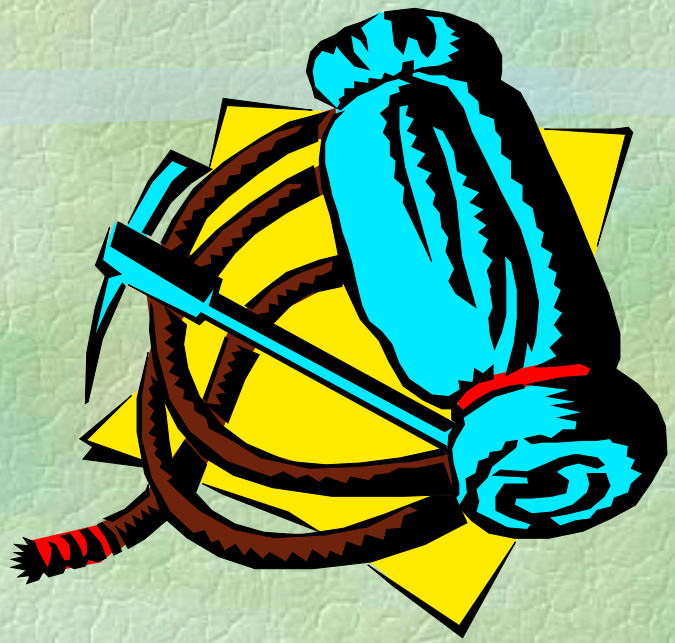
BECAUSE IT IS THERE

MY THOUGHTS ON JOY OF MOUNTAINEERING



WHERE DID IT ALL START

I grew up with an ambition and determination without which I would have been a good deal happier. I thought a lot and developed the far away look of a dreamer, for it was always the distant heights which fascinated me and drew me to them in spirit. I was not sure what could be accomplished by means of tenacity and little else, but the target was set high, and each rebuff only saw me more determined to see at least one major dream through to its fulfilment



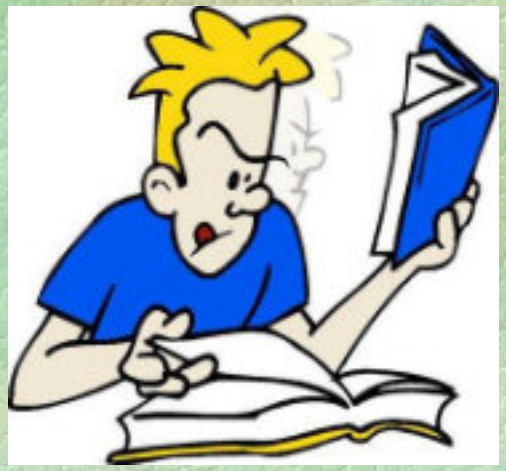
AUTHOR

Earl Denman (1914 – 1944)

Alone to Everest (Solo attempt 1947)

THE LONG LOST LOOK OF A DREAMER

- I was less than a good student and spent hours gazing at the hills
- Lasted to the 2nd year fifth form then was asked to move on
- I was regarded as bit of a Maverick





On Leaving School I Qualified in the three R's

- Rugby
- Running (long distance)
- Rifle shooting

Who am I

Rodger McCormack

Was an avid mountaineer

Instructor with Mountain Safety Council

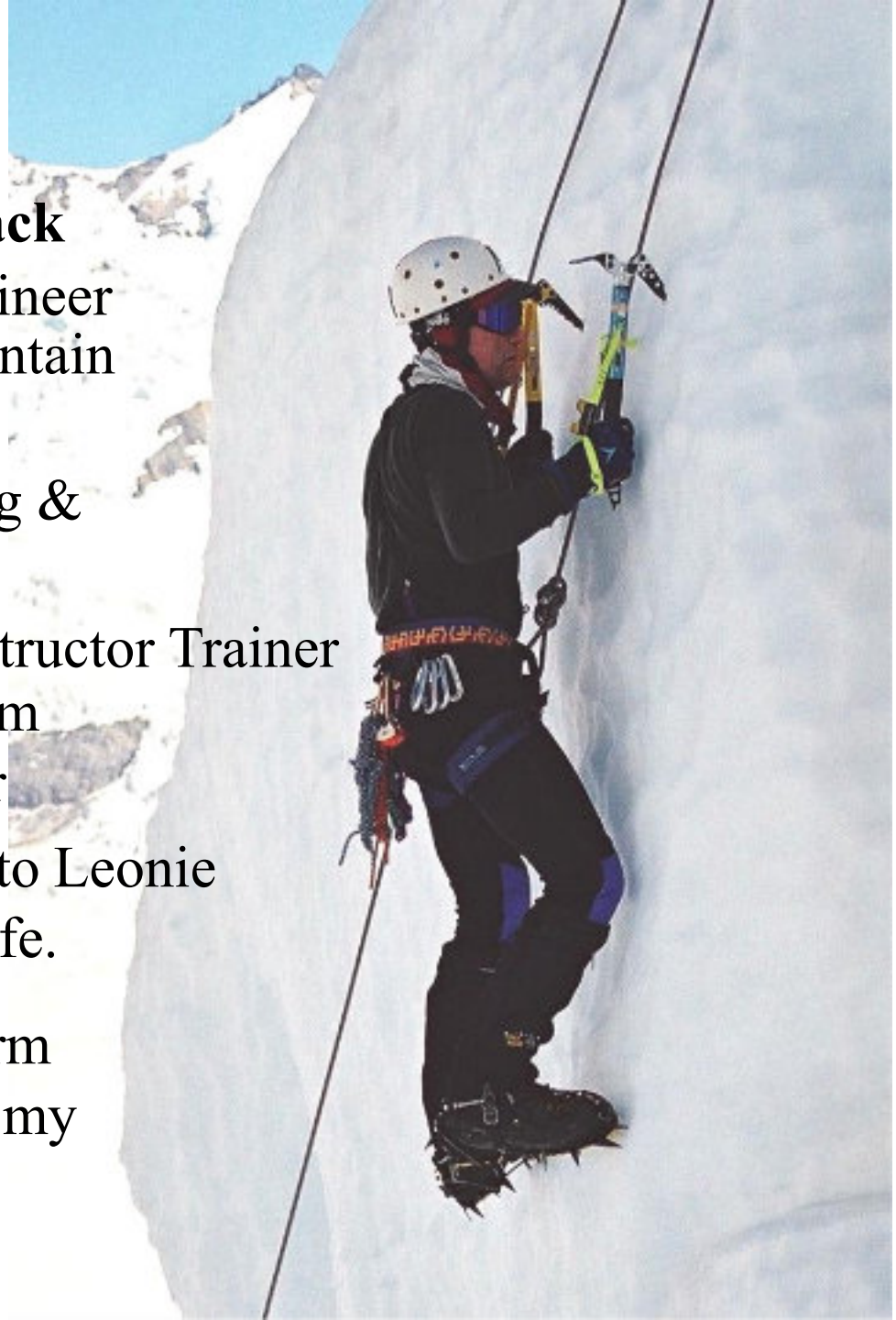
Bush-craft, Abseiling & Mountaineering

An Assessor and Instructor Trainer

Member SAR as team leader and controller

A part time husband to Leonie my long suffering wife.

