



THE
MOUNTAINEER
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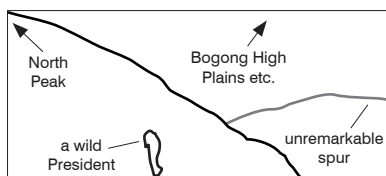
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DANIEL HEARN DEN

COVER

A view of the North Peak of Mt. Feathertop from the vicinity of the Summit. This was taken in summer when current Club members re-enacted the walk made by the original Hut builders in the sixties. In the distance are the Bogong High Plains, a popular destination for Club skiers.



ABOVE

Beach. This was the beginning of an overnight walk at Johanna Beach, near Apollo Bay. There are certainly times when beaches are a better place to be than in the hills.



STEVE CHAN
Vice President

VICE-PRESIDENTIAL DECREE

The new year begins rather auspiciously for the Club, with multiple trips overseas in New Zealand and Tasmania alongside some closer to home. No doubt we'll hear about these exciting adventures in the next edition of the Mountaineer, or when you visit the Clubrooms at the beginning of the semester.

The Clubrooms are a haven for our travellers, explorers and recreational outdoorspeople. It's an excellent point of first contact if you want to join, or even lead, a trip of your own devising. Doubtless, your first visit to the club in peak hour will seem overwhelming and hectic (it's the same for us more-established members as well!) but please don't let this deter you from coming up to us, introducing yourselves—above all, feel free to ask questions about the Club and its ways, although I like the easy-to-answer ones.

Having said that, there's no reason for you to wait till we get back from our summer holidays and adventures; many answers can already be found online at our website; simply have a browse and you're bound to find many questions already answered there regarding any of the Club's activities right through to the kind of gear you'll need to participate on Club trips.

Our trips run throughout Victoria (and sometimes beyond) and needless to say, the Black Saturday fires were not far from our thoughts; though it's too early to say, we hope to somehow contribute to the rebuilding process.

MUMC has ties with Conservation activities in areas of rural Victoria and many Club members, after having spent some time with the Club, have the opportunity to register with Bush Search And Rescue—a valuable community service which aids in the location and retrieval of missing person(s) in the bush.

For those particularly enthusiastic members of the Club, this is a laudable goal and draws upon many skills you'll learn from Club members and the trips you undertake; Bushwalking for general fitness, Rogaining for navigation practice, and Cross-Country Skiing for winter and snow-camping experience.

Many beginner trips run throughout the year; this is a great way to be introduced to these wilder elements of life, and you'll find MUMC is a fantastic community with which to share these experiences.

Steve Chan
Vice President

FROM OUR CLUB CONVENORS

Canyoning

Kate Abel

canyoning@mumc.org.au

“Canyoning, so what’s that?” you say. Canyoning is the art of scrambling, sliding, jumping, swimming and walking down creek beds. Sometimes it involves abseiling down a waterfall, or jumping several metres down into a deep pool of water (not for the faint-hearted). Some canyons involve floating on a lilo down wide, open gorges, while others are deep, dark and narrow. It can be as easy or as challenging as you want to make it. Canyoning requires the culmination of navigational, bushwalking and rock climbing skills. It can take you to some incredibly beautiful places, of which paddling, walking or climbing alone cannot take you.

There are very few canyons in Victoria so canyoning is a small sport in MUMC. Most of Australia’s canyons are in the Blue Mountains National Park, NSW so we tend to run week-long trips rather than weekend trips.

In September MUMC teamed up with University of Sydney outdoor club and ran a combined canyoning trip in the Blue Mountains. In December a few keen MUMC members explored a canyon in far eastern Victoria. We will hopefully run a trip to the Blue Mountains in March (weather and leader dependent), and plans for a trip at the end of February are also in the works.

You can brush up on your rope skills, including abseiling and prussicking (climbing back up a rope), on weekend rock climbing trips, and navigation by participating in some ro-gaines.

If you are keen to do some canyoning, email me at canyon@mumc.org.au or have a chat to me in the clubrooms on Tuesday evenings.

Conservation

Paul Glennie

conservation@mumc.org.au

It ain’t about this for now, it’s about this for the future. It ain’t just about making special trips for conservation, it’s about thinking about conservation on every trip you do.

We’ll be doing a bit of revegetation, a bit of trackwork, a bit of fauna tracking, a bit of this, a bit of that. So if you’re interested, come on down!

And let’s think about our trips: car pooling, carbon offsetting, reduce packaging on the stuff you take, take your waste away with you, take your water in with you, watch out for erosion...and have fun!

Rockclimbing

Mark Patterson

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As predicted by the previous climbing convener, as the weather has warmed climbers have come out of hibernation. During spring we had many trips running including a week in the Blue Mountains, an Arapiles beginners trip, a very large and successful joint conservation/climbing trip to the Grampians and some sea change trips to Cape Woolamai.

In December we were gifted with perfect climbing weather, trips were being run most weekends with Arapiles and the Grampians being ever popular. It was good to see lots of intermediate climbers out climbing and improving their skills. But perfect climbing weather could never last and activity seemed to slow in January as the heat became oppressive.

With the new University year starting soon we aim to have more beginner trips being run to help bring in fresh faces and get more people out on the rock. Also the Easter long weekend has traditionally been the busiest climbing weekend of the year so keep that date free! We aim to get as many people as we can manage to Arapiles for a fun weekend.

As always we encourage anybody interested in climbing but not yet involved to come say hi and get involved in club trips.

Mountaineering

Dale Thistlethwaite

mountaineering@mumc.org.au

The 2008/2009 season has been an active one for mountaineering in the club. A mass exodus to Canada beginning with Greta's move there and followed by Lincoln and Alison's journey there in December to visit OXO old-fart Joel Bartley, led to no end of adventure. Al and Lincoln had a cold, but fun, trip full of skiing and ice-climbing, culminating in Joel and Lincoln climbing the WI-3 classic *Cascade Falls*.

New Zealand has also seen much MUMC activity with Stuart and I climbing the 4+ mixed route on Dixon *No Way Out*, and summiting Mt. Cook on the 12th of January. Kate Abel also claimed ascents of Haidinger and Glacier Peak among others.

