are looking for helpers to make this an unforgettable event, so please contact Mike Greer (above). <https://alpineclub.org.nz/national-climbing-camp-2015>

- The Auckland chapter of the NZAC is hosting an interesting speaker:

*Adventurer Erik Bradshaw will be with us to discuss his completion of the first ski traverse of the Southern Alps with 800 kilometres of snowy ridges, glaciers and plateaus. He skied along the spine of the South Island - a journey with the vertical-metre equivalent of climbing Mt Everest 6 times!!*

*To complete this journey Erik has been a pioneer in inventing and developing ski equipment including a unique exoskeleton binding that fits over a walking boot to transform it into a ski boot with crampons - a talk not to be missed!*

*A light Christmas Dinner of Ham on the Bone served with warm bread rolls, mixed leaf salad with red wine vinaigrette, coleslaw and condiments will be available for \$10 per person. Drinks and additional menu items will be available at the Bar as per usual. We look forward to seeing you there!*

*Monday 8th December 7pm*

- Christmas Dinner!** At press time, we're currently considering lighting a barbeque as the sun goes down over a local crag in Wharepapa South or a film/pizza night. The day will be Wednesday December 10<sup>th</sup>.

## Ridiculously Named Peaks Part 1: Mt Hopeless

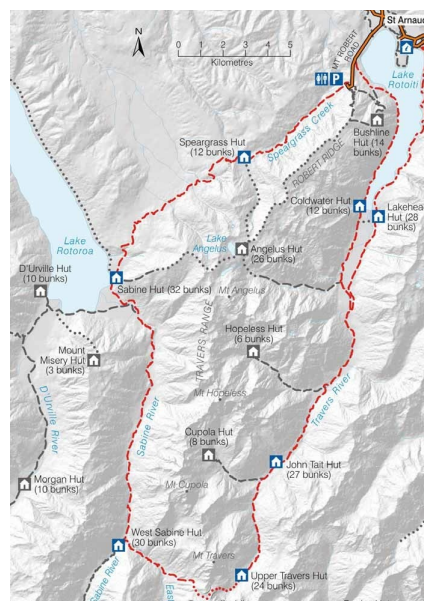
Nic Smith



**It's** never ideal to start any article with an apology but although I was perhaps not the first choice of author for our recent trip to the South Island, the task has indeed fallen to me, so here goes...

For the last wee-while, I have had the, some would say...unenviable task of dating Elliott (fondly known as 'the lunatic') which has mainly consisted of scurrying after him up mountains, running steep trails and following his lead on our road bikes (I just manage to keep up when there's a decent head wind!) Some would consider me brave for taking on the task...but most just realise I'm nuts too! The annual trip down south has been on our minds for many months and we had decided to research some ridiculously named peaks having longingly looked over the Travers Range to Mt Hopeless from the beautiful Lake Angelus Hut last year.

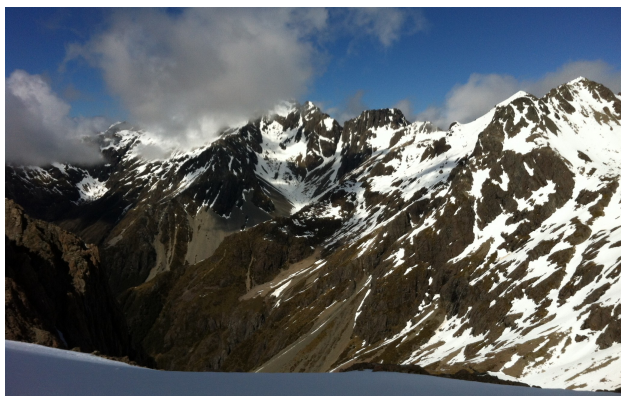
I do remember once a concerned friend warning me about Elliott, saying he occasionally overestimates people's ability and might well get me into situations I'm not prepared for....what she hadn't witnessed however, was just how prepared he is, most notably demonstrated by the full PowerPoint presentations detailing aspects of up and coming trips. This year was no exception and no sooner had we come up with the idea and persuaded some friends to join us, than Elliott had produced and sent out the preliminary ppt with some options to consider. We always have a plan A-E for the changeable conditions/weather and general levels of ability so we can make



definitive plans nearer the time. We had a number of grimly named peaks to have a go at but settled with a plan to tackle Mt Hopeless and Mt Misery as a starting point this year.