Was a shepherd - Farm manager for most of my working life

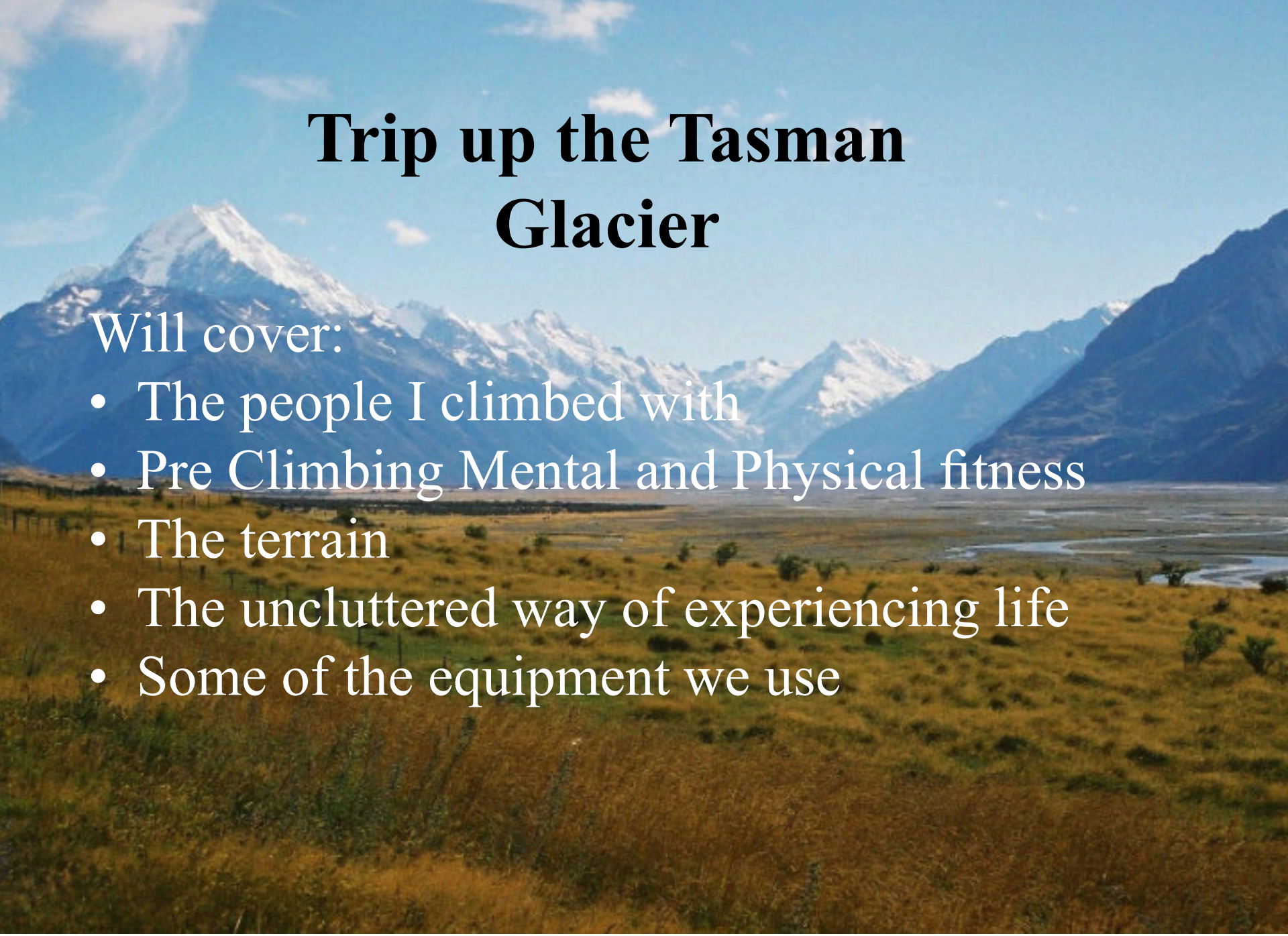


This is where it all started
The Dreamer
Mt Mitre



First Aerial Air Lift Out of the Tararua's





Trip up the Tasman Glacier

Will cover:

- The people I climbed with
- Pre Climbing Mental and Physical fitness
- The terrain
- The uncluttered way of experiencing life
- Some of the equipment we use