As always, if you're interested in mountaineering please feel welcome to come to the clubrooms, seek me out for a chat and get involved. The world definitely has room for a few more alpinists.

Kayaking

Helen Duffer

kayaking@mumc.org.au

The days are full of sunlight. The water is warm. The temperatures are above freezing. It's summer paddling time!

As the rain continues to allude Victoria, MUMC paddlers have been heading to Port Phillip Bay for "learn to roll sessions," to beaches around Victoria, such as Torquay and Wilsons' Prom, for a chance to surf the waves, and to the Goulburn river, situated near Eildon, for some whitewater paddling on dam released water.

In fact, the club's kayaks have spent more time on the water in the past two months than they did for the entire of last year, with trips heading out every weekend!

So, to the new club members, come paddling! Whether it's the bay, a beach or a river, new and exciting challenges await. To the 33 new people that have recently tried kayaking (yes, I have been keeping track of everyone) remain active and enthusiastic, come on trips and keep paddling. You never know; you may find yourself paddling at Penrith Whitewater Stadium (perhaps over Easter), Tasmania or even New Zealand.

Rogaining

Alison Thomson

rogaine@mumc.org.au

We've been pleasingly active on the rogaining front, with participation across the whole spectrum from absolute beginners through to seasoned competitors. And if you have no idea what rogaining is, seek out a rogainer in the clubrooms and let them tell you how much fun it is!

To give you a taste: think orienteering, but with no set course and for a minimum of 6 hours. This means you can make your goal anything between a relaxing scenic ramble through to a full-on endurance test.

Well done to all the novice teams who went rogaining for the first time in 2008. It's great to see that so many of you came back for more, and I look forward to seeing you at a Hash House this year.

Congratulations to Alaster Meehan, who was in the winning team for the 12 hour Brisbane Ranges event. Alaster also competed in the 2008 World Rogaining Championships in Eastern Europe, and set the course for the Otway Odyssey 8 hour event, which was especially impressive since a rogaine had never been held there before. Thanks also to all the MUMC members who volunteered to help at a rogaine. We had a sizeable MUMC catering team for the 15/24 hour event - special mention to those who helped with the graveyard shift of serving soup and cheese toasties at 2AM!

Late last year I trialled a "Basic Navigation" workshop and based on all the positive feedback I will run it again in 2009. Thanks to Helen Duffer for making the playdough. I'm also planning a workshop focussed on more advanced navigation and tactics.

See you out there!

PIE & SLIDE NIGHT 2008

The Club holds a friendly annual photography competition. Below is a selection of (not all) category winners from 2008. There were many excellent contributions this year.

Prizes and credits go to video, slide and digital photography entrants in a number of categories. Such prizes are awarded by a panel of judges and are sponsored by outdoors stores. Viewing the photography is free, but you have to pay for your own beer and pies.

This year's generous sponsors include:

Altitude, The North Face, Snowgum, Australian Geographic, Bogong, Helly Hansen and The Wilderness Shop.



OVERALL WINNER DALE THISTLETHWAITE Sunset Over Tasman Saddle

Sunset over the Tasman Saddle, New Zealand, as seen from Mt. Green.



HUMOUR ALASTER MEEHAN Snakes On A Paddock

The "dead" horse was taken in Lorne when I set the rogaine with the specific intent on entering it into the humour category...



OUTDOORS GENERAL ALASTER MEEHAN Vietnam Bridge

The bridge was taken in near Sapa when doing some hiking around the hill tribes.



OVERSEAS

TOM BAILEY

Cerro Torre

Cerro Torre, South America.



OUTDOORS GENERAL

DAVE ELLIS

Mt. Boyce

Mt. Boyce, Blue Mountains National Park, NSW.



PHOTOJOURNALISM

ALASTER MEEHAN

Chernobyl Classroom

The one in Chernobyl was actually in the town of Pripyat in the school. This is where most of the fallout occurred.



CLUB PERSONALITY

RHONDA HASTIE

Sunday Best

Matthieu in a frock in the Grampians on Uncle Paulie's and Dangerous Dave's Conservation trip.



CLUB ACTIVITY

MARK PATTERSON

Exasperator, 5.10d

Exasperator is a grade 5.10d climb in Squamish, British Columbia.

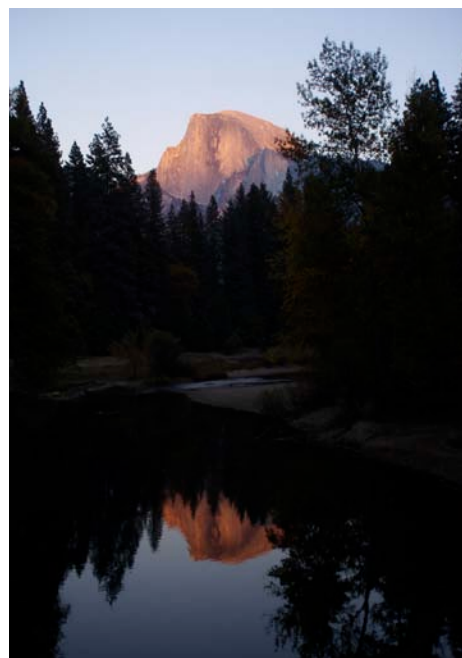


OUTDOORS GENERAL

DALE THISTLETHWAITE

Mt. Tasman

The summit ridge of Mt. Tasman.



OUTDOORS NATURE

MARK PATTERSON

The Half Dome

The Half Dome, Yosemite, United States

Special thanks to our sponsors for their generous donation of prizes:

Altitude

Mountain biking weekend for 2 at Mount Buller

The North Face

\$50 Voucher

Snowgum

\$50 Voucher

Australian Geographic

Explore Australia Travel guide 2008, Map Compass, Lensatic compass

Bogong

Wild Country Shirt, 2 pairs of hiking socks

Helly Hansen

2 HH dry baselayer thermal tops, Six Polo shirts, Hats and drink bottles

The Wilderness Shop

Day Pack Lowe Alpine Mountain Attack Hyperlite 30L



Pie And Slide Night at the Dan O'Connell.