The weather wasn't really playing into our hands on arrival in Picton so we used our first weekend to do some rock climbing in Golden Bay. Temples of Stone (3 star 18), The Muscle Inn and the rope swing into the Takaka river all lived up to expectations and we could have stayed a lot longer, however with the weather clearing we travelled to St Arnaud on the Monday, timing the best forecast of the week for summit days (tues/wed).

After a short water taxi to Coldwater hut at the head of Lake Rotoiti, we set off on our tramp along the Travers River up to the cosy 8-bedded Cupola Hut. It was pretty evident on our climb to the hut at 1390m (especially the last couple of hours up from John Tait Hut) that Neroli and Sam were regretting packing the kitchen sink. I felt pretty good (which I'm sure annoyed them no end) mostly due to my usual tactic for slowing Elliott down by letting him valiantly carry the rope, most of the hardware and probably also the 'heavy' aspects of our meagre food rations! I've also got a bit more experience of his usual tricks (which might involve coercing me to walk an extra 20kms than planned with the promise of chocolate and a comfy bed for the night) so I always pack ultralight!! Having said that, there's no easy way to downsize the equipment needed for an alpine climbing trip. Evening came with a beautiful view of the Travers Range. However the forecast was for rain overnight, clearing by dawn which later became mid-morning so we all kept our fingers crossed that it would fair up by the time we reached the technical aspects of the climb near the summit.



After an early night and early start, we began the steady climb up the cupola basin towards the south west ridge of Mt Hopeless. The first hour or so was an easy incline around the basin over rocky, partially vegetated moraine which would have been more pleasant had I not been wearing my rigid plastic boots. I must have been quite a funny sight, trying to negotiate some tricky rocky patches, wearing what felt like ski-boots! The next couple of hours consisted of pretty relentless plugging through ankle to knee to waist (in Sam's case) deep snow up to the saddle with worsening visibility to the point of white-out. After 4 hours of trudging we got to a natural decision point

where we took stock of our painfully slow progress in the very soft spring snow. Having made two thirds of our vertical distance but with the technical aspects still to come and the weather worsening with no signs of reprieve, we made the decision to turn back. I was a little disappointed but had no doubt it was the right decision given the conditions and current progress, so we plugged back down slowly to Cupola hut for a late lunch and regroup.

Sitting at the picnic table in front of cupola hut, we ate our lunch in the rain. I knew Elliott's plan was to carry on today (he knew if he'd let us get cosy in the hut we'd have wanted to stay the night!) So we had a very gentle discussion about the possibilities from here given the short weather window and general feeling of the group. Eventually we reached a consensus and set off on our trudge back down to the valley floor. We all felt good to continue at John Tait hut so we carried on well past dinner time and finally arrived at Hopeless Hut (1050m) at 21:30. Sam was a little worse for wear at this point, with an old ankle injury playing up and a very painful last 2 kms up to the hut. Not keen for any further injury Neroli and Sam made the decision to walk out the following day - having to retrace their effort from the night before to get back out along the river track.

Elliott and I made a 6.15 start with the aim of heading up and over sunset saddle with the possibility of bailing off to Lake Angelus Hut for the night or continuing over Mt Cedric and down to Sabine hut that same day. We made good progress up the valley and despite the scree escalator and mistakenly navigating by deer tracks that we had thought were footprints in the distance, we still comfortably made it to the frozen tarns below sunset saddle for an early morning tea.

Buoyed by our sprightly ascent we eyed up Mt Angelus (or what we thought was Mt Angelus) from our little rest spot. We surveyed the maps and Elliott assured me that the descent from the Northern aspect would be manageable. It was difficult to say if the peak we were looking at was the summit or whether it was the peak labelled 2095 but in any case we were pleased to see that the morning sun had not yet had a chance to melt the S.W. slope. We happily donned crampons for the first time of the trip, carefully picked out a suitable route and scooted up the slope. As the incline steepened and the morning's uphill slog began to take its toll,