Mountaineering Requires a High Level of Physical & Mental fitness



My Training Ground the Tararua Ranges



Solo Holdsworth Mitre



One day southern crossings were a standard part of my fitness training



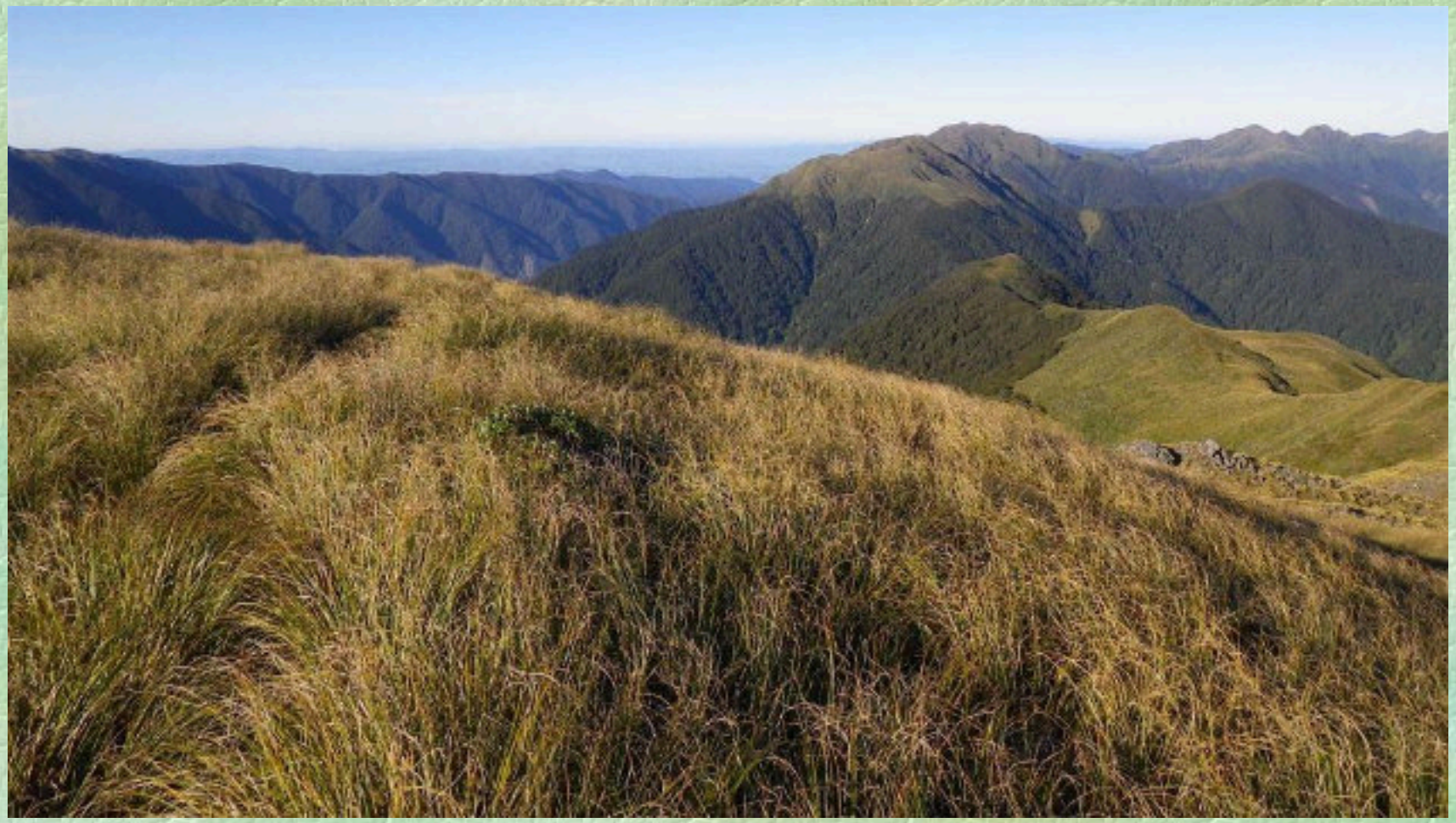
Sea kayaking also kept me fit



Outdoor Addicts Friday Night Drop in Centre Fields Hut – Above Otaki Forks



Tararua Ranges are Hard Country for Hard Men



Many Challenging Places to Climb and Negotiate Tararua Twin Peaks



Being able to carry heavy packs were essential part of fitness training



Good equipment is essential



A Haven



Winter climbing in the Central Plateau
Egmont Summit on a good day. 4.00pm



I Never Lost the Look of a Dreamer

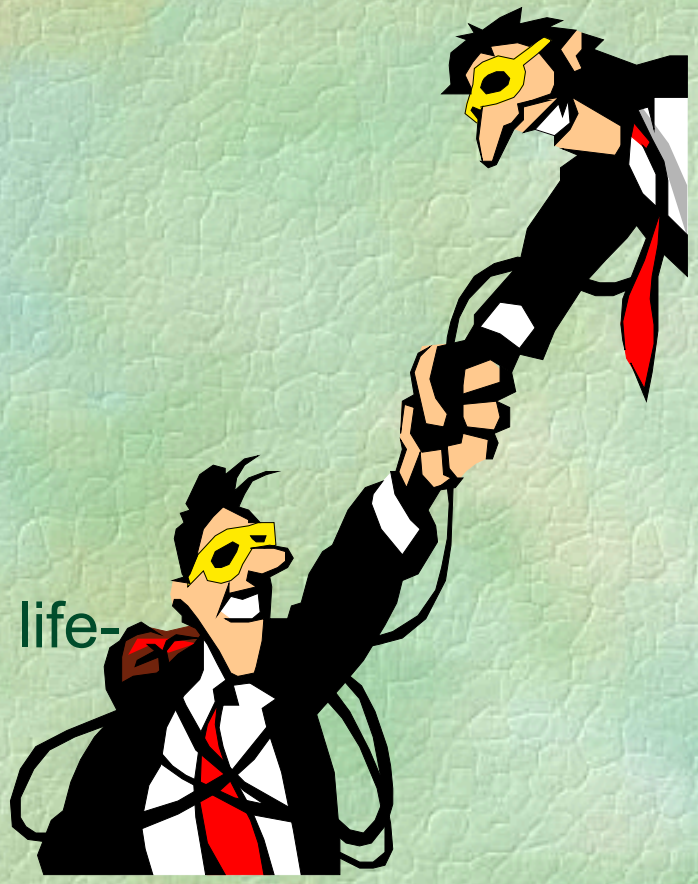


Climbing rock confidently is a key part of Mountaineering
Climbing around Kuratau



THE DEEPER SIDE OF MOUNTAINEERING

- No person can withstand or control the forces of nature.
- Mountaineering is to many the ultimate mental and physical challenge.
- Mountaineers understand the meaning of fear, commitment, discipline, pain and joy.
- Mountaineering brings very deep life-long friendships.



Mt Cook/Aoraki 3724m.

First climbed-1894 by (Tom Fyfe-George Graham -Jack Clark)