COOKING WITH PRIDE

An ascent of Mt. Cook



IF YOU'D ASKED ME why I wanted to climb Mt. Cook...I couldn't have told you—I didn't know. This worried me a bit. Previously when I'd wanted to do a route it had been the inspiration of a line: the clean, sweeping arc of the summit ridge on Tasman, the straight continuous wedge of Mt. Aspiring's southwest ridge, the balanced beauty of a traverse of Mt. Dixon. Cook wasn't like that.

From Plateau Hut the Linda [Shelf] route looks, well...dull. The parts of interest are largely hidden and the long slog up the glacier dominates the view. To find my desire to climb it increasing with every day of looking at that square-topped peak from the hut surprised me.

Stu was surprised too. "You realise it's a long way walking uphill?" he said, more than once. He knew well that glacier walking was my least favourite part of climbing. I'd often remarked that if I could pay a sum to be teleported past the walking to the start of the climbing I'd be willing to make it quite a large one.

AFTER DOING A 4+ MIXED route on the west face of Dixon called *No Way Out*, we had settled in to a good five days of bad weather in the hut, waiting for the next spell. I began to get anxious that good weather wouldn't come, that we wouldn't get to climb. I repeatedly tried to tell myself, "you never intended to do this route and you don't need to, stop worrying about it."

But it wasn't working.

I was becoming obsessed. I started to hear a tiny voice in the pit of my stomach say that if we didn't make it the season would be a waste, that this was why I had come here. It was irritating.

IN THE LEAD-UP to the season I hadn't thought at all about Cook. I had pictured myself climbing the beautiful traverse on Dixon, a route of such satisfying variation, and a long ridge which always appeals to me most. To find Cook occupying my thoughts felt like betraying a friend. I hadn't yet traversed Dixon and surely if the good weather came that is what I should do. But I couldn't shift the feeling; which is how on the 10th of January I came to find myself heading to bed at 8PM to rise at midnight for a 1AM start. Everyone else was too.

The view from summit rocks back down to the Grand Plateau.

There were several parties guided by friends heading up the Linda; Rac and his team of documentary makers were heading up the East Ridge. At midnight the hut was buzzing. We set off in convoy with three other parties. The freeze wasn't good and we were glad of the tracks, still we made good time...for a while.

I felt fit and fresh, but I couldn't regulate my temperature. My hands got cold and then suddenly I'd lost feeling. I put on my storm-mitts and slowly the feeling started to return. My stomach churned. As we approached Taculman's Corner the feeling of nausea was overwhelming. Stu encouraged me not to worry too much. The "screaming barfies", as he had coined it, is common when numb extremities start to re-warm. It is painful and makes you want to puke, but it's actually a good sign that feeling is returning. Soon the pain passed, but the nausea didn't.

As we moved towards gaining the shelf it intensified. Stu had chopped us a stance to rest momentarily and as I stood on it I was suddenly overcome and vomited everywhere. It was an amazing relief. I felt instantly better and was keen to continue. I reasoned that I had probably eaten something that didn't agree with me and now that it was purged I'd be fine. I drank plenty of fluids and we started across the Linda Shelf.

WE HAD GONE MAYBE a third of the way when I no longer felt the breeze and then everything started to move. I passed out. I came to with Stu's face above mine. I looked up and without thinking stated the blindingly obvious.

"We need to get out of here—now."

In furious agreement he considered the not too attractive options that lay before us. The Linda Shelf is not a good place to faint. It's on a reasonable angle, threatened by seracs, and the run out is an ice-cliff, making "shelf" a rather apt description. He kept me on a very tight rope and talked to me all the way. Waves of dizziness rolled over me, but I was determined to stay standing. Many anxious minutes later we were back off the shelf, but I was still struggling to maintain consciousness.

WITH SIX KILOMETRES left to get back to the hut, I wasn't happy. As we started down the Linda we saw another guide and friend, Nick, and his client Andrew, had turned around and were heading towards us. Andrew had decided he wasn't fit enough to make it to the summit so they were heading back to the hut. On catching up to us and hearing our story they offered to help carry our gear, and with the load spread between the three men we began to descend. I fainted several more times heading down the glacier, but as the sun rose I started to feel better, Nick and Andrew overtook us, and Stu, concerned for my health, asked Nick to radio us the next helicopter out of the mountains. We kept walking.

By the time I hit the Plateau floor I felt as if none of it had happened and I was ploughing up the hill back to the hut feeling healthy and mad as hell. A crazy plan was forming that I was almost too scared to articulate. Eventually I said to Stu quietly, "I want to do it again tomorrow." I expected him to be angry. I had just made him walk all the way up the Linda to not climb Cook. It's a long and threatened walk and nobody does it unless they intend to summit. Perverse individual that he is, he just looked excited and said, "If that's what you want." It was.

We'd sped up so much that we passed Nick and Andrew before they reached the hut and Stu said to Nick, "we won't be needing that chopper, Dale wants to try again."

NO-ONE GOES BACK up the Linda after turning around. I didn't realise this at the time, but everyone's reaction to my decision to go again the next day should have tipped me off—it's extremely unusual.

I took care to eat and drink and sleep all afternoon and by midnight I had a strong sense of déjà-vu when I got out of bed to get ready. This morning didn't have the flow of the day before. It took me a long time to settle into a rhythm walking across the glacier and I kept stopping to adjust things. But eventually we found it. Today I seemed to be able to hold temperature better and my hands and feet stayed with me. When we reached the point where we had turned

around on the shelf the day before, I felt we had begun.

It wasn't all smooth sailing. Yesterday's illness had worn me out and ascending the end of the shelf to gain the snow gully heading to the summit rocks took an impossibly long time. However, once we hit technical ground we were off and running.

Stu led the two pitches of summit rocks quickly and I followed with similar urgency. Then, after a bit of fiddling around on the mixed section below the ridge we reached the summit ridge proper. Probably because I was tired, the summit ridge seemed to take a very long time. The final two pitches of front-pointing up to the top were agonisingly slow, but eventually we were standing there.

Stu looked at me surveying the view and said, "Isn't it amazing? What are you thinking?"

"Actually, I was thinking what an incredibly long way it looks back to the hut," I said smiling.

