Post-conference Field Trip
Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park
18-21 February 2017
Background
Aoraki Mount Cook National Park is home to New Zealand’s highest mountain (Aoraki) and largest glacier (Tasman - Haupapa). With 19 peaks over 3000 m and glaciers covering 40% of its land surface, Aoraki National Park is a beautiful, rugged and harsh environment. Although only gazetted as a national park in 1953 this alpine region has a long cultural and social history. To Ngāi Tahu, Aoraki is a most scared ancestor embodied in the mountain, and a special tōpuni extends over the national park as a symbol of Ngāi Tahu’s mana and rangatitanga. Mountaineering and tourism have been key activities in the park since the late 1800s, with the first successful summit of Aoraki in 1894 by three local climbers. Today, the park hosts over 300,000 visitors every year, providing people with options to explore, relax, and recharge from busy modern lives.

Your hosts for this trip are:
Dr Heather Purdie heather.purdie@canterbury.ac.nz
Dr Alice Doughty alice.doughty@gmail.co.nz

Day 1 – Saturday 18th February

13:00  Depart Christchurch. Bus will pick up at the University of Canterbury Arts/Forestry Road and on Orchard Road (outside the International Antarctic Centre close to the airport).

18:00  Arrive Aoraki/Mount Cook village. Check-in to accommodation and then choose a dinner option in the village

Dinner options:
Note prices provided are a general guide only
- Panorama Room (Hermitage Hotel) - $40-80
- Alpine Restaurant Buffet (Hermitage Hotel) - $60
- Old Mountaineers Café - $25-50
- Chamois Bar & Grill - $20-30
Day 2 – Sunday 19th February

7:00-8:30 Breakfast

9:00 Meet at the Department of Conservation Visitor Centre
Presentation by Park Ranger - Ray Bellringer

10:00 Day walk – Hooker Valley.
Bus departs from DOC Visitor Centre at 9:30 am. Bring a
day bag for your lunch (provided) and don’t forget sun
protection and some layers if it is cold or even a bit wet!

The suite of glacial moraines in the Hooker Valley are
world class, and been the site of many dating efforts.
Alice will provide some lively discussion around the
challenges of moraine dating as we check out key sites.
However, it won’t be all science; Heather will cast your
imaginations back to early mountaineering expeditions,
and highlight adaptations required by the diverse flora
and fauna to survive in this harsh environment. Lunch
will be enjoyed on the shores of the Hooker Lake

16:30 Bus pick-up from White Horse Hill campground to
return to village. Individuals may opt to walk back if
they prefer.

17:00 Evening is free for participants to check out various
restaurants and bars. Also consider visiting the Sir
Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre (entry fee $20) and/or
book a Stargazing Tour ($70).

Please note that the weather in Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park can
be very changeable. Come prepared for fine/warm and cool/wet
weather. If the weather on the day is very bad, then the walk will be
modified to a shorter option.
Day 3 – Monday 20th February

7:00-9:00 Breakfast

9:30  Boat trip and short walks – Tasman valley
     Bus departs from accommodation at 9:30 am. As for yesterday, bring your day bag with lunch (provided) and the clothes, sun protection etc you will need for the day. You may get wet on the boat trip so spare shorts or light trousers can be handy.

     Today we explore New Zealand’s largest glacier. The Tasman Glacier contains around 30% of all the perennial ice in New Zealand! We will be joining Glacier Explorers for a boat tour (11 am) on the rapidly enlarging proglacial lake. Get up close to icebergs and get a water-level perspective of just how much ice has been lost in recent time.

13:00 Lunch at Blue Lakes picnic area (packed-lunch provided)

14:00 Explore glacier ‘downwasting’ during a walk along the old Ball Hut road to Husky Flat where we will get a great view of the glacier. En route Heather and Alice will discuss recent and ongoing research on Tasman Glaciers. Find out how ‘Husky Flat’ got its name.

16:30 Bus pick-up from Blue Lakes returning to village

17:00 As per day 2, time to eat, drink and explore
Day 4 – Tuesday 21\textsuperscript{th} February

The morning of Day 4 is free for you to further explore the park, or take time to relax a bit. The \textbf{bus departs at 1pm sharp} so please be back from any activity in plenty of time.

Breakfast is available between \textit{7-10 am} so you can have an early or relaxed start to your last day. Room check-out is 10am. You will be able to store luggage on the bus in the morning before you head off on activities. We will still provide a packed-lunch today make it easy for those who want to go exploring.

\textbf{Feel like relaxing?}
Department of Conservation Visitor Centre – Great displays and shop
Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre
Drink coffee and enjoys the views from the Old Mountaineer’s Café or the Sir Edmund Hillary Café
Gift shopping at the Hermitage Gift shop or the DOC Visitor Centre

\textbf{Still some energy to burn?}
Consider some of the other short walks around the village (Red Tarns, Governors Bush...). Heather and Alice can help you make your choice or alternatively you can purchase a great walks brochure from the DOC Visitor Centre for only $2 that has all the options laid out.

What about a Heli-hike on Tasman Glacier? Three companies operate guided glacier hiking, price is around $560. Trips can be booked via the DOC visitor centre or Hermitage Hotel Activities Desk

\textbf{Want to explore more?}
Book a scenic flight on a helicopter or ski plane. A number of options are available and booking can be made via the DOC visitor centre or Hermitage Hotel Activities Desk
Some useful websites....

General Information

Accommodation & meals
http://www.hermitage.co.nz
http://www.mtcook.com/restaurant

Flights and Heli-hiking
https://www.mtcookskiplanes.com/
http://www.helicopter.co.nz
http://www.heliworks.nz/mount-cook-scenic-flights
http://www.mtcookguides.co.nz/
http://www.helihiike.co.nz
http://www.mtcook.com/tasman-glacier-heli-hiking

Other activities
http://www.mountcooktours.co.nz/
http://www.glacierexplorers.com/

Quick Checklist
✓ Layers - Warm clothes, cool clothes & rainwear
✓ Boots/shoes suitable for walking
✓ Sun protection (sunscreen, sunhat, sunglasses)
✓ Day bag and drink bottle
✓ Casual clothes (dinner clothes - if wanting to dine in the Panorama Room)
✓ Own toiletries
✓ Towel (can be hired if required)
✓ Camera!