

Introduction to Mt Wellington

This is the third guide for The Mountain, with more than double the number of climbs since the first edition in 1981. The new version has been expanded to include new crags, more route and clearer access information so finding the crags and climbs, and following routes should be easier, particularly for newcomers. Our intention has been that the printed guide will continue to fit in your back pocket and not require a crane to lift it so the descriptions have been shortened where possible and the general blurb kept to a minimum. There is heaps more supplementary information available on line for you to browse or download at your leisure including additional photos, topos, history and articles, and a Forum where you can share your info, updates and gossip. The full content of this guide is available at <http://www.thesarvo.com>.

In addition, the rapid increase in rap stations is now reflected in the text and the topos: the re-growth of vegetation in the gullies where people are no longer traipsing down is now very obvious, and there is a significant reduction in the amount of tat hanging off the many belays on the cliffs.

This edition has taken a new approach to guide writing using new technology:

- The guide is edited online, which speeds up the process and allows input from a greater variety of people.
- The content is available free online. In the end the information in this guide belongs to the climbing community, and the web is the best way to make that information available.
- The printed document is generated directly from the web content, ensuring the printed guide is always up to date with the latest content.
- Print-on-demand means we can publish early, publish often and publish cheaply. This guide will be only printed as copies are needed by utilising modern print-on-demand style publishing, enabling us keep updating the guide over time: hopefully it will not be out of print very often or for very long.

The question of whether to use photo topos is a vexing one. The nature of the cliff (in among trees, deep gullies, foreshortening, round corners etc) makes clear photos really difficult to get for all the climbs. Peter Jackson's excellent topo drawings have been retained and added to for many areas and will be augmented with photo topos where a clear photo can be taken.

Inevitably the more accessible and easily found routes get the traffic but we do urge you to get up into those more inaccessible areas: there are some gems awaiting you.

► Dedication

Dedicated to the lad, Dave Gardner, a great friend, climber and character, killed by an avalanche in New Zealand in 2004 while guiding on Mt Tasman and to Ken McConnell, who died on the mountain in 2006 doing what he loved. Vale.

► Acknowledgements

This guide has been a community effort and a very large number of people have contributed. Many thanks go to these people, and their contributions:

Tony McKenny: Editor and chief mover and shaker.

Al Adams: Editor and author of colourful descriptions.

Dave Humphries: Editor and topo tweak master.

Jon Nermut: Editor and boss of printed layout and web trickery.

Phil Robinson: Detail review officer and author of the 1981 guidebook.

Peter Jackson: Artmaster responsible for crafting the crag topos.

Ivan Riley: Site topos and maps.

Thanks to Max Banks, Al Beech, Doug Bruce, Josh Caples, Simon Carter, Lyle Closs, Nic Dekka, Campbell Godfrey, Dave Gray, Stefan Karpiniac, Doug McConnell, Gerry Narkowicz, Roger Parkyn, Simon Parsons, Garry Phillips, Kim Robinson, Ian Snape, Pete Steane, The Wellington Park Management Trust, Al Williams, Alex Wilson, Simon Young, wives and partners of the editors and many others for their contributions, updates, comments and photos. Thanks everybody.

► On Your Own Heads

Climbing can be dangerous. If you think otherwise, stop reading here and take up lawn bowls or tiddly winks. YOU are responsible for your own safety, not us. We have attempted to make sure the information gathered here is as accurate as possible but we accept no responsibility for any errors included in descriptions, for any changes in the state or quality of the climb, or for any of the fixed anchors or for your choice of climb on the day. This is a mountain with all the inherent characteristics of a post-glacial landscape in action - wind, cold, loose rock, vegetation and rock fall. Only climb if you have a high level of skill, use appropriate gear and look after the safety of each other.

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The Organ Pipes has much loose rock and a helmet is strongly recommended - most regulars on the cliff have had at least one near miss.