WE TURNED AROUND. It is one of the ironies of mountaineering that you spend hours striving towards the summit, but when you get there, you rarely stay long. It's also difficult to anticipate what you will feel when you get there. When I climbed Tasman, standing on the summit, I was euphoric. Cook wasn't like that. I hadn't known I wanted to climb it and now that I had, I wasn't sure how I felt about it. Stuart was proud and excited enough for both of us. I decided to let the experience digest.

IT'S A FUNNY THING what makes us proud. If I'd never thought I would climb Cook—which I hadn't—then I'd never in a million years thought I would try it, gain half the height of the mountain, fail, and then get up the next day and do it all again. But I had. I realised when I got back to the hut and was eating dinner that night that in the eyes of others this made me tough, but I wondered if perhaps I was just too stubborn to fail. Either way I was more proud of my determination to do it again, than actually getting to the top...strange. **M**



The author nearing the top of the Linda Glacier (above).
Stu and Dale on the summit of Mt. Cook (right).





PRIORITIES

What are you worried about?

BY STU HOLLOWAY

AT ARAPILES RECENTLY I saw a party climbing slowly on D Major. I thought they would probably finish before dark until there was a long delay after the leader reached the top and before he had established a belay. This hold-up made it certain that the second would finish with the last light or in the dark. I knew that neither climber was carrying a torch and that they did not know the descent route, which involves steep, exposed scrambling or an abseil from a hard to find anchor. Trying to find your way down in the dark and without knowledge of the route would be very challenging and would certainly provide significant opportunity to screw up and be injured or killed.

I wandered up with my torch to show the climbers the way down and, in the process, saw much of the reason for the delay in the anchor construction. Although it is an area where you could wrap your rope or drop a sling around a range of good anchors, the climber had constructed a belay out of several pieces of placed protection, broken down quickdraws to connect to the pieces with opposite and opposed carabiners and then carefully endeavoured to equalise them

with several metres of the rope. It was probably terribly safe until someone broke their leg or worse trying to find a way down.

Many years ago now a Korean University climbing club set out to climb Aoraki/Mt. Cook in New Zealand. As part of their expedition training approach they planned to have base camp in the village, advance base camp at Plateau Hut and establish camp 1 half way up the mountain at about 2950m. In camp 1 they were woken by the sudden arrival of tonnes of debris released from 'the gunbarrels', the famous ice-cliffs which threaten this part of the route but to which they had apparently given no consideration. Amazingly they were rescued with only some major fractures.

People often seem to climb according to an inherited set of rules but I often wonder where the rules came from, how and why they came about and whether something might have been lost in translation.

Leviticus, the Book of Laws, addressing matters related to food, hygiene, sexuality and relationships (and witches) outlines a range of rules that were probably generally good ideas, especially when you consider the range of parasites that were commonly

found in pigs and which could survive slaughter and partial cooking to infect humans.

Climbing and life are not static, however, and rules that make sense in one context might not make sense in another. Whether pigs and their meat are really a threat to health now, particularly in Australia, is probably, at worst, up for discussion (not that there aren't other reasons that you might choose not to eat them). Similarly, an individual or small group privileged with special powers to influence the fate or behaviour of those around them would certainly be a threat to democracy, but rather than killing witches I reckon this should encourage us to preserve the freedoms and independence of a diverse investigative news media.

The world is, in fact, full of variables that we should endeavour to recognise in our decision-making. Following a set of rules for safety may blind us to other risks. Several years ago the Department of Conservation in New Zealand decided they needed to remove the stoves and drums of kerosene that were kept in the high mountain huts because they were determined to be a fire

Belaying	Slinging Protection	Anchors
1. Maintain control of rope.	1. Protection must stay put.	1) Strong for the forces and directions expected; this probably implies a degree of redundancy.
2. Keep off ground/ledges.	2. Avoid sharp edges&loose rock.	2. Able to cope with rescue, escape and party size (i.e. leading on, swinging leads, groups).
3. Give a soft catch; a slightly dynamic belay reduces impact on protection, rope and climber.	3. Keep rope in line/minimise friction (drag).	3. Consistency.
4. Watch, give advice and support to avoid fall.	4. Manage fall length.	4. Speed and simplicity.
5. Manage length of fall.		

This table lists some likely priorities for some different aspects of climbing (above).

hazard. This lead to climbers flying in plastic bottles full of shellite to run MSR stoves; a much more explosive fuel insecurely stored to run a less reliable stove unit which gave rise to a dramatic increase in the need to use fire extinguishers in huts. I find it incredible that people drink drive and even more so that some people do not wear seat-belts in motor-vehicles given their indisputable contribution to improving victim outcomes in collisions, but I do understand the practise of the Treble Cone bus drivers who reportedly don't wear seat belts on the mountain road; their hope is that they might be able to jump clear of the vehicle as no-one has yet survived a crash off that road. As a passenger I would rather have the driver well strapped in and motivated to drive a bit slower.

WATCHING SOME PEOPLE climb I often notice them worrying about—and implementing systems to address—dangers that don't really seem applicable to the circumstances in which they are operating. Carefully building an elaborate anchor to make escaping the system easy is probably not the most

efficient way to prepare for the possibility of rescue on a short, single pitch climb. (Lowering the victim back to the ground would probably be the quickest, simplest and best way to address the *Danger* element of DRABC). Whether you are really making rescue easier by establishing the focal point of the anchor at about ankle level seems to me another question worth asking. Similarly, taking extra time doubling up the carabiners, or substituting lockers, on pieces of protection in a multiple component anchor just before dark probably isn't giving enough emphasis to the fact that the descent, which you might not know, could be steep and complicated and that neither climber has a headtorch. Or that your partner might suffer heatstroke or boredom.

Rather than always doing what you always do, climbers can dramatically increase their safety and efficiency, which are often surprisingly closely related, by asking “what am I concerned about here?” As a simple example, you don't need a multi-directional anchor at the top of a climb.

In some ways I could be seen as regularly encouraging people to cut corners but I

am not really asking climbers to be unsafe. Try to focus on the real issues. Be willing to strip away useless extra redundancy or complex systems that don't actually solve problems. Think about what you are doing, where you are doing it and why you are doing it—understand systems rather than memorising rules; respond to the situation.