I felt the pace slow. Even as Elliott kicked some beautiful steps for me in the softening snow, my usual quick pace was easing off. Despite sugar boosts and the full repertoire of my mental tactics for putting one foot in front of the other (several hundred thousand times it seems!), I was getting exhausted and starting to wonder how well thought out our little sideline jaunt was. The other worry that started to creep in was the descent - how could we really know what it would be like having only seen it from a distance a year ago? - I started wishing for that comforting PowerPoint



presentation. By the time we reached the peak that we had eyed up from our comfortable spot at morning tea, I knew I would preferably be concentrating on the descent by now and even the sugar wasn't giving me the same highs! Teetering along a narrow cornice and onto a seriously shabby rocky ridge, I had my friend's voice in my ear telling me that maybe this was beyond my ability. It took all my concentration to carefully place each cramponed foot such a way that it wasn't about to dissolve away from under me. Looking ahead, all I could see for the next few hundred metres was more of the same. Minutes later I was sidling around a particularly precarious pinnacle with rocks falling away beneath my feet and I think that's when I reached my limit. Normally the view would have been magnificent but at that moment I decided I didn't really want to be able to see the exposure and work out how far I'd fall if my tired feet misplaced a step! I called a stop. Not really in a position to have a cuppa over this decision and without any info on what was to be expected of the terrain for the foreseeable, we back-tracked. It took a little high alpine shuffling but we managed to leap-frog so that Elliott could skilfully lead the way back over the edge and down climb all the way back to our start point. Phew! In hindsight, if I'd been mentally forewarned by knowing what to expect on the ridge and descent I think I could have made it to the summit. However self-doubt is a powerful thing when your energy levels are pretty non-existent. If Elliott was annoyed that I had made us turn back he didn't show it. In some ways I was annoyed enough at myself knowing in retrospect that I was just dealing with my exhaustion, but I learnt a pretty good lesson on my own limits (and the value of PowerPoint preparations!)

We have since been assured that the climb is pretty straightforward once the ridge is negotiated but it didn't do us any harm other than a few extra hours of snow plodding and we had a good bit of daylight left to play with. Once at the saddle and with the weather once again clouding over, we used the GPS to ascertain a route around the basin, traversing the partially covered scree slopes to eventually hit the well-marked Mt Cedric track. Having kind of known all along that shortening the day by staying at Lake Angelus Hut was never really an option in Elliott's mind, we marched on over Mt Cedric with panoramic views including the length of Lake Rotoroa. Having previously experienced the ridiculous gradient of the Mt Cedric track (having toiled up it the previous year) we stopped for dinner with a view before the knee grinding descent. Finally reaching Sabine Hut at 19:30 we spent a comfortable night there.

Unfortunately by this point we had effectively lost a day due to the unfavourable weather and conditions on Mt Hopeless. No time for Mt Misery then and keen to reunite the group, we water-taxied out after breakfast on the Thursday with reports of 'impassible' tracks both Lakeside and Speargrass.

Back in St Arnaud we reunited with the rest of the party and enjoyed the obligatory pizza and post-trip beers, nursing only minor swollen joints and the occasional blister - our primary objective met....to get up and back safely!

For me - limits were found and extended, lessons learned and knowledge gained both of my own comfort level and that of the group. Feelings of frustration, exhaustion and accomplishment! Crampons now oiled, brushed and hung ready for the next adventure...certainly plenty on the list!



Author Nic Smith

## Buy or Sell Gear (<http://climber.co.nz/forum/buy-sell>)



## CNI Notices

- Climber Ben Luke Windsor was climbing at Mangaokewa Scenic Reserve, Waitomo Sunday October 26 and his wife's wedding ring was misplaced. If you've seen it, please contact him at 021 050 6259 or [benwinza@gmail.com](mailto:benwinza@gmail.com). Good luck Ben.
- We're considering a new toilet system for Whangeahu hut. We currently have a long drop which is overdue for replacement and is now outside current DOC policy/requirements for national parks.

## Lost and Found (<http://climber.co.nz/forum/lost-and-found-gear>)

The Climber has a forum for lost and found gear.

## From HQ

### • **New President of NZAC announced**

At the recent meeting of the Club Committee, the nomination of Penny Brothers to the position of Club President was unanimously approved. Penny is a Professor of Chemistry and has held Assistant and Associate Deputy Vice-Chancellor positions at the University of Auckland. Penny is well travelled, having worked extensively abroad in North America, China and Europe.

As a climber, Penny is best known for her big wall ascents of the West face of El Capitan (with Bill Denz), Direct NW face of Half Dome, West face of Sentinel and the Leaning Tower. She was also on the 1980 American and Indian women's expedition to the Garwhal Himalaya, led by Arlene Blum, including the summit party for first ascent of Bhrigupanth (see NZAJ 1981).

