

welcome

As the frosts start to set in and some of our fellow workmates head off for their annual winter adventures we suddenly realize that we are again at the end of another busy Summer season. It was Adrian's first season at the helm, and he and Sally could not have fitted in better! There have been many laughs, some at the expense of poor Adrian (working in an office full of predominantly women does have its moments)!

Even though we do not get to see the Brownes on a day to day basis we continue to be entertained by their adventures and bring you a few snippets of their 'retirement days' in this issue.

Fox Glacier or more specifically Alpine Guides has found itself in the midst of an epidemic over the past few months, yes that's right, the 'love bug' has hit Fox Glacier. Read on for all the intimate details. . .

love is in the air



On the 8th of April, Adrian and Sally tied the knot at St Mary of the Angels Church in Wellington. Friends and family traveled from as far away as London, Jersey and Germany to help them celebrate. The sun was shining and rumour has it that Adrian was not the least bit fazed when Sally was 25 minutes late to the church! They honeymooned in the very romantic Aitutaki in the Cook Islands and came back tanned and relaxed and excited about their future together.

Special congratulations

Special congratulations also go out to 2 of our guides Natalie Van Der Hulst and Grant Drummond who recently got engaged!

Congratulations also to our very own pin up girl Mary Gordon. Mary (a former 'doris') has been struck by cupid's arrow and married John Falconer in April in a very romantic ceremony on a hilltop in Central Otago.



Thinking of popping the question? What better way to do it than in an ice cave on the Fox Glacier. That's exactly what helihike clients Steve and Leisa did. So determined was Steve to propose to his future bride that he waited 5 days for the weather to clear to be able to sweep Leisa off her feet in a very romantic ice cave!

Just as we go to print another guide has been struck by the love arrow, congrats to Tamra and her fiancé Chris.

We wish all the couples all the best and lots of happiness!



ice axe wielding andersons

Waihi in the North Island of NZ may be known for it's mining, but Alpine Guides has tapped into another precious resource known as 'The Andersons'. Way back in 1999 and from a family of 4 girls and 7 boys a young lassie named Fiona Anderson joined Alpine Guides. From the outset she became a legendary ice axe wielding step cutting machine. Her sister Brigid (Brigie) followed and decided her skills were best spent whipping clients up some mean tucker at the Hobnail Café, along with the occasional special guest appearance step cutting on the glacier.

Not to be out shone by the girls, Brian thought it was his time to make his way to Fox Glacier, and certainly gave his sisters a run for their money with his step cutting skills, and put his mechanical (and patience) skills to good use working wonders with our historic buses.

When more guides were needed this year we knew to look no further than Waihi! No sooner had his big sis made the SOS phone call, Matthew sprung into action hitchhiking all the way down to Fox Glacier.

To ensure that the Anderson resource is not lost, another has been created. Brian and Helena had a beautiful baby boy called Jacob in February, and we are glad to report that he is already in training, mini ice axe in hand!

Since Fiona's arrival in Fox she has blossomed into the Assistant Operations Manager (and part time Human Resources Manager)! Her ice axe wielding days have developed into wielding helihike loads and watch out Toni Marsh and Karen Olsen (TV 1 & 3's weather girls), her weather calls will put you to shame!



(Carrol Browne reports from beyond...)

After receiving the third wasp sting of the day in my garden (gone are the days when I happily hired people to do the gardening) I decided it was time to rest my swollen head and foot and sit down to write this story about our fun filled retirement days . . .

We've had some great trips and are slowly working our way through a range of transportation modes. So far, horses, bicycles, helicopters and feet have taken us into some pretty amazing New Zealand country sides. Yet to come, China to St Petersburg by train and plane to London, then on to the Queen Charlotte Sounds, British Columbia, to try out our lovely boat, the Senang Hati. We are learning the wisdom of what our dear sailing friend said, "If you really want to know what its like to be a boat owner, especially a lovely wooden motor sailer, all you have to do is convert all your cash to hundred dollar bills, go stand in a cold shower and cut them up".

As for the rest of the "retirement" scene, we are tying each others arms to our respective sides. That should make it less easy to say, "Heck, put me down for that, I've got heaps of time now that I am retired".

We are starting to get the hang of being out of the day to day at Alpine Guides but we sure do miss the good times up there. We think the glacier still knows us and she sure is as pretty and as interesting as she has ever been and maybe even more so.

So slowly we are getting used to this 'retirement thing' and by this time next year, we may be leading a slightly quieter lifestyle. On the other hand, someone may have undone the rope around our arms and we may have once again said once too often "Heck, put me down for that, I've got heaps of time. . . ."



discover a winter wonderland . . .