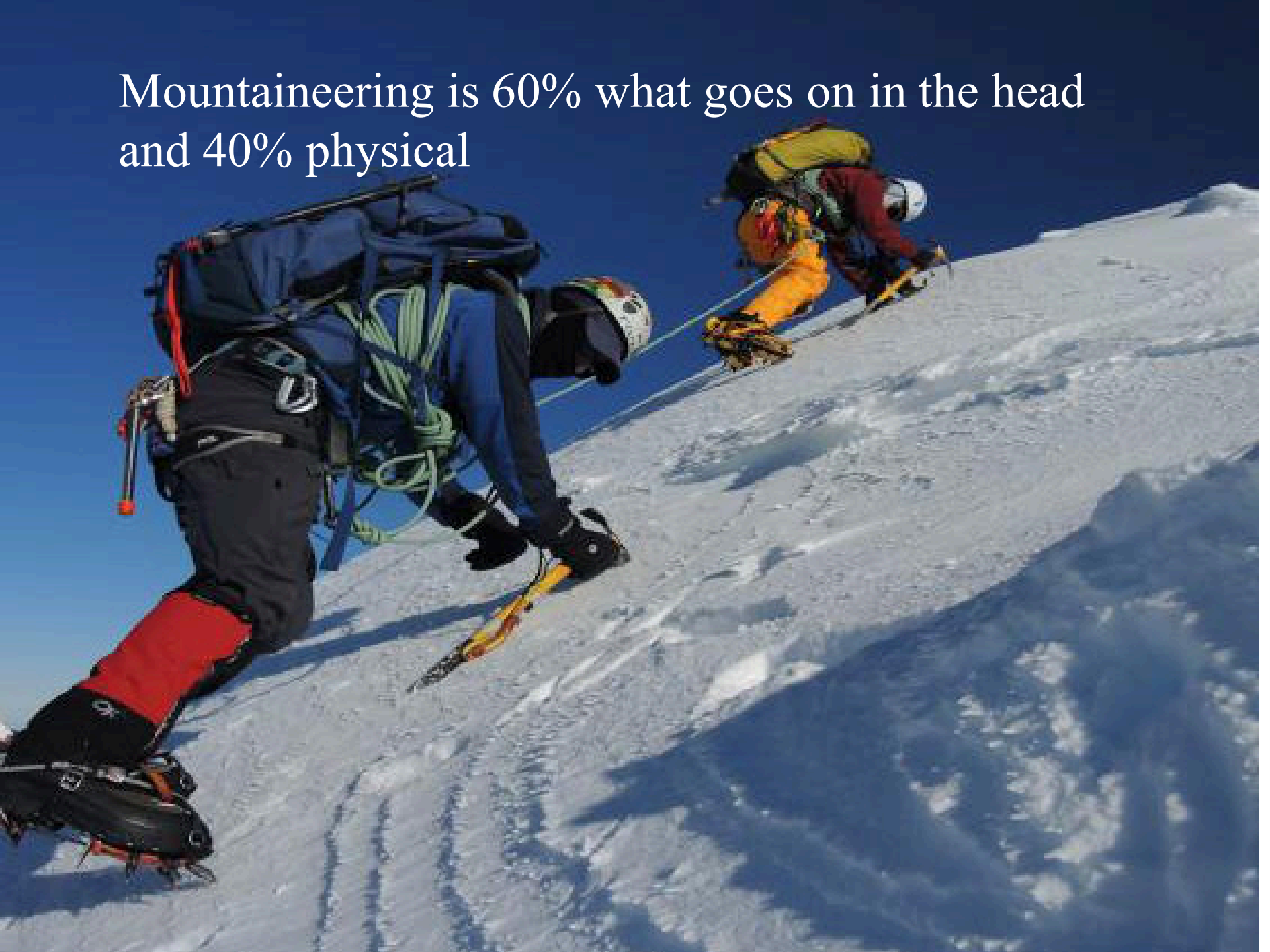




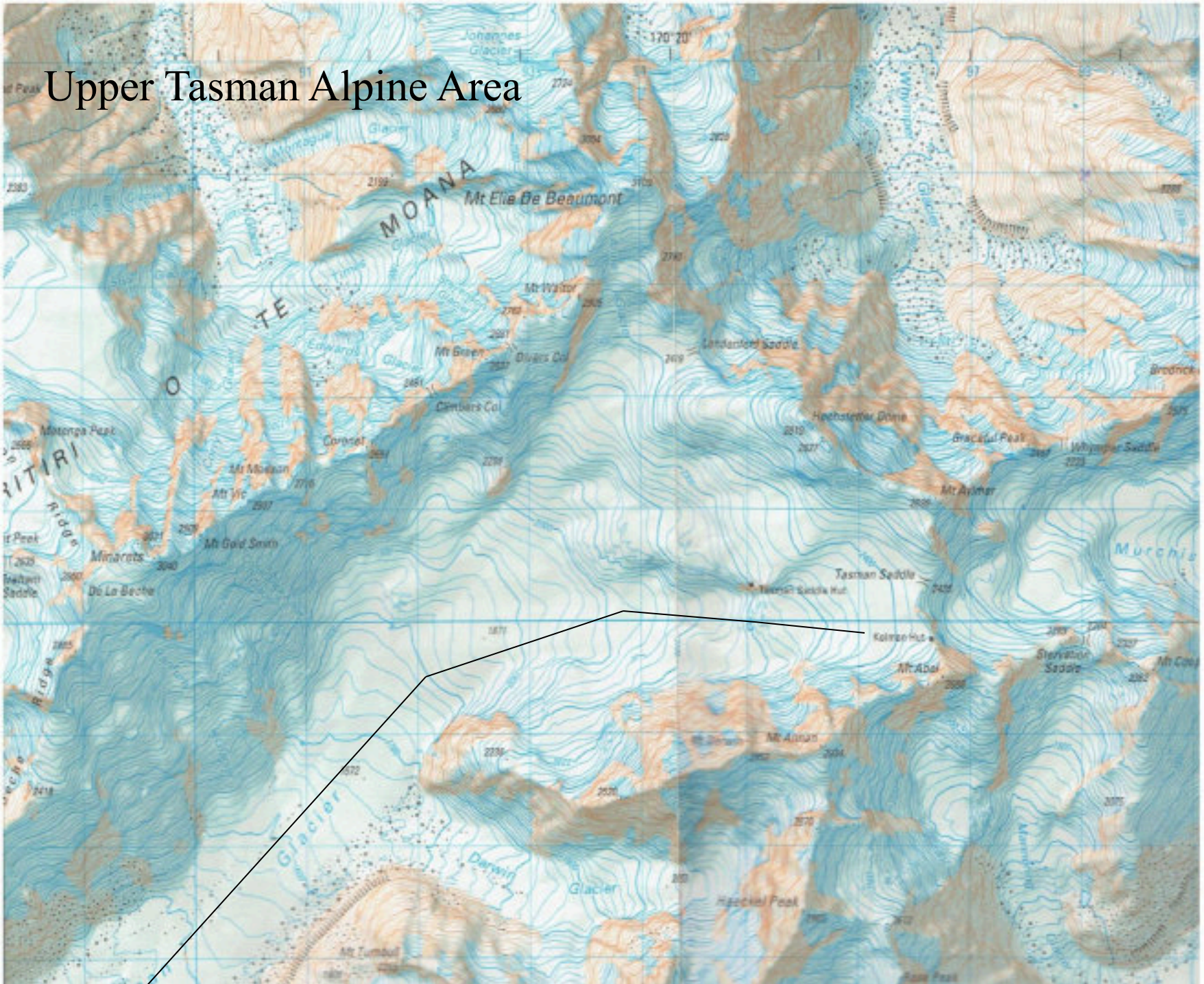


Sorting out gear and supplies for the trip at Mt Cook Airport

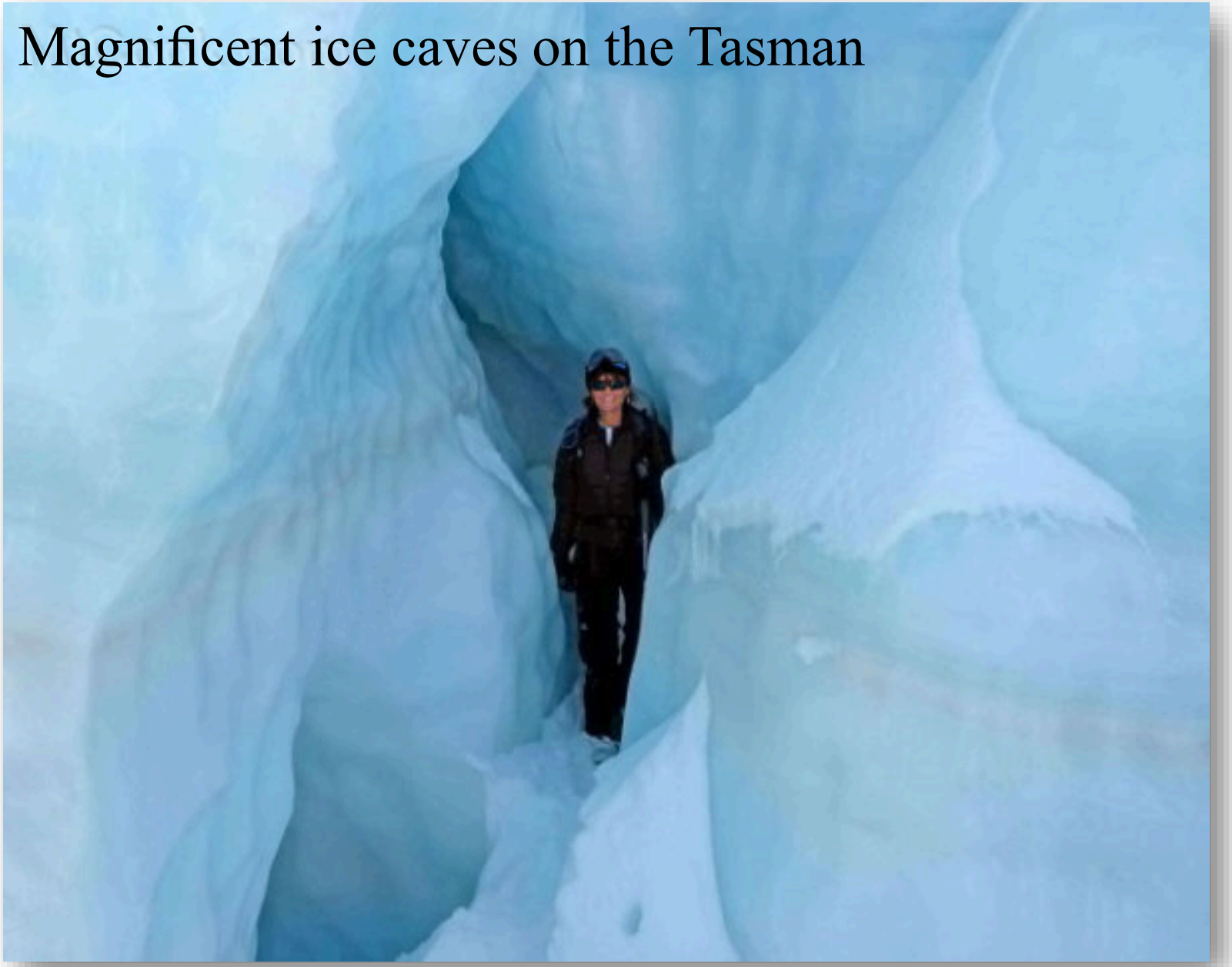



Mountaineering is 60% what goes on in the head
and 40% physical

