



BUGS
November 2011



Newsletter of the
West Coast Alpine Club

Things have warmed up substantially of the past few months and WCAC members are shifting focus from snow sports towards more summery activities. The Burrell family have been helping Warren and Marion with lambing. In late September our President Alan, kindly cleared the Mt Brown-Styx Valley track a day before Anu, Fredericka, and Lis tramped through. There have also been several club members overseas. Kevin Dash and Jill Cotton have enjoyed an African safari, meanwhile, previous club member Nita Smith has gone back for a second summer working in Antarctica.

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Mt Franklin in Arctic Conditions

Sir John Franklin was an English explorer that sailed to the Arctic in 1845. All 128 crew on his two ships perished when they became stuck in the ice. WCAC member Chris Oates recently suggested that 'he was going out (of the country) and that he could be some time'. Chris was on his way to Canada for a sea kayaking journey in relative proximity to Franklin's fiasco.

Meanwhile back in Arthurs Pass, Teresa and I chose a particularly cold few days to do a bit of Arctic exploration of our own. Crunching up the Minga Valley through the hoar frost looking up at snow plastered Mt Oates gave us a taste of the Arctic to come. Wading through waist deep snow well below the bush line gave us a good feel for Arctic travel.

However, when we finally topped out on a long, steep, icy gully well after sunset, we realised that we had arrive in the Arctic good and proper.

Winter mountaineering is really cold. I was glad of every single feather in my down bag as Teresa and I tucked into our little snow cave on the SW flank of Mt Franklin. The next morning we slowly worked our way up the

ridge behind our cave under a cold, uncertain looking sky. On our traverse around to Lake Anna we passed a few locals and even managed to see a lovely looking bull shammy making the most of the first morning sun. At Lake Anna, I decided to fill up my drink bottle for the final climb to the summit. Ten minutes (of furious action with the ice axe) later I managed to break through the half metre thick cover of ice.

We didn't quite make it to the summit. However, we decided since we could almost throw a rock at it we would not tell anyone and claim a winter ascent. Besides, we didn't want to get or boats stuck in the ice and lose our crew. The long journey back to the cave used up the rest of the available light. However, we took the hint



Josh working Thievery Corporation, 24, a recent addition to the growing array of limestone sport routes at Punakaiki River.

from a very dramatic sunset that the weather was finally closing in and decided to head down to Goat Pass Hut for the night. After floundering around in a lovely combination of alpine scrub and deep snow for a few hours, we finally arrived at the cold hut after a stiff 15hr day.

The warm NW rain signaled an end to our Arctic party on the Polar Range. The next day we made the long trudge through deep wet snow back to a warm coffee at The Château, Arthurs Pass.



Rescue dog Bud, aka Big Ears, watches over proceedings at the recent CC&VR practice day held at Mt Fox, near Greymouth. The day was an excellent refresher, enjoyed by all except Karen's bum!

Where in the West?

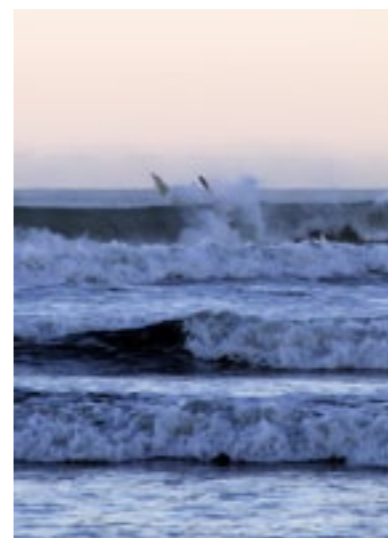


Congratulations to our president Alan Jemison for being the first, and in fact the only correct respondent to last issue's competition. Several hopefuls offered the Kelly Range, and they weren't too far wrong, but as our winner identified, it was in fact Pfeifer Biv. His prize is the chane to baffle us all, and on the left you will see his photogrpah for the next round of Where in the West...

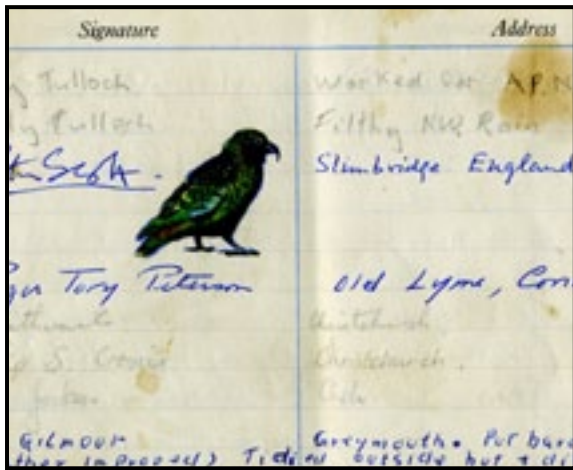
2011 Photo Competition...



Here is a selection from the outstanding collection of winners from this year's comp. Congratulations to all who entered - standards were very high!



The Kea in the Hut Log...



The kea drawing by Peter Scott in the WCAC Hut Log, January 1966

The Club Hut Log for January 1966 has a very short entry for January 7 & 8th which says, “Peter Scott, Slimbridge England.” Nothing about why he was there or who he was with (although it was probably the other person who’s name is entered below his the same day, i.e. Roger Tory Peterson, Old Lyme, Connecticut, USA. Still not very enlightening. The only real thing of interest is a small coloured drawing of a kea.

On the same page are entries by Andy Tulloch, Dick Jackson and Ernie Gilmour..... all names more well known to West Coast Alpine Club folk than a couple of overseas visitors. However it was Andy Tulloch who told Mary Traves, via email correspondence early in 2011, that the said Peter Scott, was firstly the son of Robert Falcon Scott (Antarctic explorer) and secondly a person of some

renown. In fact Peter Scott had made a name for himself in his own right as a painter, ornithologist, explorer and conservationist. In fact not long after he visited our Club Hut and drew us a kea, he was knighted (1973) for his contribution to the conservation of wild animals.

Suddenly a rather bland entry in an old Hut Log had become quite interesting and an internet search about Peter Scott revealed quite a few details. What was rewarding

was to find that a man with such an illustrious father was able to go on and carve his own really successful niche in life. He was only two years old when his father died, and Robert Scott in his last letter to his wife, advised her to “make the boy interested in natural history if you can: it is better than games.”

His wife must have followed this advice well as Peter Scott succeeded admirably in the field of natural history as well as painting. Sir Peter Scott died in 1989 just prior to his 80th birthday and a little bit of him lives on a little book in the WCAC Archive.



While she was playing in the garden a shinning Cuckoo landed on Maria Burrell's finger. Was the bird tired after a long migratory flight? And did it then get hypnotised by Maria's vibrant tie dyed t-shirt? The shinning Cuckoo stayed on her hand when she took it inside to show her mum, Rose. In fact it hung around so long that they contacted DOC to ask what they should do with it.



Boots is the semi-regular newsletter of the West Coast Alpine Club. You can contact us at burrellg@hotmail.com

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