"Our guide was fantastic! Just wanted to compliment him on his style, information and general respect of the nature of the glacier. We appreciated the time and attention to detail he provided. eg how concerned he was with remembering our names and his concerns for everyone's safety. Altogether a memorable trip!! Thanks one million!!!! Andrew and Abby from Sydney, Australia

The All Day Fox Glacier Walk has long been getting rave reviews from clients all over the world. It is a fantastic day out for those with an adventurous spirit who wish to venture further up the glacier than the half day trip and what better time than over the less busy winter months!

After accessing the glacier through a 'secret' track which winds up through bush regenerating from previous glacial advances, your guide will cut fresh steps in the ice to enable you to journey close to the majestic pinnacles of the first icefall. The towering blue pinnacles are an

awesome sight and you will then have the opportunity to have lunch 'glacier style'.

In winter we keep our groups to a maximum of 10 people and clients also receive trekking crampons (10 point spikes to attach to their boots) which are perfect for winter ice conditions. They allow maximum grip and make traveling on the ice very comfortable.

In addition to leather boots and trekking crampons we also outfit clients with waterproof rainjackets, overtrousers, woolen socks, mittens and hats at no extra charge. There is also an opportunity for clients to purchase a thermos of delicious hot homemade soup, tea or coffee from the Hobnail Café before they depart on their adventure.

The All Day Walk is exceptional value at only \$95.00 NZD per person and bookings are recommended.



THE FOX VIEW

ALPINE GUIDES FOX GLACIER

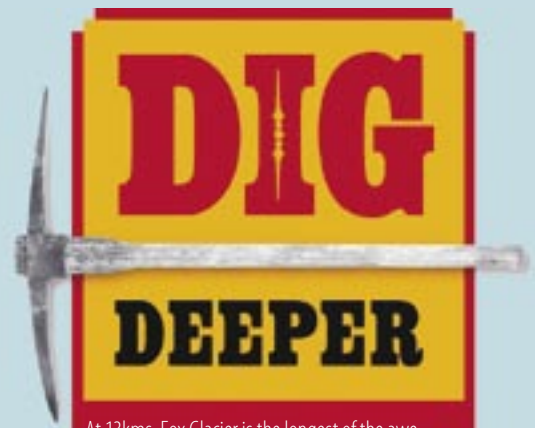


'beloved' rescue

Even though Mike has started to settle into a 'semi-retired' lifestyle, he still has a lot of time for the glaciers and is up there any chance he gets. Unfortunately, even with decades of guiding skills behind him he still managed to lose his 'beloved' into an icy pool whilst accompanying the Glacier Guides First Assessment candidates on the Franz Josef Glacier (please don't fret as we do not mean his wife, Carrol but are referring to his antique, imported and very expensive wooden ice axe, so needless to say he was extremely distraught!)

A reward was posted and Mike was keen to see who amongst the guides were poor enough and brave enough to embark on the retrieval exercise. Despite the guides best efforts that day, as the light faded, it seemed as if Mike's axe was gone and there was the looming reality that Mother Nature would one day expose his treasure to the competition's guides who would know nothing of his personal loss.

Next day brave Brian, partner Helena and brand new baby Jacob arrived at the Browne's house with the ice axe, borne fittingly aloft Jacob's buggy. (Brian had run up in the dark the next morning carrying the 10 litre scooping bucket which intrigued the suspicious Franz guides – what manner of new fangled inventiveness have the Fox guides come up with now, they wondered!). The years of training Mike had invested in his team of guides had paid off he was reunited with his 'beloved'!



At 13kms, Fox Glacier is the longest of the awe inspiring NZ West Coast glaciers, and it's 36 square km neve is bigger than the size of Christchurch city!

At its head soaring peaks of over 3 000m (10 000ft) dominate the vista. These include Aoraki (Mt Cook) and Mt Tasman, which weather permitting, can be viewed on our heli hiking experience.

NZ's west coast glaciers are unique and are probably the most accessible glaciers in the world, as they terminate amongst temperate rainforest just 250 metres above sea level. Nowhere else does this happen!

like father like son . . .

Mike's guiding legacy has lived on in youngest son Pete, and just days after the dramatic reunion Pete's radio calls were heard at base and went something like this. . .

Sunday: "Somebody has taken my axe and I want it returned" (Axe is returned anonymously)

Monday: "Who has my axe, I want it back?!" (Once again the ice axe pixies jump into action)

Tuesday: "*****"! My axe has disappeared into a crevasse (Pete stages a crevasse rescue to retrieve the axe).

Wednesday: Buggar, I've lost my axe into a waterhole again! (Axe disappears into the glacier, to be possibly seen again in 2050)!

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