

## Club night this Thursday 4 November



## HiTAC November 2021

Hi Folks, welcome to the latest issue of the HiTAC.

Comments / opinion and content can be forwarded to [Hitac.tac@outlook.com](mailto:Hitac.tac@outlook.com)

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## From the President's Desk

Kia ora katoa,

Another busy month. Avid readers will by now have noted this is a common preamble, TAC must be doing something right.

It's a barely coherent mixed bag from me this month, all but impossible to fashion into a sensible narrative, but first up, check out the trip reports section to find out what you missed out on this month. From being lost in a white-out somewhere near Syme Hut on the Fantham's Peak trip or topping out on Taranaki for the annual slush summit (spoiler: as the summit skiers will attest, it wasn't that slushy after all), it's been awesome to see so many people, both old heads and new boots, making the effort and getting out there. As I sulk in my soggy garret tapping out this latest rant, even steady spring rain won't wash my FOMO into schadenfreude as the Labour weekend rock trip goes on without me. But, as the snow rapidly recedes the rock will be warming up. So time to break out the rock gear, the summer climbing season begins.

Jeremy Beckers' TAC 2022 Calendar is out now, available from Jane's Gallery. 30 bucks a pop for an A3 Calendar of J.B.s stunning Taranaki alpine photography. He is slowly contacting everyone who showed interest via email but get in quick before the word gets out and everyone else finds out. Great Christmas present and the generous bugger is even dedicating some of the proceeds back to the club.

DOC has advised that the Taranaki Crossing project is all go this summer and there will be works being undertaken from Pouakai Hut through to Manganui Skifield. These upgrades are scheduled to take place from November 2021 to May 2022 and track closures are not anticipated as part of these upgrades. However, there may be temporary delays and diversions so please ensure you check the DOC website before planning any trips.

Remember the open climb last year? Well, one lucky punter got a free Helicopter flight home, but in doing so he didn't get the name of the photographer who took the snaps of him standing on the summit. He's still a bit hazy on the details but he was on the last party to make it on the summit and would really like that photo for his collection. So check your files OC crew, and if you are that gentleman's photographer can you please send me the summit photo to forward to him.

Right. Bloody Covid. If you are a club member, and particularly one using our Lodge, unless you have an exemption, please, just get vaccinated. The exec isn't issuing any proclamations regarding requirements for non-vaccinated current members to use the Tahurangi Lodge or partake in club activities at this time, other than please maintain distancing within the Lodge and please wear a mask. But rules around vaccine passports are coming. There will inevitably be implications for Lodge use so watch this space. However, at this time any non-members wanting to stay overnight at the Lodge must provide proof of vaccination or exemption unless they are under 12. Also, any new member applications must also be accompanied by proof of vaccination or exemption.

Club Night this month is again Covid affected. We had planned for a guest speaker to attend from Auckland in person, but that ain't happening now. So Edwin Sheppard, as the representative of Aotearoa Climbing Access Trust will be speaking via the dreaded Zoom, but we'll hold the talk at the Blind Foundation, as usual on Thursday the 4<sup>th</sup> of November at 7.30 pm.

Finally from me, this year's Open Climb will be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2022. Slightly changed format and reduced punters due to a comprehensive review of the safety plan (many thanks to Sophie Tucker and Jonathan

Crane), but the same numbers of volunteers from the club will be required as usual. Please set the date aside in your calendars.

**Ivan Bruce**

**El Presidente!**

[president.tac@outlook.com](mailto:president.tac@outlook.com)

[www.taranakialpineclub.co.nz](http://www.taranakialpineclub.co.nz)

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## Photo Competition 2021

See separate email for Details

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## Alpine Calendars - Available now

I'd like to advise that the TAC 2022 calendars are printed and available at Janes Gallery at 30 Devon Street East.