Alpine climbing, with all its competing demands (is it safer to climb unroped with terrible consequences for a fall—which you should avoid by climbing in balance—but move fast enough to mitigate exposure to deteriorating conditions and objective dangers?) features a lot of this sort of decision-making, but taking a similar approach to rock climbing can, at the least, save you time. Try to reconcile competing demands by identifying and responding to your priorities: what are you trying to achieve or what hazards you are trying to manage. There is more than one way, but the approach which addresses the real, most pressing concerns in the quickest, simplest manner is probably the best way at any given time. **M**



An anchor of arcane complexity takes a considerable amount of time to construct (opposite) compared to the more streamlined configuration of a simple anchor for efficiency when swinging leads, or for leading on (above left). View of the Gunbarrels and the Linda Shelf icecliffs on Aoraki/Mt Cook—not a place to linger (above right).



KAYAKING AT JAN JUC

BY KRISTINA COCKBILL

ON A FINE SUNNY day in mid January, with the mercury hitting 27°C, a crew from MUMC ventured south to the wide blue waters of the ocean—an atypical experience for our white water kayakers but a great opportunity to get wet and practise. After checking out Torquay, deciding the low tide exposed too many rocks and too many people, we settled on Jan Juc down the far eastern end of the beach which had some good two-foot waves and less people—although further to cart the gear. The eight boats were quickly filled and any trepidation was overcome with the boats filled with paddlers keen to get out into the waves.


Now while I can only speak for myself, having not been in a kayak for six months and not on a river with MUMC, I had originally thought the beach might be a good intro but I quickly changed my mind. My theory was that when I capsized I could easily pull out and then get back in without too much trouble on my own and not

worry about rapids or drifting away with a lot of help required.

However, for those who haven't had this experience, the effort just to get a water logged boat out of the waves is much more than I had expected, let alone emptying it and getting back in. Fortunately with lots of us having this issue, those who were taking a break onshore happily helped to empty and re-install the kayaker in the boat and that the waves didn't knock them back onto the beach. It was important to get the balance right as successfully getting back into the kayak while firmly resting on the bottom would then present a new challenge of getting afloat again at all.

The second fallacy I had arrived with but did not depart with was that getting out past the waves was the hard part. Having moved onto phase two—the experience of attempting to catch a wave—and being immediately and quite regularly sent sideways, gave me a whole new point of view.

However I, as with most paddlers, who had their morning of regularly capsizing and spending more effort getting the kayak in and out again, the longer the day went on the less time was spent on this and the more was spent catching waves. There was even progression to steering the kayak straight all the way into shore.

WITH A DAY FULL of fun, challenges and some time outs on the beach with the ball and frisbee, I had a great day and it was the consensus of the group. The day concluding with some large and yummy ice creams as a reward for our hard work (no rewards required for the good stuff) before it was time to head back to Melbourne. As Helen, our kayaking convenor who did a great job of organising the trip, pointed out at the beginning—a day in the surf those who aren't able to Eskimo roll yet, is just motivation to get more practising. Bring it on! 



CONSERVE THIS

Uncle Paulie Glennie and Dangerous Dave Ellis run amok (again)



Everyone standing around waiting for a tree to grow, I guess. Conservation, by its nature, usually doesn't have the same amount of instant gratification as some of the other activities—but it is nonetheless rewarding.



And the moment this photo was taken, the sun rose from behind the clouds and warmed the world.

BY UNCLE PAULIE

Conserve

Verb: 1. store up; keep from harm or damage, esp. for later use.

2. Physics; maintain a quantity of (heat etc.).


3. preserve (food, esp. fruit), usu. with sugar.

OUR WEEKEND IN THE Grampians could fit all of these definitions. Saturday (work day) was spent repairing steep, badly eroding tracks behind Flat Rock, looking out over the “amphitheatre”. Climbers distracted themselves from the intimidating but enticing Taipan Wall by hauling star pickets, timber, a generator, tools up Flat Rock and then down the steep paths on the other side. Non-climbers did the same thing; not sure why. May have something to do with definition number 1—*store up; keep from harm or damage, esp. for later use.*

The theme—*Silly Hatterday*—provided much entertainment, especially to our friends from the Victorian Climbing Club (VCC), who had organised most of the logistics for the weekend. My favourite was Dave's inspired duck/hippo combo-hat (and a big shout-out to Dave for organising the weekend).

Saturday night was probably the feast to end all feasts, which each car being responsible for a savoury and a sweet dish to share with the group. Fondues (cheese, then chocolate) and sushi were examples of the delectables served up in an effort to 2. *maintain a quantity of (body mass etc.)*.

Sunday was play day, with some learning to become independent climbers, some trying out climbing for the first time, and others bushwalking. Most importantly, a great effort was made to impress the locals by wearing our “Sunday Best”. Special mention goes to Russell for the pink silk shirt he stole from his gran, and particularly Mathieu, who spent the day in a beautiful floral dress (you should have seen the looks he got when we stopped for dinner in Bal-larat!). This ensured that we managed to 3. *preserve (good humour, esp. by cross-dressing), usu. with a smile.*

Big thanks to all 25 or so of those who came to work, eat, play, and feel warm and fuzzy about helping conserve a small part of our environment for the enjoyment of all. See you at the next conservation work/play trip. 

BECOMING A (MOUNTAINEERING) HUT WANKER: THE ESSENTIAL HOW-TO GUIDE

Incorporating invaluable tips on inactivity and narcissism

BY DALE THISTLETHWAITE

Part A: Talking Big

1. Big plans I have for next week, next month, next year...

Naturally now you've decided to become a hut wanker you've spent quite a deal of time sitting around in the hut doing nothing. The fool proof antidote to this is to start talking up your plans for next season while you are still thoroughly engaged in pissing away this one. Don't worry about being called on this, there are boundless excellent excuses for why you haven't achieved (or indeed attempted) and of this season's ambitious plans, including, but not limited to:

- You couldn't find a suitable partner who could match your prodigious skill level. NB: Don't worry about offending your current partner, after all, you have no loyalties now—you're a hut wanker.
- The conditions/weather never quite coincided; an excuse with year's worth of value since it's often true.
- You have a chronic, ongoing and very manly injury—scars help.

