



December 2016

Welcome to the HITAC.

Comments / opinion can be forwarded to

Hitac.tac@outlook.com



Amadablam - Nepal

Photo – P Andrews

From the President's desk



Thanks to everyone who came along for the Open Climb induction for the 2017 event, to be held Saturday. We have sufficient members who've made themselves available to help on the day, so will open Registrar club website early December. If you know anyone who is keen to participate, remind them to book early! We've had an unprecedented number of entries for the club photo competition! Make sure you get along December club night to see all these fantastic photos. We'll also be presenting Certificates in recognition service members and Life Members, and enjoying a few celebratory beers.

Progress is being made on the Lodge downstairs upgrade project. A few more costings to be finalized and will be the funding application to TSB Bank.

If you've been out and about on the mountain, you'll have likely noticed a few more people around, as a direct result of the Kaikoura earthquake heading to Taranaki. This was certainly evident last Sunday with a busy carpark at North Egmont on what was a fairly cold blustery day.

The Exec Committee wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and hope to see you at the Annual Club Barbecue on 19th January.

Elaine Sinton

President

Trip Reports

The Slush Summit that wasn't

I have had the privilege of living in close proximity to a volcano for several decades. I have climbed it a handful of times, and decided that this I like to climb it when it is at least partially covered in snow. All previous summits having been done in the warmer months of the year, where there is up in the crater.

I am writing from a beginner's perspective, so apologize in advance to all those who have long ago overcome the trivial challenges faced by the club. This required that I complete a "snow-craft 1" course with the Taranaki Alpine club, (which I did with my 14 year old son, Matthew) – I have been a member for several years, but certainly not a very active one.

With the necessary "qualification" I am now able to hire the equipment that I currently do not yet possess – helmet, ice axe and crampons.

Following the snowcraft-1, the Alpine club organized a series of exciting walks in the snow – the culmination of these being the "Slush Summit". Unfortunately – clashing commitments meant that I was unable to go on any of the forerunners to the slush summit, other than 1 day when I did and did some exploring independently.

It is supposed to be Spring – and on my independent foray to the lower slopes of Taranaki on 11 September the weather gods smiled! The weather was calendar perfect!

As the Slush Summit approached, it became evident that such good fortune was not going to strike again. Initially a notification was received from the co-coordinator stating that the climb was being moved from Saturday to Sunday. Not a biggie. Then it was totally cancelled. But all was not lost as members would still be going to the lodge anyway to do some sort of a walk in the snow – possibly a slush summit, conditions permitting.

As I had hastily hired my gear a few days prior, as well as starting to pack everything (based on my snowcraft-1 list) I decided that this effort was in vain. Packing, for a beginner, is still painstakingly slow while I hunt for all the items necessary. (Now mostly organized into a basket in the easier access next time).

A further packing challenge was that Matthew was going to be using my larger pack for a trip and thus I had to use a smaller pack – squashing and strapping the sleeping bag to the outside with bungee cords.

By Saturday afternoon, I was all packed, and ready to drive to North Egmont Visitor Centre. I got to the bottom of our steep driveway and when I tried to put the handbrake, it effectively was dislocated in my hand. Just a floppy stick with no function.

Damn. Luckily I also own an old Toyota – the car used to teach our children to drive – so I quickly transferred all my gear across and headed off working handbrake, and, fortunately, recently acquired WOF ad rego.

On arrival at the visitor centre, it was apparent that the warmer weather had led to considerable recession of snow – it any walking in the snow was to happen, it would require quite a bit of climbing beforehand to get access to it!

I was not alone in the quest to climb "wherever" – soon catching up to other members of the Alpine Club – Sam (who's superior fitness soon led behind), then Sophie and Stacey. Sophie also happens to be the trip co-coordinator. (I don't think having a name beginning with "S" is a prerequisite for a TAC member. Mine doesn't begin with S.)