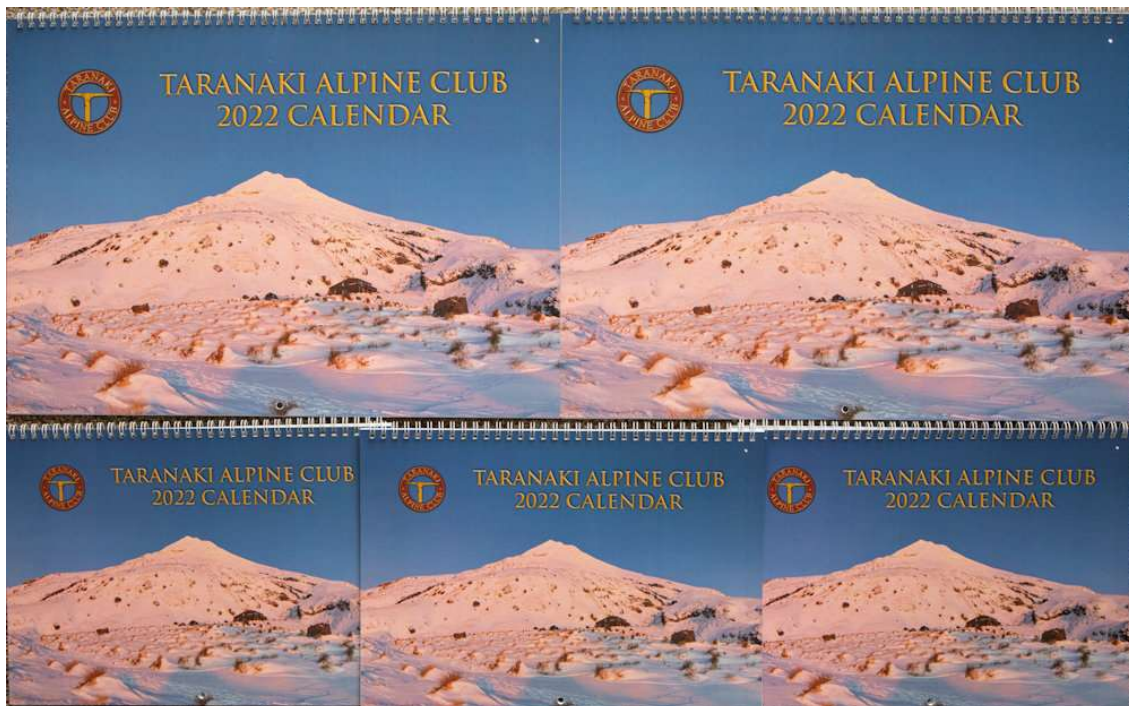
Both A3 and A4 calendars are available, although most of the A3's are already sold.

A4's are \$20.00 ea and A3's are \$30.00 ea

Along with the number indicated by club members, additional calendars were printed to accommodate extra sales.

I also intend having them available at club night.

Jeremy Beckers



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## 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**

## Thursday 4 November

### Edwin Sheppard - Aotearoa Climbing Access

Club Night this month is again Covid affected.

We had planned for a guest speaker to attend from Auckland in person, but that ain't happening now. So Edwin Sheppard, as the representative of Aotearoa Climbing Access Trust will be speaking via the dreaded Zoom.

## Thursday 2 December

Photo competition & Social time

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## Club Trips

Our club trips aim to give you the opportunity to practice your alpine & mountaineering skills, get to know Mt Taranaki (and in some cases other awesome NZ mountains), meet other like-minded people and, have some laughs!

It is important to note that our club trips are not instruction courses or formal guided events. Our Trip Leads are experienced club members who kindly volunteer their time to share a route they know reasonably well and meet the above trip aims. Each trip participant is expected to be self-sufficient on the mountain, have the skills to undertake the trip, know the gear to bring and, participate under their own risk and responsibility.

Our trips are of course also weather/conditions dependent. Where possible we try to have a reserve date in case weather changes things. We do not charge for our trips although everyone pays for their own gear, equipment, transport, fuel, food, and in some cases accommodation. If we stay anywhere other than Tauranga Lodge we'll suggest a preferred option as it's always great if everyone stays at the same place.