► Accidents and Assistance

Accidents do happen and tragically the first climbing fatality occurred early in 2006 when an abseil setup failed. To seek urgent help phone 112 or 000 - mobile phones have good coverage on the mountain. It is vital that you describe whether access is from the top or the bottom of the cliff, so that rescuers can quickly move to the area.

► Grading

Grading is always contentious. Some climbs have been re-graded and re-rated after canvassing opinion amongst climbers but where there was a divergence of opinion the editors added the grade you see. Re-rated climbs gained or lost stars because the nature of the experience has changed.

In the end, both the quality and grade of routes is subjective, particularly with newer routes, and inevitably publishers win any debate over grades or quality. For your guidance, we have kind of thought:

- *** An absolute ripper, a "must do" climb.
- ** Still great climbing, highly recommended.
- Worth going out of your way to climb for sure.

► Abbreviations

- BR - Bolt Runner
- DBB - Double Bolt Belay
- Alt - Alternate leads
- FA - First ascent
- FFA - First free ascent
- M - Metres
- LH/RH - Left hand/Right hand
- ▷ - Sport climb
- ö - Access to a rap station descent
- - Quality rating

► Related Links

The following sites provide further information on the mountain:

<http://www.thesarvo.com/>

<http://www.wellingtonpark.tas.gov.au/>

Climb Tasmania (Tas selected climbs) by G. Narkowicz. Climb Tasmania Inc. 2005.

Craglets 6th Edition. Roger Parkyn and Matt Perchard

The Mountain

Hobart is defined by The Mountain. Standing 1270 metres high it forms a stunning backdrop to the city while the spectacular vista from the top encompassing the surrounding islands and estuaries is truly world class. The summit may be a short drive from the city centre but is a world removed, a true mountain environment complete with unpredictable weather, stunted sub-alpine flora, and a complex of buttresses, outcrops, screes and gullies.

Kunanyi, as the original inhabitants call The Mountain, has been heavily used since white settlement as a source of timber and stone, for hunting and recreation and by the occasional bushranger. It has been burnt on numerous occasions; the last major instance was the Hobart Bushfires of 1967.

Situated directly below the summit at an altitude of 1000m is the largest and most conspicuous crag on the mountain, the Organ Pipes. Visible further to the right and tucked beneath the subsidiary peak of Mt. Arthur, is the boutique crag of Lost World.

The whole area is now managed as a de-facto National Park by the Wellington Park Management Trust. Increasing numbers of visitors have been making the pilgrimage to the top resulting in heavier traffic, new tracks, new amenities and the building of an (appalling) lookout on top.

More climbers are using the crags, filling the car park (even during the week), bolting, cutting tracks and dropping rocks. Our challenge for the future is for all of us, climbers, managers and tourists alike, to ensure that future development does not detract from the essential beauty, history and peacefulness of this unique environment.

► Maps

Most the area we are interested in is covered by the Tasmapp Wellington Park Recreation Map (2006), Scale 1:20 000.

Techno-navigators should note this map is based on the Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994 (GDA94) but if your GPS doesn't have GDA94, use the satellite derived coordinates based on the World Geodetic System 1984 (WGS84). This is virtually equivalent, and is the system used in this guide.

► Rock

Geologically, a faulted complex of Triassic sandstones and Permian mudstones underpin a massive sheet of dolerite that forms the angular cliffs of the Organ Pipes and Lost World. Subsequent ice action has resulted in large block fields that are still moving slowly down the slope. Sometimes the erosion is more rapid - during the winter of 1985 the big belay ledge below Punk gave way and a huge boulder the size of a room rolled out of what is now called Rockaway Gully, creating a new access track and blocking the road.

► Aspect

Mainly east facing, and protected from the prevailing westerlies. However, the altitude means the weather can be hot, dry, cold, wet and windy, all on the same day. Snow is possible, if unlikely, at any time of year.