Conditions were pleasant for most of the walk – even up the "Puffer" which is the steep part. Just as we had the Tahurangi Lodge in our sights we became aware of small white things landing on our shoulders – snowflakes!

Born North of the Bombay Hills, I have still had little enough experience of being in snowfall for this to be a wondrous and magical thing!

We were soon ensconced in the lodge – which was already inhabited by several other groups, hence was warm and cozy inside.

The evening was spent pleasantly as we all cooked or reheated or reconstituted our various dinners and I was taught a new game – Bananagra scrabble pieces! Loads of fun!

Meanwhile, outside, the weather was taking a turn for the worse.

Temperatures were dropping and snow was now falling more insistently. A strong wind had whipped up and during the night, the lodge groaned as a storm howled outside.

It was obvious the next morning that there would be no need to hike to higher slopes to put the crampons on. The snow had come to us! The snow was thick with ice, and it was still actively snowing outside.

Even the intrepid group who were aiming for the summit decided to post-pone departure a little to see if the weather would settle.

It didn't.



I had already decided that attempting anything so ambitious was beyond my level of expertise, and found another climber, Murray (older than me) who was also happy just to explore lower slopes. My novice status was again apparent in that it took me 90 minutes when I got up, to eat breakfast and get all my gear on, ready to go to the door. (To all those female novices – wear your bra to bed. This is getting dressed in the morning.)

Decision-making was also a challenge. Should I wear sunglasses (I had packed both) ...but where, in all my gear, were the ski goggles? I tipped everything out to find them!

By the time I had all my multiple layers of clothing on – I resigned. For some reason the Gore-Tex raincoat I had bought earlier in the sale) had a huge hood, making me look even more ridiculous. Just as I thought I was organized, I pulled the crampons out of my bag to discover that they were huge! Not at all like the ones I had bought for my 9/11 excursion. I had not checked them when I collected them the previous week! I adjusted them to the smallest size and only then were they small enough – just – to fit over my boots. I learned! I will take my boots with me to the equipment hire place and check the crampons for size!

Eventually, my companion Murray (who had waited patiently) was ready to head out the door!

Only to be greeted by blizzard like wind and snow.

Being in Taranaki, the weather can change several times per day – still lots of room for optimism. After all, the “summit” group of climbers had all headed off about ½ hour beforehand.

We had not got far before we attached our crampons to our boots. The snow was fresh, deep and very soft in places.



The vegetation existed in smaller quantities than I expected. Many of the plants had vertical icicles hanging from them. Attempting to take any photos was a mission. Murray patiently removed every

get my phone out of my bum-bag and use the touch screen, or even just the button at the side. Then I had to get my gloves back on again – a tight non-adjustable drawstring, around the wrist making the insertion of damp hands extremely difficult – even for a regular glove user! I shall have a new design – one with Velcro!

I tried (and failed) to video the storm, but between the whiteout conditions, strong winds, and poor visibility (in part due to my prescription goggles fogged up under my ski goggles), I was unable to capture anything satisfactory.

Snow flakes, driven by high wind, felt like icy needles piercing any exposed skin – namely – our faces. I was certain that on my return, my face would be a measles victim!

Gradually snow started to melt and trickle down my neck. Simple solution – put my hood up. Discovery! – the enormous hood fitted perfectly over my helmet! So that is why the jacket had such a huge hood!

The weather, it seemed, was not going to change for the better. The winds, if anything, became stronger and stronger, and on many occasions, we were arrested. We had not even exited Hongi’s Valley, but it was apparent that to go further was foolhardy. I was mentally preparing myself to perform a “summit arrest” should the need arise.

We had had a “taster” and decided that a warm cuppa back in the lodge had enormous appeal! Within minutes, and unsurprisingly, the “summit” group joined us, having come to the same conclusion.

I took my phone out for one last photo before re-entering the lodge – only to see the battery drop to <1% (and shut down) – from 75% when I left earlier. I’m not sure what the outside temperature was, but clearly I had misjudged how cold it actually was – my multiple layers of clothing had done an excellent job keeping me warm!