2. Gear that would make me so much better than I am...and the quest to buy it

This point revolves around how much more you could achieve in the mountains if only you had those new leash-less tools, ultra-lite pack, set of C3 cams, etc. You've got to be a little bit careful with this one as it can sound whingy unless your fellow hut dwellers are gear freaks too. You can do a preliminary check on this by walking out into the entranceway and looking at the assembled gear—lots of shiny metalwork with no scratches and fancy looking tools that have clearly never been hammered? You're in business! Head back into the kitchen and start your rant. If you're lucky, someone else may even chime in with a tragic anecdote about the route they failed on entirely due to not owning the latest kit. It should be

noted that no one with genuinely old gear ever performs this whinge (that's the irony). There will always be some old-school, tough as nuts, climber with hickory handled tools and an external frame pack, wearing wool-lens and sitting quietly in the corner listening to you and your down-clad, re-curved wielding pack of tools in silent resignation. However, these types are usually quiet and keep a low profile, so just ignore them.

3. Impressive things I did some time in the past

This tip revolves around long-winded recollections of your previous mountaineering conquests. Since you are unlikely ever to have done anything, it's best to go light on the details. The worst thing that can happen to you in this situation is to encounter a keen climber who is actually looking for beta on the route you are bull-shitting about. If this happens to you, there are three simple paths to escape:

- a) Faux amnesia—"Oh I can't really remember, it seems so long ago, it was all so straightforward I didn't pay much attention."
- b) Obfuscate—"Oh you just go left...Nah doesn't really matter how far... all the lines are good, just pick one."
- c) Change the subject—"no actually that route wasn't really that great, but it does remind me a bit of this awesome techo route I did on..."

4. Today I am not going to climb because...

One of my personal favourites, you can start prepping this one the night before. Simply listen to the weather forecast on the evening radio schedule and interpret as negatively as possible. "Light breezes around the tops" can quickly become gale-force winds if you're committed enough. If any weather of


consequence is on the way (even days away) you should start predicting its early arrival. Then there's the "not enough time to do anything of consequence" excuse. This one comes with the added bonus of demonstrating your hardcore credentials. As in... there's great weather for a shorter route, and if you were any less hardcore you would do such a route, but you're so talented/experienced/all-round awesome that you're only interested in a full GT of Mt. Cook and the weather spell isn't long enough for that, so you're staying in the hut.

Part B: Acting Small

1. If you've been to a hut and you've never:

- Shovelled snow for water
 - Walked rubbish out to the airstrip
 - Swept the floor
 - Filled the buckets, or
 - Put on a brew for returning climbers
- You're excused from reading this section—you've already mastered part B

2. For extra credit—Bastard Acts:

- Walk heaps of snow into the hut on your boots
- Leave your crampons right outside the door for someone to trip on
- Use every blanket in the hut to build yourself a bed three feet high
- Steal someone's toilet paper
- Do the washing up poorly and in cold water—surely someone will get gastro?
- Leave something perishable behind in hut food—preferably dairy or rotten fruit
- Fly out without taking any rubbish with you
- Put your boots on at midnight and stomp around
- Leave your junk lying around everywhere
- Use the piss bucket, but never empty it
- Move the marker put in place for the fridge
- Snore 

A full-page photograph showing a male rock climber in a blue helmet and red shirt scaling a dark, craggy rock face. He is positioned on the right side of the frame, reaching up. To his left, a powerful waterfall cascades down the rock, creating a large plume of white spray. The water is a deep blue-green color. The overall scene is dramatic and adventurous.

AT WORLD'S END

Climbing at Cape Woolamai

BY STU HOLLAWAY

THERE ARE NOT MANY blank spaces on maps these days. The vast empty heart of Africa has long been filled with lakes, rivers and ranges, and the last fields of Terra Incognita have become known and mined of their treasures. But overlooked, ignored, denied and hidden, there are still small pockets of wilderness on the edge of civilization and in the civilized. Here there are spaces to see the unknown, here there are chances to undertake adventures, and here there be monsters.

Cape Woolamai, at Philip Island, has a reputation as a loose horror show of crumbling granite, big surf and terrifying top-outs. In part you could say that this is justified, particularly at The Big Cliff, which is dark and committing, but around the Pinnacles area the routes are shorter, sunnier and don't involve the exit pitch up steep sand and dune-grass.

Over the past year, with a range of partners, I have made five trips down to the Pinnacles area to explore the surrounding cliffs. The old guidebook lists only a handful

of routes and features extensive warnings about how dangerous and scary the place is. We've established another twenty routes, particularly focused on developing the middle coast areas Isla de Muerta and World's End. The climbing is generally easy, with routes established so far ranging from grade 5 to 19; the rock, a beautiful pink granite, is largely sound and the protection adequate, although it helps to have lots of cams and a willingness to jam them into slightly grainy and flaring placements, so it is generally pretty casual and fun in a stunning ocean setting.

Traversing onto islands, accessing cliffs between waves and climbing pinnacles that rise from the ocean makes it a spectacular and distinctive, rather than difficult, place to climb. There is plenty that is casual and not too intimidating, but even here there is the uncertainty of the unknown whenever you head ground-up onto a new route and there are also opportunities for courage and terror on steep, hardish routes with spaced protection in a sometimes intimidating

setting. The true line of Ahab hasn't been climbed properly—grade twenty moves on small wires above the crashing surf prompted a traverse to easier ground. No one has summoned the nerve to take on the roof above the inlet. Only three routes have been established on World's End, with no one yet entering the multi-dimensional blow-hole chimney of the Poseidon Adventure or attempting the impressive wall that overhangs the abyss.

ADVENTURE IS A RARE AND precious thing but with imagination you don't need to travel far to find yourself confronting the unknown, and who knows what will be found there? To commit to the route, to go forwards, to retreat, to fear, to thrill, to succeed and fail: all these opportunities and more continue to wait for us just past the edge of what we know. I've been climbing for seventeen years and this has never changed: when I cast off with an uncertain outcome I see monsters and find great treasures. **M**

Lincoln Smith on the first ascent of *Ahab* (17?). We avoided the real challenge of the top seam, which awaits an ascent (opposite).