Upper Tasman Alpine Area



Magnificent ice caves on the Tasman



THE TASMAN GLACIER IS A MINE FIELD OF CREVASSES



Summit Ridge on Mt Cook.
Every move must be precise and well planned .



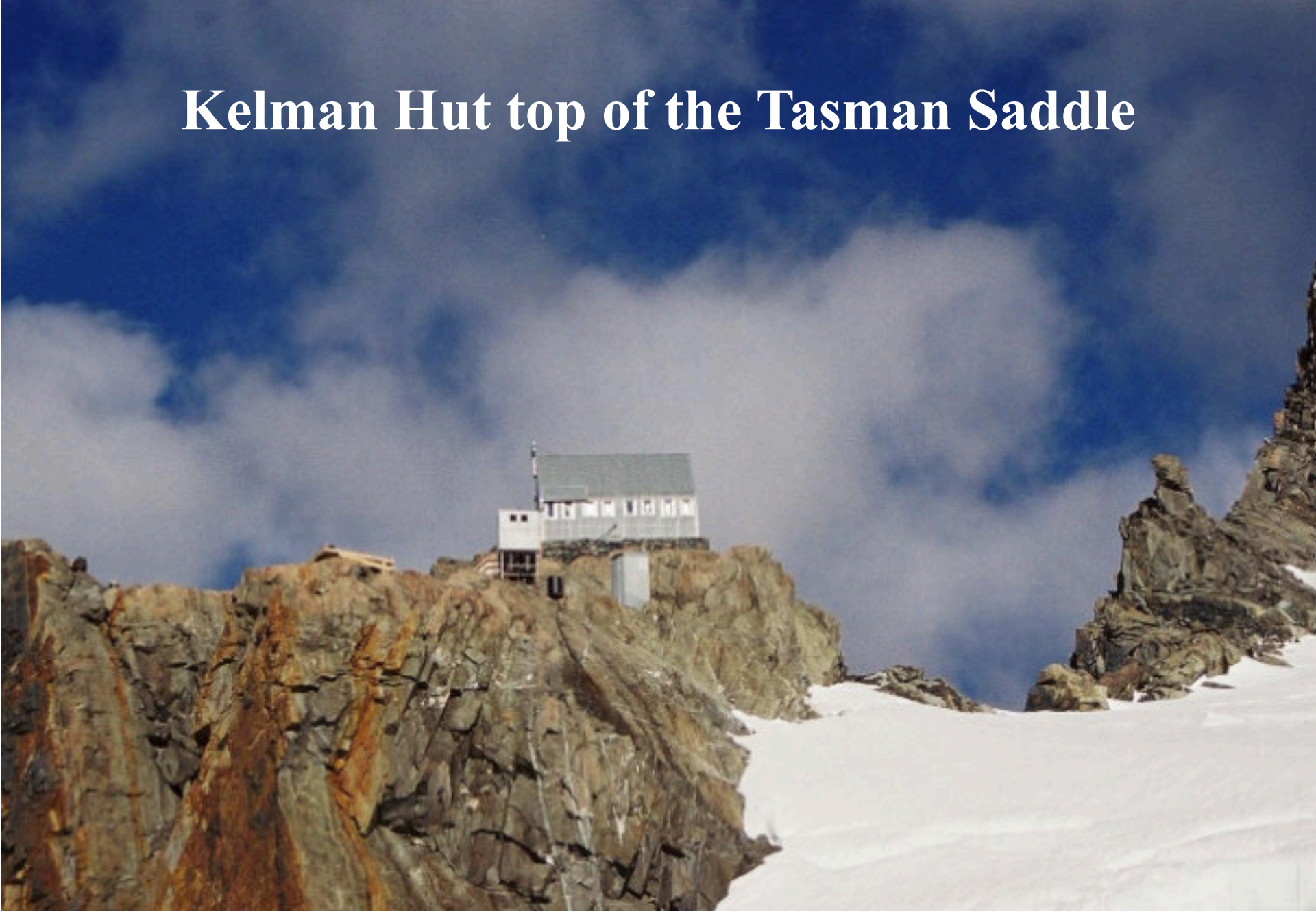


The Tasman is a special place.