Maybe I will get one of those chemical warmers for my bum-bag next time!

After warming up in the lodge, and sharing stories, we headed back down. The Puffer was covered in slippery snow and ice – so descent was a challenge. The weather started to clear somewhat during descent providing views of the mountain with its fresh snow cover.

Mercifully the car park had been spared the snow. I really did not know how my car would handle going downhill in snow!

I hope, one day to write about actually doing the slush summit or similar!

Lessons I learned.

- Take your boots with you when you hire crampons
- Wear your bra to bed
- The trip-co-ordinator has supernatural powers when it comes to predicting weather
- All those layers of clothes on the snowcraft-1 gear list ARE necessary!
- My head is not abnormally small after all
- Bananagram is fun
- Keep your phone warm or it will stop working
- It is actually more fun driving a manual car back down from the Visitor Centre!
- The members of TAC are a great bunch of people!



CLUB TRIPS

Our trips are for club members who want to practice their alpine & mountaineering skills, get to know Taranaki (and in some cases other awesome mountains), meet other like-minded people and have some laughs! Please contact Trips Coordinator Sophie Tucker, committee2.tac@outlook.com if you're interested in any of the below or if you have ideas for future trips. Be sure to keep an eye on our website and Facebook pages for too.

Our trips are not instructional, yet are nonetheless led by an experienced Trip Leader(s) and spaces are limited accordingly. Trips are also weather and 'free' - except of course for your own costs re gear/equipment, transport, fuel, food, accommodation. You will organise your own transport accommodation as necessary, although we will suggest preferred options to help ensure everything is coordinated.

Trips in snow/ice conditions are for club members who have completed at least Snow Craft 1 (or equivalent). If you need to hire equipment please contact the TAC Gears Officer (contact details at end of this HITAC and on our www).

December 2016 Trips

- no trips planned

Sunday 8 January 2017.

Taranaki summit day hike via East Ridge. Reserve date Sunday 15 January.

Saturday 25 February 2017.

Taranaki summit day hike via Kokowai Lava Flow. Reserve date Sunday 26 February

March 2017.

Taranaki summit day hike via Fanthams Peak/Rangitoto Flats. Exact weekend date tbc – watch this space!

April 2017.

Taranaki summit day hike via West Ridge. Exact weekend date tbc – watch this space!

May & June 2017.

No trips planned.

17-20 August 2017 - Remarkables Ice and Mixed Festival Trip

We'd love to organise a club trip to this festival for keen club climbers. Keen? Read on!

The Remarkables Ice and Mixed Festival is the annual festival & climbing meet of the Expedition Climbers Club. It brings together a huge cross-section of climbers from around NZ and the world whilst showcasing new and existing routes on NZ's most accessible and multi-pitch winter training area: Remarkables. Beginners get to rub shoulders and share the rope with the top winter alpine climbers in NZ. Various clinics for both beginner & experienced climbers, general climbing, competitions and races for the more experienced, and a variety of social gatherings all aim to advance modern mixed climbing. Check it out at www.iceandmixedfestival.co.nz.

Each member will book & pay for their festival attendance/clinics, flights, accommodation etc. However, we are happy to advise preferred options to coordinate things to ensure it is a great club trip for all!

If you're keen to attend this event with other TAC members, please have a look at the festival website and express your interest to Will Archibald, Secretary at secretary.tac@outlook.com or [027 344 7908](tel:0273447908) with the following information:

- which aspects/events/dates of the festival you are keen to attend
- your climbing experience to date
- whether you have your own climbing equipment when & where you completed Snowcraft 2

Spaces for this festival usually fill up quickly so we're keen to hear from you to coordinate groups who are keen on same events and perhaps some team training in the preceding months.

Club Nights...