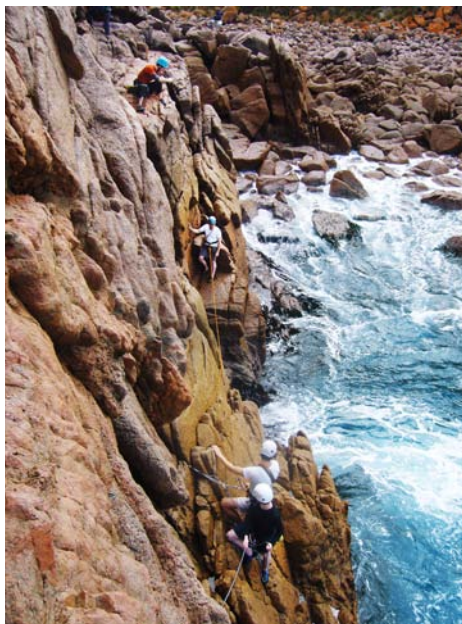
Andy Green on *Aztec Gold* (7)



Shallow water soloing—Lachie Currie unroped in the sun. Sometimes waves break over the top of this small pinnacle.



(I've forgotted her name but Andy Green would be able to tell you) on the first ascent of *No Joyful Voice* (18) with the chockstone bridge across the Abyss below.



Dave Ellis preparing to cross the Abyss between Isla de Muerta and World's End.



Climber pulling on to *Aztec Gold* (7), Isla de Muerta



Alan on the first ascent of *Waking The Kraken* (13?), World's End, with the claustrophobic depths of the unclimbed Poseidon Adventure visible below.



LAKE TALIKARNG

There is no lake in this picture, but that's okay, there are rocks instead

BY HELEN DULFER

THE WEEKEND WAS A SUCCESS. I had rekindled my sense of adventure. Julia had remembered her love for hiking and the outdoors. Chris and Lauren were still keen for further expeditions. However, as I browse through the vibrant photos from the trip and recount different stories and jokes with friends, I am aware that there were a number of key decisions made both leading up to the weekend and during the hike that lead to an enjoyable adventure rather than an uncomfortable epic.

The decision process began two weeks before we set out, when Jules asked me if I wanted to go hiking; "I don't know where, I just want to get away."

After a short discussion, we decided that the hike must fit the following criteria:

- 4 days in length.
- Remote destination. Perhaps somewhere in the Australian Alps.
- Exploration. A new route.
- Distance was debatable. We were both more interested in the things we could discover along the way, rather than accomplishing any grand feats.

Still in search of an appropriate destination, our next stop was the Clubrooms. We flicked through a number of books and magazine articles and found extremely useful information, such as "beware of the wildflowers in spring and summer". I'm not entirely sure when flowers stopped being a decorative display and started being a DANGER to society.

With a few ideas in mind, we began rummaging through MUMC's map collection and our attention was soon turned towards the Crosscut Saw area of the Mt. Howitt map; we both remembered the absolutely stunning views in the area from past trips and were keen for further exploration. We played around with different route ideas, and found that since the walk is along a ridge line, Australia is in a state of extreme drought, and we were heading into summer, water availability became a key concern in our discussion.

The alpine weather report for the weekend didn't inspire any confidence either. A series of bad cold fronts were predicted to cross the state and consequently, the report read something like this:

Friday: Rain. 30km/h winds. The chance of a storm.

Saturday: Rain. Gale force winds. Thunderstorms in the afternoon.

Sunday: More rain, rain, rain.

However, the group was very enthusiastic, and pub o'clock was approaching fast, so we decided on a route that incorporated the Cross Cut, hired our gear and made a move towards dinner.

The plan didn't last long.

The forecast wasn't good. At 9.30AM the next morning I found myself on the phone to Julia, explaining my worries and concerns. I believed that the group, which consisted of Julia Mosley, Lauren Chester, Chris Watkins and I, were capable of completing the route we had discussed, but I saw little point because the "absolutely stunning views" would most likely be obstructed by low cloud cover and I saw little pleasure in walking an exposed ridge line with "gale force winds".

Basically, I didn't think the walk would be enjoyable and I really didn't want to deter Lauren and Chris from hiking forever.



On top of the world. Chris and I take in stunning views from a cliff face on the Sentinels (opposite). The vegetation changed as we climbed up to the Sentinels with white snow gums giving way to the huge rock outcrop (above). Lauren and Julia enjoy a clear view of the high plains. Fortunately the cloud lifted during the morning, offering spectacular 360 degree views (right).



Needless to say, it didn't take long to convince Julia to change our destination.

BEFORE I DELVE FURTHER into the trip planning ordeal, I should probably mention a couple of things about team Jules/Hel. Our friendship dates back to school and through working together on countless occasions we have concluded the following:

- a) We both have similar interests
- b) We have completely opposite personalities
- c) We generally have an entirely different way of doing things
- d) We are both stubborn
- e) We are both extremely competitive (especially with each other)

Although this combination would probably make brilliant business partners through continual debate and subsequent refinement of ideas, there are a number of key results produced by our personality combination. Firstly, we both enjoy a challenge and subsequently, we have been known to bounce off each other to create plans that are near

impossible and somewhat ludicrous. Secondly, we generally disagree. On everything. At the end of the hike I personally thought that Julia and I had done an excellent job of agreeing with each other, however, Chris had other ideas: "every single decision was a debate. You couldn't find two more different people." I hope Chris never sees us in disagreement!

With this information in mind, early on the day we had planned to leave, we were once again without a destination but not disheartened. Plan B. Shorten the trip to three days and spend the first day packing, food shopping and destination hunting. However, another criterion was added to the list:

- The destination must be somewhere unexposed and within the tree line.

Lake Tali Karng seemed perfect. It was someplace new. It was remote and relatively hard to get to (although even the most popular bushwalks would probably be deserted on this particular weekend) and there was the prospect of spectacular views of the

lake from peaks above. In good spirits we laughed at Julia as she read out a description of a walk within the area found within Tyrone T. Thomas' book, *120 Walks in Victoria*, which included the following quote:

"Contour west around the cliff base back onto a steep and trackless 'rock river' spur. It must be descended, despite the awkward rock slides and the route should be along the highest point of the spur all the way."