Plateau Hut Mt Cook

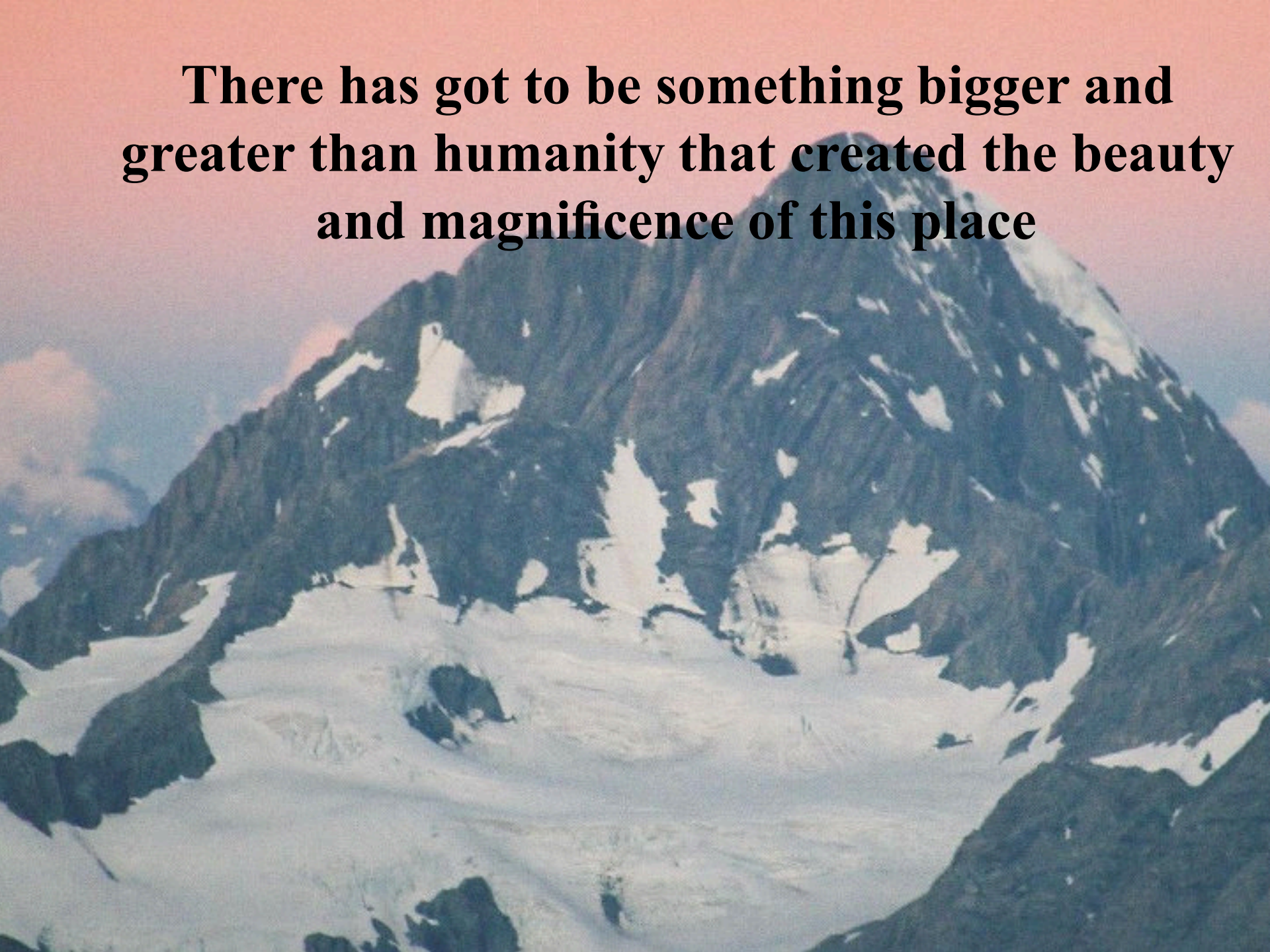


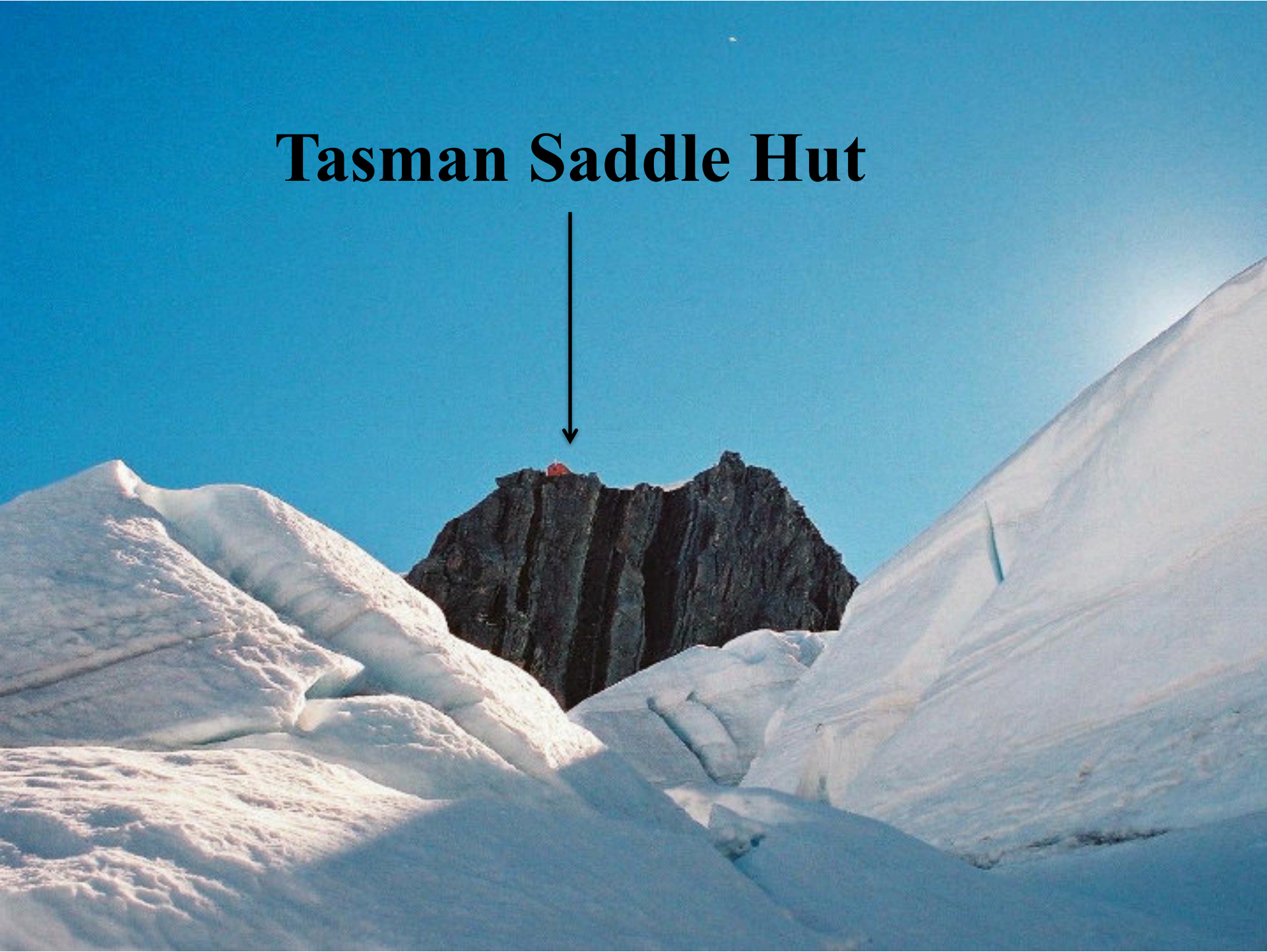
Kelman Hut top of the Tasman Saddle



Early morning above the cloud




There has got to be something bigger and greater than humanity that created the beauty and magnificence of this place