If you're interested in coming on any of the below trips, or would like to lead a trip, please contact Trips Coordinator Lindsay Stones on

[trips.tac@outlook.com](mailto:trips.tac@outlook.com)

for further details. Be sure to keep an eye on our Facebook page for trip updates too.



No Trips planned at the moment.. But stay tuned

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## Trip Reports

### Kawakawa bay 2021

The TAC climbing trip was beset from the outset with obstacles.

With Waikato in COVID alert level 3, it meant getting from New Plymouth to Kinloch involved a lengthy detour through long stretches of poorly maintained gravel road on the back roads from Ahititi oil order to avoid police checkpoints - only to learn later that no-one was actually checking the border and we could have saved time, nerves and tyre rubber and driven the normal route through Mokau.

Next was the weather - the 2020 trip was memorable for lots of rain - and the forecast was not at all favourable in 2021 either - influencing the decision to even go on the trip for some. I decided to risk it - recalling that in 2020, despite the rain, if you stood in the crag and waited long enough, there were short windows in which to climb - and any climbing is better than none.

As it turned out, Saturday was perfect - and Sunday was much better than predicted - with a sprinkling of early morning rain to dampen our tents, then no more than intermittent light misty rain which was never bad enough to abort climbing.

I had made arrangements to leave late Saturday afternoon, but have no doubt the remainder of the afternoon remained favourable for climbing.

As with previous years, our gear was brought across on a pre-arranged shuttle (many thanks to TAC for paying for this) - and we had the option of coming on the boat, on foot or by bike, as the trail from Kinloch to Kawakawa bay

is part of the great lake trail- lined with Kowhai in full bloom at this time of year. I chose the latter method , along with Amber and Finn (who impressively bike-packed their gear in!).

Everyone had soon set up camp, conveniently close to the boat drop off area, which was almost certainly a result of a lack of Aucklanders or Hamiltonians filling up all the campsites.

The campsite itself is a sprawling affair, now with 2 toilets, and a large shelter, which is useful to congregate in should the weather turn nasty (memories of 2020...).

Despite the intermingling of people from many cities (excluding those in the upper North Island) there was no COVID QR scanner in sight, and for 2 days, practically no discussion about the virus - which in itself was very refreshing.

We are a disparate group in terms of skill levels - from relatively experienced, to absolute newbies. most of us had little experience with outdoor climbing - for some, it was the first time outdoors, for some, the first time leading outdoors, some were willing to try more challenging grades. My learning was to do mostly lead climbing (the hardest was just an 18 - I was glad I had not read the guide book before i did it or I would certainly not have attempted it!). I also learned to clean the anchor and abseil down with the prussic. Ensuring every step is done correctly seemed even more terrifying than the climb itself! Clearly there is a need for more practice!

For those who have not been to Kawakawa Bay, aside from there being no road access to this little piece of paradise. The climbing is on a series of cliffs visible from the lakeside, but access to these involves some steep hiking through a labyrinth of indistinct tracks. A guidebook (or download on one's phone) is essential, especially if you have not climbed in the area before.

By late Saturday morning, we were all heading off to find our first area to climb.

We chose the "Lower Bluff" on Saturday, which has a selection of easier grades as well as some more challenging grades to suit our group. There were many options and as outdoor climbing generally takes a lot longer than in a gym, we had enough to play around with for the entire afternoon until darkness loomed, and we headed back to our campsite and cooked dinner on the lakefront watching the small black ducks frolicking in the water (this is a somewhat euphemistic description of what was going on - it is Spring after all).

Some more intrepid members of the group chose to swim in the chilly water.

There were also a large number of boats anchored for the night - to camp, climb, have BBQs and parties.