After inspecting the map and noting some more of Tyrone's valuable advice (such as 'walk until you reach the blue rock, then continue west') we had a plan for the weekend:

Day 1—walk 12km and camp beside the lake

Day 2—explore the area in a series of day walks and continue camping by the lake

Day 3—return to the car.

It was a pretty cruisy plan and we had a very cruisy morning because the night proceeding was rather late due to a certain situation, however, I am going to refrain from disclosing details in an endeavour to

keep the event a secret from my sister and father because I would like to be able to use the car in the future. While the girls slept, Chris becoming somewhat mad with boredom, eventually gave up on finding a rock outcrop worth bouldering and began searching for a sharp rock to cut his toe nails with. I can't say that I have ever had that urge! Eventually we started hiking.

The trees were black. I'm not sure when the fire came through, but I was worried about the hut. Miller's Hut. It was raining. And raining. And raining. It was past lunch time and we were all hungry but it was just so incredibly wet that no one wanted to stop. It rained ALL day. It rained without stopping. I can't remember ever being that wet (although that statement has little meaning considering my extremely bad memory). As we marched on towards the hut there was only one thing on my mind: I hoped that it hadn't burnt down with the fires.

Phew. Still standing.

After lunch, the most crucial decision was made in terms of our comfort over the next few days. I couldn't really see the point of hiking down to the lake and spending all our time cooped up in two person tents, when there was a perfectly good and empty hut a couple of kilometres away. Once again

the decision was unanimous. We would set up our tents at the hut and day walk from there tomorrow, with the lake as one of our destinations.

With the first day's activity completed by 3pm (a total, and somewhat pitiful, 8km was hiked) the girls snuggled into their sleeping bags for another sleep, while Chris turned his attention to making a fire light out of a heap of really, really, wet wood. Amazingly, when we awoke for dinner, the chimney was puffing out smoke! Brilliant.


After a night of constant rain, we woke to relatively clear skies. Today would be a good day. Little did we know that two days after reading and joking about Tyrone T. Thomas' description we would find ourselves at the Sentinels (two spectacular rock outcrops which offered some pretty incredible views as the rain held off) and subsequently at the top of the very same spur he has described. We had two options:

- a) Walk back along the four wheel drive path we had just walked (boring)
- b) Follow the spur line down to the lake whilst taking in amazing views (much more exciting)

Yes, the term "awkward rock slides" was foremost in our minds as we somewhat out

of controllably slid, slipped, glided, skated and fell down the spur. To Julia's disappointment, the uncoordinated photos taken throughout this stint were unable to capture just how hard it was to walk down the spur. Instead, they seem to show everyone simply sitting on flat ground or in Julia's case, randomly crashing into, and subsequently being pinned by, a char grilled black log. At some stage the novelty began to wear thin.

Whilst tucking into a very satisfying lunch by the water's edge it was amusing to hear Lauren, a geology student, proclaim with a glare that "these were not fun rocks". On that statement, I was in total agreement...perhaps we should have followed Tyrone's advice and followed the "highest point of the spur all the way".

And here ends the decisions. The remainder of the weekend passed without any issues, though the rain persisted; the track we had walked in on now resembled a small flowing creek after three days of near-constant rain. This image provided us with a little laughter and summed up the absurd but brilliant weekend nicely. It was a success. However, I am absolutely certain that if we spent the weekend at the Crosscut, or camped by the lake, it would have ended very differently. 



Julia demonstrating just how incredibly wet it was in Victoria. Weren't we worried about finding water at some stage??? (above). Path or creek? (left).

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PHOTOS: EMMA BLAND



MT. BOGONG

A Brief History of Time


IT'S THE WINTER OF '94, perhaps '95, Tawonga, North-East Victoria. With snow shoes strapped to my school boots, a pair of thin cross-country ski gloves, cotton pants and a woollen jumper, I've just hit the snow line of Victoria's highest mountain. An icy snow storm is in full swing, even with the protection of the trees my hair has soon been given some awesome icicle dreads. My heart is racing, my eyes taking in every little detail around me, this, is awesome. I am of course freezing, slightly shitting myself, but I'm having the time of my life. This is the moment I start my addiction and fall in love with Mt. Bogong.

MT. BOGONG IS A GRAND 1986m high. Sure, by world standards he's more of a hill, but the poor man is old, very very old, so I think he earns his name "big fella". It is said that in years gone by, Aboriginal people from far and wide would gather every year and feast on the Bogong moths that migrate there in huge numbers. It was, and still is, a place of great significance to many people.

I've hiked Bogong at least 20 times, and I never, ever tire of it. It has so much to offer if you just stand still for a moment and let it speak to you...hike up the Staircase Spur, but stop before you reach the top. As the trees give way and you enter the snow line proper, you'll see snow poles lining the ridges. You'll notice just a few of these are different—old iron husks, some leaning heavily, many lying bent and broken. If you stop by these poles, and listen, you'll hear them play a haunting song. As the wind rushes through the slots in their sides, they literally play you a tune you'll hear nowhere else. As the decades pass these poles will melt away, their poor wooden cousins taking their place; the song will never be heard again.

Looking out from the West Peak across the Kiewa Valley, you can see clear into NSW.

Back at the summit and beyond is what I prefer; you look out across unending hills and valleys. This is the time you appreciate solitude. The sheer expanse is daunting. Take the time to be there at sunrise and you'll see the brilliance of the colours in the sky. Vibrant reds where the sun kisses the horizon, oranges reflecting from beneath billowing clouds, blues from the sky piercing through the scattered clouds.

MT. BOGONG IS A GEM SITTING in a treasure trove. The sights, smells, sounds and history of this place make you humble and teach you to appreciate everything around you. 



New Years Day, 2005—sunrise seen from the summit (main). Dan and I nearly tripped over a guy in a bivvy.

January 2005—the saddle between the summit and West Peak (top).

Winter 2007—one of the few remaining steel snow poles on the Staircase Spur (above).



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