PLEASE NOTE Club nights start at 7:30pm

**First Thursday of each month, at the Foundation for the Blind rooms,
131 Vivian St, New Plymouth**

December 1st : President's shout and photo comp

Our annual photo competition will take place at the December club night. Get clicking and you may be up for one of the prizes that our Judge has donated for each category winner!

Entries must be received by Sunday 20 November. Details elsewhere in this newsletter.

January Thursday 19th : Club Barbeque 6pm. PLEASE NOTE DATE CORRECTED TO 19th

Merrilands Domain (Audrey Gale Reserve) 6pm BYO Food & Drink. BBQ cooker supplied.

February 2nd : Dave Clough – Crozier in Antarctica

Dave's talk will cover a number of Husky trips in the Ross Island area culminating in an attempted sled trip around Mt Terror to Cape Crozier or Retracing the sledging trip undertaken by Scott's men in the winter of 1911, as documented in Cherry- Garrard's Antarctic classic book "The Unknown in the World".

Outlining Captain Francis Crozier's place in Polar history and his part in the disastrous "Franklin Expedition".



FMC Visit to Taranaki – Friday 2nd to Sunday 4th December

Hello all

Executive members of the Federated Mountain Club will be in Taranaki on the weekend of the 2nd December to 4th December. They are keen to meet with pre outdoor-focused and other like-minded organisations to discuss matters of interest within our region. A number of activities have been organised for the week an open invite to whoever is interested in participating in any or all of these. Please forward on to your club members.

A meeting with FMC for all interested parties will be held at the Beach Street Hall (Corner Beach Street and Devon Street East) in New Plymouth on Friday night December. The hall will open at 7.15pm, and a presentation and an informal question and answer session with FMC will start around 8pm. We will also have a presentation about NPTCs Take A Kid Tramping programme

Please forward to this email address anything in particular you would like the FMC to focus on in their presentation or any particular questions that you would like to put onto FMC so they can prepare for these.

FMC have requested to join locals out in the hills and there are a couple of tramps planned for anyone interested:

1. Saturday / Sunday we will do the Pouakai Circuit, staying overnight at Pouakai Hut. Meeting 7.45am Saturday and return by 4pm Sunday Register with Karen 577 or karen@nptc.org.nz
2. Saturday day tramp from North Egmont Visitor Centre 4-5 hours. Register with Hugh 06 7579 341 or hugh.alexander@xtra.co.nz
3. Take A Kid Tramp on Sunday. It is in the bush area below the North Egmont Visitor Centre. Meet time is 8.45am and we should return by 3.30pm. Register with Karen 75 38 577 or karen@nptc.org.nz

We hope that you may be able to make the most of this opportunity to connect with FMC Executive members.

If you have any queries or comments at all please get in touch.

Kind regards
Astrid Haesli
on behalf of New Plymouth Tramping Club Committee

Check, Clean, Dry Reminder

Hi there,

I am this year's Check, Clean, Dry advocate for Taranaki Regional Council, taking over the very successful campaign that my predecessor Kate I will be working alongside another student, Sophie, however I will be coordinating the program. We are attempting to engage a wide range of users so are contacting the different clubs and organisations in Taranaki to try and get a Check, Clean, Dry reminder to club members.

The 'Check, Clean, Dry' programme aims to prevent the spread of freshwater pests. This will be done through raising awareness and reinforcing the importance of implementing these simple procedures after interaction with waterways. Some freshwater pests, such as Hornwort are already present in Taranaki. By keeping pest species such as Hornwort from spreading to more of our local rivers and streams, and doing our bit to ensure other pests like didymo do not reach the North Island, we help to preserve the environmental, aesthetic and recreational values of Taranaki waterways.

Last year we were able to spread the message through various club's newsletters, which proved successful in reaching many of our target audience. As a result of this success, we were hoping to do the same thing this year so were wondering if you would be willing to include a Check, Clean, Dry reminder in your next newsletter or magazine, or even on a Facebook page or website.