There are times when you are on a seemingly blank slab, or trying to haul yourself around an overhang, palpating the rock with torn fingertips to try and find a hold positive enough to haul your bulk upwards, while both feet are planted on something smooth and rather mossy, and you hope like heck that the shoes will hold - and you ask yourself, as you swear, or grunt like Adam Ondra - why am I doing this? especially when the next clip appears to be such a long way off!

But then you get past that point and the terror you were feeling moments earlier turns into a sense of huge relief, and exhilaration.

At the top (if you actually get there), not only is there an enormous sense of achievement, the views of Kawakawa Bay are simply stunning! once you are secure on the anchor, it is worth turning around and just taking in the breathtaking vista below.

Our chosen spot for Sunday was "Secret Garden" - which again had a wide range of climbs of various levels, and also various styles, from chimneys and overhangs, to blank slabs. There was also the occasional conveniently placed tree to grab hold of or lean against. (Who says you cannot use features?).

There was a sharing of knowledge and equipment - special thanks to Kelsey who had an endless supply of quick-draws) and some great team bonding!

Then one heads back to really where one's fingertip signature is no longer recognised by one's computer as the fingertips in question is temporarily shredded!

Thanks to Lindsay Stones for co-ordinating this trip and Alpine Club for paying for the boat shuttle.

And anyone else who had a hand in organising this event.

Also thanks to everyone in the group for sharing tips (and gear), and for all the encouragement.

Claire Jones

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## Not So Slushy Summits

## Trip Report No. 1

### Slush Summit 16 October 2021

Summit attempt, but it was too icy for our skills.

My partner and I did the Snow Craft 1 course in September this year, and that was an amazing experience where we learned a lot from all the guides.

Back home, we convinced a friend to enrol in the last Snow Craft 1 course this year so that we could do some snow trips together.

So, in the last couple of weeks, we started to go for some little trips/ hikes up the Māunga to get used to our gear and get some practice and more confidence to walk with crampons.

The weekend before the Slush Summit, we joined the Fanthams Peak Spring Summit trip with the TAC, guided by Ivan Bruce, which was also an awesome trip and a good practice for us to see if we were fit enough to venture to the summit.

Fit enough ?? but definitely, with a lot of anticipation and a smile on our face, we started the Slush Summit trip on Friday evening with two friends at the North Egmont Visitor Center.

I was a bit nervous at the beginning, but that changed as soon as we started to walk up the lovely puffer. We arrived at the Tahurangi Lodge with the last light and managed to take another look at the summit before it got dark.

After dinner and chatting away with the trip leader Greg Banks and some of the Summit crew, we went to bed and tried to get some sleep for the big day.



6 am, coffee and breakfast time, what a nice start to the day with a stunning sunrise.

The weather report was good for the day; sunny and a light breeze.

The whole crew met at the Tahurangi Lodge just before 8 am for the Summit briefing. Greg discussed the weather conditions, planned route and safety, and introduced us to our amazing guides.

We left at 8 am from the Tahurangi Lodge, made our way over the North ridge where we put the crampons on at the start of the staircase. From there, with crampons on, we continued on our way up to the Summit.

It was still sunny and started to get warm. A nice cold breeze was blowing.

It was a good ascent; the snow was still soft, and we felt good.

I was still a bit nervous about how I would feel when we got higher up, with the steepness, so I asked Peter Lethbridge what to expect after we all stopped at the beginning of the Lizzard.

The snow had started to get icier, and the guides asked how everybody was feeling and if anybody felt like turning around. I still felt comfortable to continue but going up is always a different story than going down. To be honest, I couldn't say if I would feel comfortable walking down in those conditions if I had continued to the Summit.

Most of the crew also felt like turning around at that point.





So we split the group in two, which was a good decision.

I was happy to get so far up, given that it was my fourth time walking on crampons, and I never expected to reach the Summit on the first try.

Summit attempt! ;) but it was too icy for our skills.

It was an amazing experience, and so happy for all the knowledge and patience of the guides up there.

A big, big Thank you to everybody!

We're looking forward to many more trips up the Māunga.