► Access and Facilities

Access details for each crag are listed separately but in general, travel south from Franklin Square along Davey Street and the Huon Road; following signs for the B64, Ferntree (Mt Wellington), for 9.6km. Just before Ferntree turn R onto Pillinger Drive (C616), which leads via the Springs Picnic area (4.5km) to the Pinnacle (summit). Metro buses 48 and 49 go from Franklin Square to Ferntree - hitch the rest of the way to the Pipes or walk if you are keen.

Wellington Park is generally a day-use area, and there are no formal camping facilities in the Park. Rough bush camping is possible near the base of the Organ Pipes or the Lost World, if you can find a level enough site - a bivvy among the boulders may be a better option, particularly at Lost World. Bush camping is also permitted in the lower altitudes in the western sections of the Park but campfires are not permitted anywhere in the Park. There are a number of picnic and emergency shelter huts throughout the Park although these are not available for overnight stays. Fires are permitted in huts with fire places, and they are often stocked with fire wood. There are toilet facilities at the Summit and at the Springs. Other accommodation options are backpacker hostels or camping in the Hobart area.

► Climbing Information

There are almost 450 recorded climbs on the Mountain ranging from short, hard, bolted sports routes on sandstone to long multi-pitch trad and sport climbs on the Pipes themselves. There are also over 200 boulder problems on both dolerite and sandstone. The new guide has been expanded to include new outcrops and updated information on routes and access.

Most activity focuses on late spring to early autumn although some intrepid hard climbers have been known to wade through snow in winter to reach the warm sunnier buttresses. Generally though, for the rest of the year climbing lower down is more enjoyable although the rock can still be damp and slippery - as well as cold.

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► Bolting and Ethical Debates

Mt Wellington has always been essentially a traditional climbing area although over the years pegs, bongs (the climbing ones mainly although the use of the other sort is reputed in some cases...) and even bolts have been used on some first ascents. More recently, however, this traditional ethic has been changing with the advent of many sport climbs and the installation of rap stations, particularly on the Organ Pipes.

The rate of bolting new climbs is also definitely on the increase and one or two of the smaller crags have been heavily bolted. Occasionally bolts have been placed in inappropriate places or on existing climbs but this is fortunately rare, as is hold "enhancement", gluing or chipping.

The local climbing community is in reasonable accord as to how to maintain the ethics of climbing here, although that doesn't stop an occasional blood-letting as the finer points of ethics are debated. Please respect the opinion of others before placing bolts, or removing them, and if in doubt consult across the climbing community... this may not clarify the situation immediately but will probably result in a delicious debate that can rage for months. If in doubt, don't.

Experience overseas and on popular mainland crags is that U-bolts (staples) wear through relatively quickly if used for top roping or where many ropes are pulled through after abseil. If you are contemplating fixing a rap station, particularly one that will be frequently used, consider using thicker staples, chain, or fix malions or a twisted stainless shackle. It will increase your cost, but will also last longer as a testament to your beneficence.

While on the topic, it would be appreciated if climbers would refrain from cutting any more tracks, particularly on the Organ Pipes. There are now several well-defined paths up to the buttresses and the Trust is now working with climbers to rationalise these routes to minimise any more vegetation removal or erosion. These tracks are sometimes marked by small cairns usually erected by newcomers to the crags or those less familiar with the path system, so they don't get lost and have to go blasting up on yet another bush bash with more resulting damage.

► Climbing Tick List

If time is short and you want the best, try any of the following multi-star classics.