Additionally, I think it would be beneficial for the region for a number of talks to be conducted at your club or organization. This allows for an informative discussion of the threats freshwater pests pose and how we as a community can combat the spread. If your club has any upcoming events think it would be worthwhile to attend, please let me know.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries.
Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards,

Claudia Muller
Student

Taranaki Regional Council

47 Cloten Road | Private Bag 713 | Stratford 4352, New Zealand

P [06 765 7127](tel:067657127) | F [06 765 5097](tel:067655097) | www.trc.govt.nz   

Working with people | caring for Taranaki

New Members

The Club extends a warm welcome to our new members, and we look forward to seeing you on the Mountain.

Karen Griffiths, New Plymouth

Bernadene Whitehead, Jade Whitehead & Lochlan Murphy, New Plymouth

Muhammad Saaya, New Plymouth

Callum Andrew, New Plymouth

Club Information

TAHURANGI LODGE

This is the TAC's premier Lodge on Mt Egmont / Taranaki. It sleeps 24, has electric heating and cooking, all cutlery, pots and pans, etc. Just like Members can request an eKey by completing the application available from the Club's website.

Overnight fees are \$45 for non-members. Members free.

Anyone who stays at Tahurangi Lodge must write in the overnight book upstairs by the fridge;

1. Their surname and initials.
2. Say TAC or non-member.

Bookings by non-members or members taking a group of 5+ people should be made with the Lodge Booking Officer, or by booking online via the website.

The lodge subcommittee looks after all maintenance. Contact the Lodge committee if you want to help, have ideas for improvements, or have something wrong.

If you find you can't get into the Lodge because of an eKey failure or you have locked yourself out etc., phone either the Club President, or the Officer.

<http://www.taranakialpineclub.co.nz/pages/contacts.html>

Contact info on Web page. They may be able to help by supplying the current access code.

SUBSCRIPTIONS Annual subscriptions are set at the Annual General Meeting.

Subscriptions for 2016: FAMILY \$60, ORDINARY (single) \$40, STUDENT (under 18), \$30.

The subscription halves for those joining after September 1st

For more info contact the Treasurer.

Members with unpaid subs at end of April are sent an account overdue notice. If still unpaid by 1st June incur a penalty of 20%. Any members with subs at 1st July are removed from membership.

GEAR HIRE - TAC Equipment Officer:

The following equipment is available for hire by TAC Club Members:

Ice axes, ice hammers, helmets, harness (incl. karabiners, etc).

Each item costs \$5/day or a maximum of \$10/day for 2 or more items per person. Return the gear promptly after use and you only pay for the actually used it. Return it late and risk paying for the complete period; your choice.

A PLB (Personal Locator Beacon) is also available for hire and great for back country tramping or alpine climbing.

Contact the Equipment Officer AT LEAST 2 days in advance to ensure availability

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EVENTS PROGRAMME Club nights, trips, instruction and social events are all important functions of the Club's activities – they need both support participants as well as volunteers to lead them.

If you have suggestions for club nights contact the Club Captain, or would like to volunteer to lead a trip contact the Trips co-ordinator.

HITAC— NEWSLETTER A monthly newsletter emailed out to club members with an email address. Also available via the Clubs website

www.taranakialpineclub.co.nz

Any trip reports, events, gear for sale can be sent to the Editor at hitac.tac@outlook.com

Each quarter the FMC (Federated Mountain Clubs) Magazine is posted with a paper copy of the HITAC.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Must be advised in writing – Send to the Secretary by mail to: Taranaki Alpine Club, PO Box 356, New Plymouth, or email secretary.tac@outlook.com

Tahurangi Lodge

General info

<http://www.taranakialpineclub.co.nz/pages/lodge.html>

Bookings

<http://www.taranakialpineclub.co.nz/pages/bookings.html>

Club Contacts

<http://www.taranakialpineclub.co.nz/pages/contacts.html>



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