It is a sign of the Club's strength and the esteem in which the Presidency is held, that such an accomplished person can emerge from the ranks and assume the role. Congratulations Penny!

### • **Coronial inquest into the Auckland Section Trip on Mt Taranaki**

Coroner Davenport of New Plymouth has released his findings in the matter of an inquest into the deaths of Nicole Sutton and Hiroki Ogawa, on an NZAC Section Trip last year.

Following the tragedy, the Climbing/Instruction Committee of NZAC commissioned two independent investigators, Hugh Barnard and Tarn Pilkington, to write a review of the incident and make recommendations to NZAC. The synopsis, findings and recommendations of that independent report can be found here: <https://alpineclub.org.nz/section-resources/incidents-and-reports/taranaki-incident>.

Prior to this incident, the Club Committee resolved to standardise the processes and safety management systems that various Section had for Section Trips. With added impetus from the Barnard-Pilkington report, this work has culminated in Section Trip guidelines and resources, which are currently being trialled by the Auckland and Canterbury/Westland Section.

### • **Looking for early 1940's mountaineering clothing/equipment images**

Amber Rhodes is currently doing research on Sir Edmund Hillary's for a TV series covering his life from the 30's to the 70's. Part of this includes his early mountaineering days in the 1940's and she wonders if members have any photographs of that era. They do not have to be of Ed himself, but rather they are looking at the style of the clothes and equipment worn for reference. Anything you can help her with would be greatly appreciated: [dreammachine86@hotmail.com](mailto:dreammachine86@hotmail.com).

# New Zealand Alpine Club Central North Island Newsletter

## December 2014

- **Alpine club products for Christmas:**

- NZAC 2015 Calendar – Featuring winning images from our recent Photographic Competition  
<https://alpineclub.org.nz/product/nzac-alpine-calendar-2015>
- Rock Deluxe – A guidebook to the best crags and boulders in the North Island.  
<http://alpineclub.org.nz/product/rock-deluxe-north>
- Guidebooks – A wide range of alpine and rock climbing guidebooks.  
<http://alpineclub.org.nz/shop?category=24>
- Tramping – A New Zealand History – The story of the development of tramping in NZ  
<https://alpineclub.org.nz/product/tramping-a-new-zealand-history>
- NZ title gift ideas: Shelter from the Storm, Joy of the Mountains, Among Secret Beauties and Our Mountains.  
<http://alpineclub.org.nz/product/shelter-from-the-storm>  
<http://alpineclub.org.nz/product/joy-of-the-mountains-a-climbers-life>  
<http://alpineclub.org.nz/product/among-secret-beauties>  
<http://alpineclub.org.nz/product/our-mountains-journeys-to-new-zealands-high-places>

For prices and to purchase log into the NZAC online store.

- Book: From Peak to Peak – by Grant Rawlinson – The inspiring true story of the first human-powered journey from the summit of Mt Ruapehu (2797m) in New Zealand to the summit of Aoraki/Mt Cook (3750m):  
<http://www.amazon.com/Peak-Human-Powered-Journey-Ruapehu-Zealand/dp/9810924267>

### Quick Reference

National Climbing Camp 2015	<a href="http://goo.gl/vSNtWt">http://goo.gl/vSNtWt</a> <a href="http://goo.gl/uI1aXQ">http://goo.gl/uI1aXQ</a>
Youth Rock Climbing Camp	<a href="http://goo.gl/oWyFL1">http://goo.gl/oWyFL1</a>
Facebook	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/alpinecentral">https://www.facebook.com/alpinecentral</a>
Section Website	<a href="http://www.alpinecentral.org.nz/">http://www.alpinecentral.org.nz/</a>
Google Groups	<a href="http://tiny.cc/nz-cni-climbers">http://tiny.cc/nz-cni-climbers</a> <a href="http://goo.gl/dr4hw7">http://goo.gl/dr4hw7</a>
Google Calendar	<a href="http://goo.gl/UEJxS0">http://goo.gl/UEJxS0</a>
Buy/Sell Forum	<a href="http://climber.co.nz/forum/buy-sell">http://climber.co.nz/forum/buy-sell</a>
Lost and Found Forum	<a href="http://climber.co.nz/forum/lost-and-found-gear">http://climber.co.nz/forum/lost-and-found-gear</a>