Tasman Saddle Hut

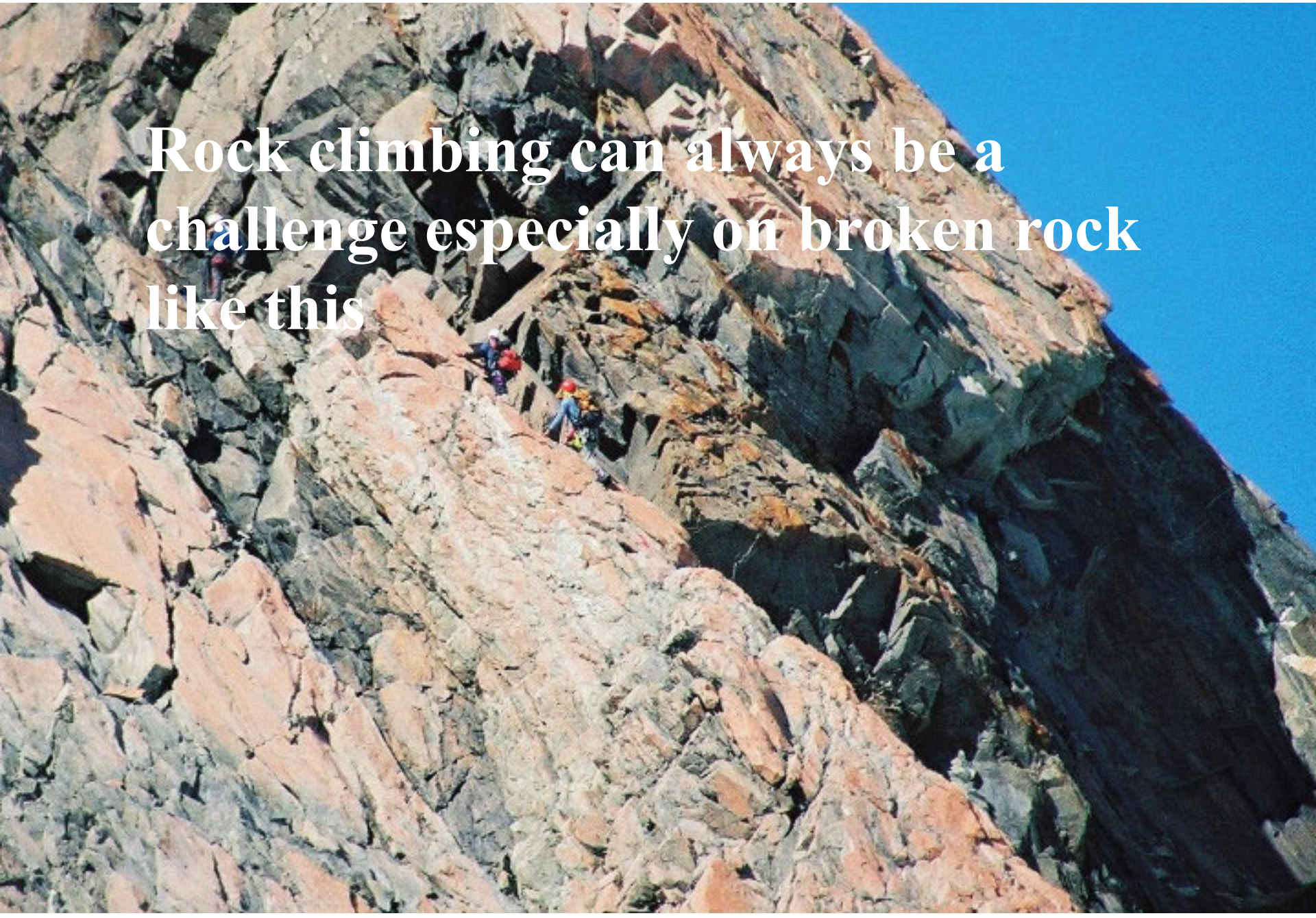

Kelman Hut
Mt Elie De Beaumont
3109
Mt Walter
2905
Mt Green
2837
Drummond Peak
2514
Mt Roon
2231
Mt McIntosh
1935
Mt Anderegg
2360
Mackay Rocks
2243
Minarets
3040
Graham Saddle
2635
De La Beche
2950
Chancellor Dome
2004
Mt Halcombe
2659
Mt Barnicoat
2800
Conway Peak
2899
Douglas Peak
3077
Mt Darwin
2952
Mt Hamilton
3025
Malte Brun
3199
Malte Brun Pass
2483
Aiguilles Rouges
2950
Mt Chudleigh
2966
Mt Johnson
2692
Mt Hardinger
3070
Governor Col
2834
Lendenfeld Peak
Mt Tasman
3497
Mt Haast
3114
Clarke Saddle
2978
Mt Dampier
3440
3724
2565
Aoraki / Mt Cook
Huts
Hochstetter Gl
Grand Pl
Tasman Glacier
Agassiz Glacier
Albert Glacier
Victoria Gl
Fritz Gl
Spencer Gl
Darwin Gl
Franz Josef Glacier / Ka Roimata o Hine Hukatere
Te Moeka o Tuawe
Hut
RANGE
MALTE BRUN
1600
1700
2000
2300