12: Pulpit Chimney

14: Fiddlesticks, Pegasus (Direct), Sentinel Ridge

15: Nefertiti

16: Lignum Vitae, Moonraker

17: Blue Meridian, Centaur, Raspberry Jam and Crackers, Chancellor Direct

18: Third Bird, Black Magic, Digitalis, Lost Wanderer

19: Carpe Diem, Battle Cruiser, Punk, Brown Madonna, Space Cowboy

20: Lone Stranger, Icarus, Sky Rocket, Improbability Drive

21: Left Out, Farewell to Arms, Atlantis, Cold Power, Tartarus

22: Neon God (pitch 1), Beaten and Abused, SSSSI, Savage Journey, Blank Generation, Heat Pump

23: Ultrasound

24: In Flagrate Delicto, Phoenix, After Midnight

25: Mildly Amused, Wootang, James's Arête

26: The Colour of Magic, Pleasant Screams, Completion Backward Principle

27: The Fifth Elephant, Slap Dancer

28: Gargamell

29: Cheshire Cat, Blubber Boy, Pleasant Screams Direct

30: Space Invader

31: Future Shock

A Short Climbing History

► And in the beginning...

Tasmanian climbing has reflected the changes and evolution that has occurred across Australia and overseas, if sometimes a little belatedly. The first climbs were recorded about fifty years ago with the ascent of Skyline Minor (9) in 1958 although Jim Peterson and Darryl Webber were active a few years earlier. Even in the late nineties there were still the odd wooden wedge in cracks, hanks of hawser tat round spikes and rusting pegs. In the very early 1960s, the Van Diemen Alpine Club and University Mountaineering Club were established and a number of routes including the ever popular Pegasus (14) were made on Northern Buttress. Activity on the Pipes, however, increased significantly after 1965 with the formation of the Climbers Club of Tasmania with

ascents such as Faust (16) and Ophthalmia (19) (so much ash around after the bushfire!) by John Moore and Reg Williams, Nefertiti (15) by Moore and Phillip Stranger and the outstanding Moonraker (16) by Mike Douglas and Williams. Hexes, nuts and tube chocks (lengths of aluminium tubing slung with the new tape for the uninitiated) were the go, and in 1968 the visiting Brit, John Ewbank, showed how they could be used on climbs like the Shield (20), Centaur (17) and the stunning crackline, Icarus (20) giving the local lads a major boost. Following on, Ian Lewis and Lyle Closs, two talented local climbers, put up many climbs in the early seventies including classics such as Third Bird (18), the elegant Chancellor Direct (17) and the not so politically correct Great Bitch (19).

► All that glitters

A Golden Age of climbing for a particular cliff or area always seems to have ended just before you started... or so every one insists. For The Mountain though, the late Seventies and early Eighties was indeed a golden time. Technology was changing again with the advent of cams and wires and a passing parade of youthful local heroes and visiting stars improved standards out of sight as they explored new buttresses and crags and had lots and lots of fun. Kim Carrigan, then the best climber in Australia, Mike Law and Greg Child teamed with local climbers including David Bowman and Lewis to leave their mark with a swag of climbs such as Tartarus (21), the master blaster Battle Cruiser (19) and Starship Trooper (22), another pearler, Lone Stranger (20), and of course everyone's favourite, Brown Madonna (19). Henry Barber called in on his blitzkrieg tour of Oz in 1975, on-sight soloed Double Column Central (17), and added the jamming test pieces of Daedalus (20), and Savage Journey (22) at Lost World.

The action, though, was with the local lads. A youthful Simon Parsons, along with Phil Bigg, Doug Fife, Phil Steane and Phil Cullen had a ball, venturing out onto new territory with climbs such as the stunning Sky Rocket (20), just one of the best climb ever (yeah, well, it is pretty good...), the amazing arête of Killer Canary (22) and the jamming test piece, Punk (19) although you had better hurry to climb that one as the main pillar is moving... Pete Steane, Garn Cooper (a legendary climber reputed to have soloed Resurrection Shuffle (21) in bubble boots) and Al Adams were also in on the action with the ever popular Blue Meridian (17), Bad Attitude (18), so aptly named, and a number of other quality routes. During 1985 Justin Kennedy put up the then hardest route on the Pipes, Second Coming (25) with Parsons.