On the way down, we practised our footwork with the crampons a bit more and made a short round trip to visit the first hut location where Jon Jordan told us the very interesting story of how they built the first hut in 1933 up there. We then walked back to the Lodge and enjoyed our lunch in the sun on the deck.

A big shoutout again to all our guides and the fantastic crew up there.

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## Slush summit, Trip Report No. 2

**16 October 2021**

This should probably be titled the “not so slushy summit”, as we got to the bottom of the Lizard and it was pretty icy. (Well so they tell me, as I have no point of comparison of what an appropriate level of slush is.)

So our big group divided in two and five of us beginners ventured on to the summit, with the reassurance that we had an equal number of experienced TAC climbers in the group (well, once it had been established that Jonathan Crane, hidden under his buff, was not actually a beginner who just did their snowcraft last week, and had enough skills to go on). Thanks so much to our mighty leader Greg Banks, and his able assistants, Steve Ritson, Jonathan Crane, Phillip Andrews, and Andrew Jordan.

We set off, and then were more reassured when we were heavily outnumbered with even more TAC winter gurus – El Presidente Ivan and Chris, Andrew, Dan and Conrard who were all carrying their skis up with them. How could they stay away from the amazing conditions and blue-bird skies.

We reached the summit at about Noon, and got a great tour of the top from Greg, followed by a quick ice climbing lesson on the Sharks Tooth. The views were breath-taking, we could see the South Island.

We watched the skiers descend into the crater and set off ourselves. The decent was a whole mixed bag of ice and slush, and the learning continued with a snow test demonstration from Greg (2.5m deep of snow and pretty stable).

We came down Hongis (high rating of slush), and back to the lodge for tea time (less slush). Thanks again to Greg and his team – and the reminder that it’s not really about getting to the top, but about continuing to gain experience and skills, and maybe one day we’ll be the ones helping take some newbie eager climbers to the top.

Ngā mihi,  
Charlotte





## Slush Summit re-run 23 October

Summit attempt part 2. After the slush summit attempt on the 16th Adam, Martin and myself (Nicole) decided to call Peter Lethbridge and see if we could organise a second attempt the following weekend. Peter was keen, and there was a weather window opening up for Saturday.

So, we started our trip late on Friday evening and walked up to the lodge with a beautiful red moon.

Peter was waiting for us, and after a pasta and pesto dinner, a nice conversation, and a short briefing for the following day we all went to bed.

6 AM wake up call from Peter for a stunning sunrise.





Quick breakie, packing, and off we went at 7.30 AM, just as Steve Millar was arriving to the lodge. Steve would join us later on.

We hiked up to the staircase, walked through the scoria and we finally put the crampons as we stepped into the bottom of snow valley.

During the morning, the snow was firm allowing us to practice our cramponing skills. We traversed up through snow valley towards the lizard, and stopped in the same place where we turned around the previous weekend. Steve had joined us by now, and after a quick assessment of the snow and weather conditions we decided to continue the ascent.

As we approached crater valley conditions got a bit more challenging, but the guidance and advice of Peter and Steve gave us the confidence to continue moving into the crater.



After the final push from the crater, we reached the summit at 11.14 AM. We were absolutely stoked to make it, and in awe by the surrounding landscape.



On the way down, the snow conditions in crater Valley had changed to soft with the occasional hard patch to keep us on our toes and gave us a chance to continue to develop our descending footwork with crampons. Snow valley was soft which gave our knees a welcomed break on the descent to the lodge.



By around 2.30 PM we were back in the lodge, feet up, coffee in hand and big smiles on our faces. A huge shout out to Peter Lethbridge who led the trip, we learnt a lot, and were lucky to have him share his mountain wisdom with us that day. It was also great to have Steve Millar join us and share his expertise that day. We felt privileged to have shared the way up the mounnga with these two very experienced club members!  
Nicole Michelini

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## Outdoor Cook book

Dear Taranaki Alpine Club.

Hi! I'm Tony the Vice-President of the Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club.

