

# Cross-country ski adventures

My first ski experience was at Tekapo's Round Hill Ski Field in 1966. My Otago Tramping Club companions vanished leaving me with a pair of hired skis. I carried these up the main slope, worked out how to put them on and aimed them downhill. Fortunately it was a ski that broke and not my leg. The Masons' were hooked and ski fields all over the South Island were targeted. The trampers' urge to wander soon set in. At Coronet Bruce and I heard a comment from the chairlift, "Gee those buggers must have strong arms," as we tried out new climbing skins.

Ski touring and ski mountaineering soon followed not only in the greater Mt Cook glacier country but on the previously under-rated Central Otago ranges.

My most enduring memory is the pistol shot sound of my companion's leg snapping as we skied off Hochstetter Dome. Fortunately a ski plane was able to retrieve our patient.

The mountain climbs were big and the descents over all over too quickly. Falls often resulted in your pack taking unwelcome charge of the situation.



On the flatter ranges travel could be slow and clanky as we were restricted by the bindings to short steps. Bruce once didn't realise he had crested the gentle tops on an Old Man Range traverse with skins and continued a good few kilometres before he realised he was going, ever-so-gently, downhill. In 1974 Bruce discovered the joys and freedom of using light cross-country ski gear on his travels in the North American Rockies. We never looked back after that, and extended our free-heeled skiing into the Alps.

[Notes]

Getting away from weight of ski mountaineering gear.

In July 1975 had own xc gear.

20ft kick and glides. X/c not scared to loose height -unlike alpine skiers (they only go up or down). We shot through the basins and covered the miles.

Jack Coker etc – we may have been kicking off modern cross country skiing in Otago.

Out to traverse every range.

Skiing on edge of a storm – enough sunlight – cascades of ice crystals – being blown and accelerating up hill and having to half wedge to slow down.

Instruction courses at Big hut.

Ski Camps – Lorne Peak -night skiing. Two Thumb range – the big snow.

Jack Macs Garvies – both ends – Mt Tennison – Trig A.

Hawkdun- Ewe range.

Lake Hope.

Old woman – Mt Blatt.

Duffers – polar plateau - Old

Man – Waikaia Bush Rd.

Whiteout adventure with John Pohl.

Broken nose etc. Ski tip up nose

Compass fog traverse – drop into Fraser basin.

Fixing up old huts.

Pisa traverses. Lake McKay.

Kakanui – bottomless snow - frost bite.

20 years to get right conditions for Maungatua.

Secret spot in Waipori Forest.

The Desperate Skiers Club. - extending ski season into Summer.

Lammermors/Lammerlaws.

Dunstans – both ends.



# Treble Cone



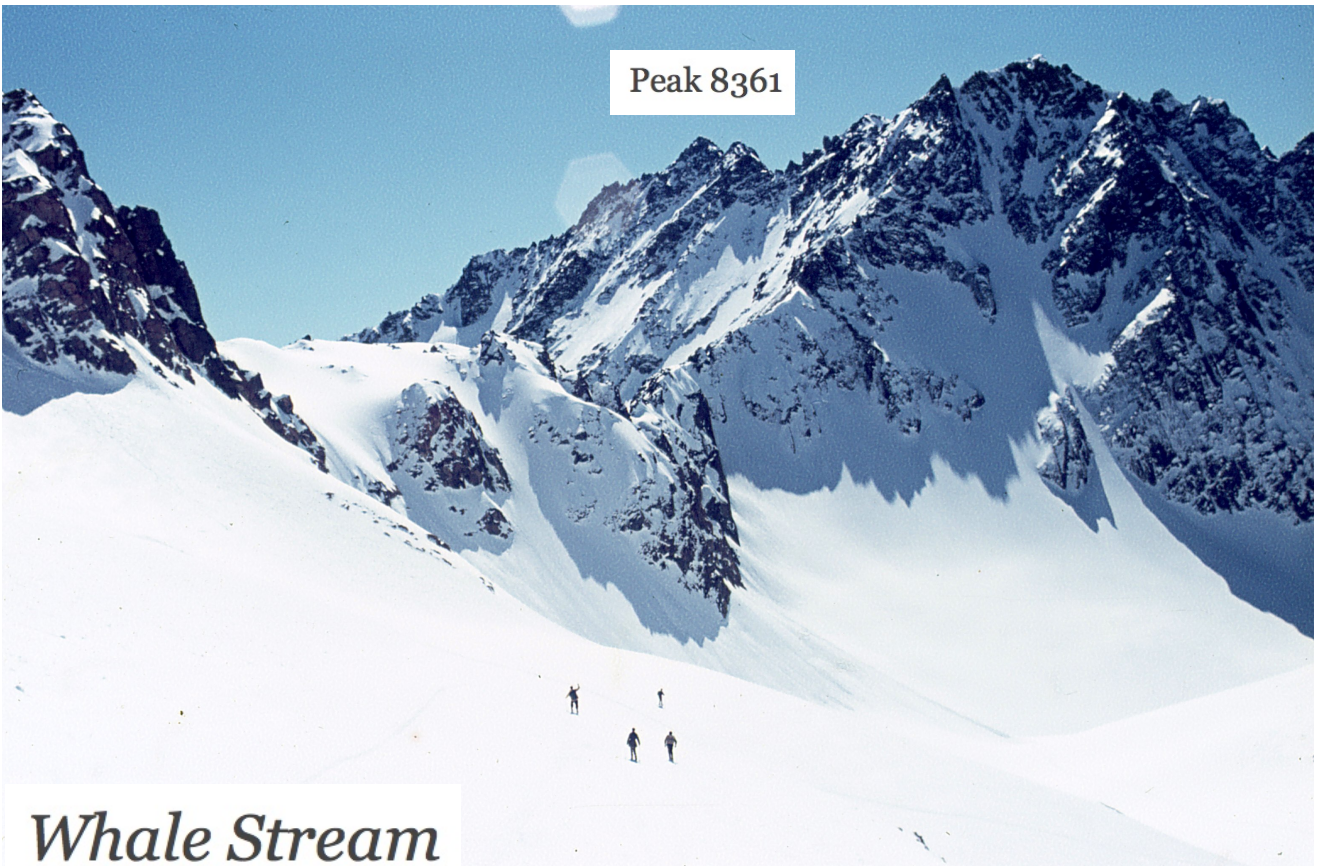
Peter McKellar got stripped by the rope tow. KDM

# Awakino



Bill Sheath. Bill was known throughout the Hakataramea Valley for his humane treatment of his farm animals. At this time there would have been no skifield without Bill. It was a treat to see him paralleling downhill with a grease gun and no poles. KDM

# Hawkduns



Peak 8361

# Whale Stream



## *Mueller Hut*

## *Kakanuis*

Frost bite and bottomless snow  
- too cold for skiing KDM



## *Two Thumb*