When the weather was bad, or for variety, there was always the smaller crags. Joe Friend added Atlantis (21) at Lost World, the "best crack on the mountain", or so he claimed at the time, and Phil Steane blasted on with a whole range of climbs such as Glam (19) and Heavenly Head Job (18) as well as starting the development of New World with Rob DeCesare. Adams found an Opportunity (20) at Lost World and Biggs, Parsons and Fyfe were exploring the upside down world at Sphinx Rock with Phoenix (24), Tutankhamen (21) and Pharos (24), setting the scene for the developments to come some ten years later.

By 1987, Nic Deka had moved to Hobart from North-western Tasmania and set about making his mark with a couple of routes on the then rarely visited Broken Buttress area. From 1988 to 1990 new activity was dominated by Deka and Dave Stephenson. With a variety of partners between them they added such classics as Beaten and Abused, a thin 22 right of SSSI, Space Cowboy (19), Gladiator (21M0), the very aptly named Farewell to Arms (21), and the one pitch classic of the grade, Carpe Diem (19).

► Yesterday

The 90s kicked off with Adrian (H) Herington's ascent with Stu Scott and Pete Steane of Pugnacious (22), a balancy little number. Steane teamed up with Fife, recently returned from abroad, to produce significant bold leads such as Cold Power (21) and Massacre Madness (21), and the three star face of Left Out (21) by Fife, while also helping Adams with his Tired Cliches (18).

These routes were on the cusp of a significant period of change. As new longer route lines dried up, technology, this time in the form of the portable power drill, yet again enabled climbers to explore new ground as they moved out onto the exposed faces and arêtes, often in spectacular positions: 50 minute hand drilling efforts were now a thing of the past. Matt Perchard and Owen Prall kicked in with climbs such as Live Fast, Die Young (24) and Would Jesus Play Guitar in a Thrash Metal Band (24) but it was the arrival of Roger Parkyn from New Zealand that signalled a seismic shift in ethics, attitudes and standards. He created a swag of new routes on all the dolerite crags, with probably the finest being the soaring two pitch In Flagrate Delicto (24) - magic climbing. Sam Edwards established the sensational Pleasant Screams (26), Slap Dancer (27) and his signature route, After Midnight (24) - "amazing what a lad can do with school holidays and a nickel-cadmium power pack" according to Parkyn!

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► Today

The charge has continued into the new millennium. Al Williams has added several soon to be classics such as Wootang (25) and the Colour of Magic (26). Kim Robinson was Sucked In (24) and dealt with Terror Firmer (25). The new routes keep coming, with another recent arrival Nick Hancock climbing his Tower of Power (25) and Doug McConnell bolting up the Best Climb in the Gorge (24).

Meanwhile the rise in standards on the smaller outcrops has been meteoric. Robinson has established the hardest route to date at Lost World with Cheshire Cat (29) while Garry Phillips and Jake Bresnehan have re-written the book at Sphinx Rock with climbs such as Space Invader (30) and Spaced Out (31), and Future Shock (31) at the recently re-discovered Ferntree cliffs.

The scene in Hobart has always been small, not surprising given the low population, but there have been more than a few climbing characters. Some mercurial stars rapidly burnt out and drifted off to bouldering, mountain biking or even kayaking, while others have endured on down the years. If you see some lone soloist, high on an obscure wall it may well be Phil Robinson prospecting for new routes. Thirty years after sailing up Roaring Forties (15) he continues to add to the stock of trad climbs, often with son Kim. Recent additions include Hakea (21) and Dynamic Journey (20). Simon Parsons returned to Tasmania twenty five years after climbing Ultrasound (23) to add the direct start, coming in at 28. He followed this up with Pleasant Screams Direct at 29 - possibly the hardest pitch, certainly the most sustained, on the Pipes and on dolerite. Extraordinary.

► And tomorrow

Each generation has added their own private history to the Mountain. To quote the first guide: "Many people will probably be content with climbing the established classics. For others the history is far from ended".

Tony McKenny

The Organ Pipes