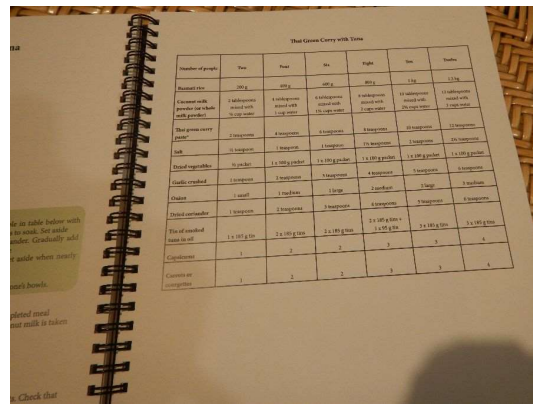
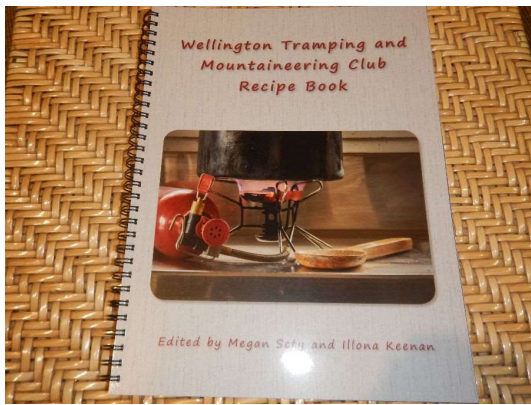
We have tramping cookbooks for sale for \$30 plus \$5 p & p. The books are printed on glossy paper with colour photos. There are 96 recipes - mains, desserts, meals for dehydrating, breakfasts, snacks and Tararua biscuits. Many of the recipes list the ingredients required for group meals from 2-12 people.

Do you think you could circulate this information around or put it on your FB page?

If people are interested they can get in touch with me at [vicepresident@wtmc.org.nz](mailto:vicepresident@wtmc.org.nz)

How are you doing with the recent lockdown and general Covid situation? We are not holding club meetings at the moment which is making it a bit difficult to keep people engaged. However, we are still having tramps getting out but sometimes with low numbers.

Regards and thanks!



## New Members

We welcome the following new members, and look forward to meeting them on the hill.

Craig Martins	Rahotu
Harrison Martins	Rahotu
Alex Bengstein	Opunake
Joe-Stanley Edwards	Opunake

## 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 home. 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 Club's website. The lodge subcommittee looks after all maintenance. Contact the Lodge committee if you want to help, have ideas for improvements, or have found 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 Lodge Booking Officer. Contact info on Web page. They may be able to help by supplying the current access code.

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

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual subscriptions are set at the Annual General Meeting.

Subscriptions for 2017: FAMILY \$65, ORDINARY (single) \$45, STUDENT (under 18), \$35. The subscription halves for those joining after September 1st. For more info contact the Treasurer.

Enquiries to : [treasurer.tac@outlook.com](mailto:treasurer.tac@outlook.com)

*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 unpaid 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 days you 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. We also have (new) 6mm Prussic Cord for sale to club members at \$2 per meter. Contact the Equipment Officer AT LEAST 2 days in advance to ensure availability.

## EVENTS PROGRAMME

Club nights, trips, instruction and social events are all important functions of the Club's Activities – they need both support from 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. [trips.tac@outlook.com](mailto:trips.tac@outlook.com)

## HiTAC— Newsletter

A monthly newsletter emailed out to club members with an email address. Also available via the Clubs website [www.taranakialpineclub.co.nz](http://www.taranakialpineclub.co.nz)

Any trip reports, events, gear for sale can be sent to the Editor at [hitac.tac@outlook.com](mailto:hitac.tac@outlook.com)

## 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](mailto:secretary.tac@outlook.com)

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## Club Links

- [Club Homepage](#)
- [Lodge & Bookings](#)
- [Club Contacts](#)

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