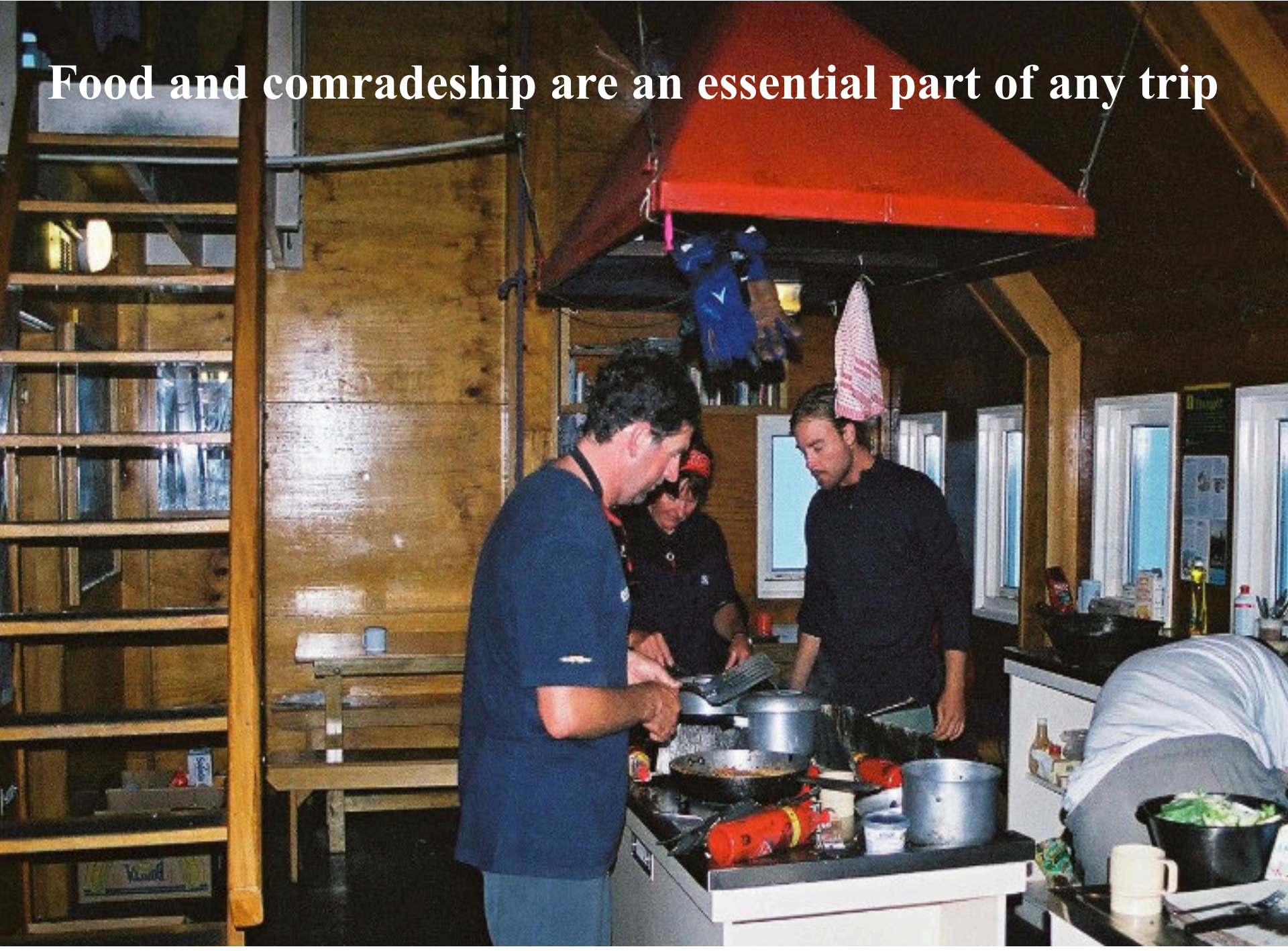

Top Mt Elie De Beaumont. Magnificent sights and satisfaction all around

Mountaineering develops life long friendships because your life depends on your climbing mate

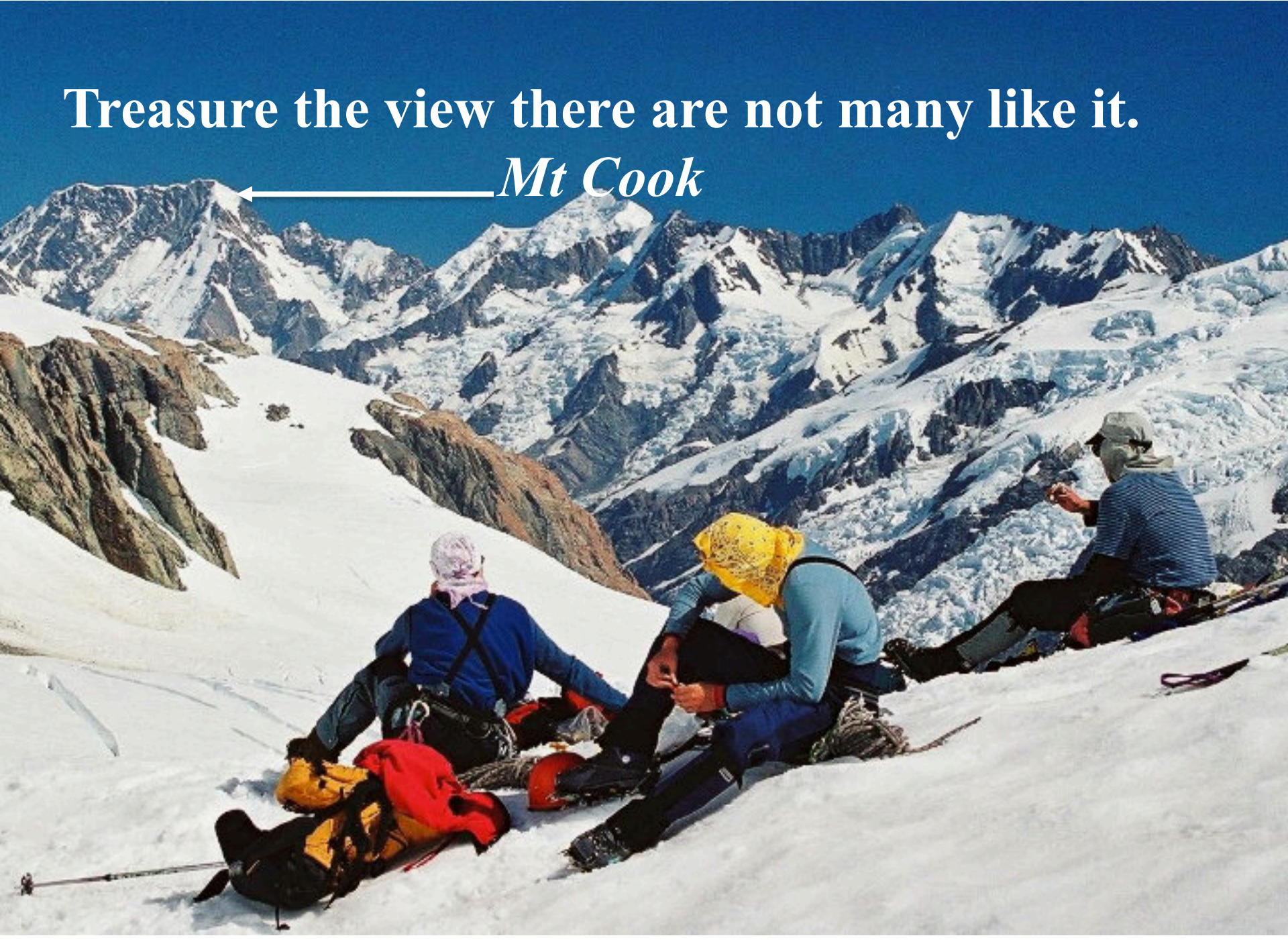
Tal Niv" a Captain in the Israeli Army. Standing with me on the top of Elei.What an awesome mate




Rock climbing can always be a challenge especially on broken rock like this


Food and comradeship are an essential part of any trip


There is always a chance after a days climbing for a good yarn and look forward to what tomorrow might bring with eager anticipation.


Treasure the view there are not many like it.
Mt Cook

Beats walking

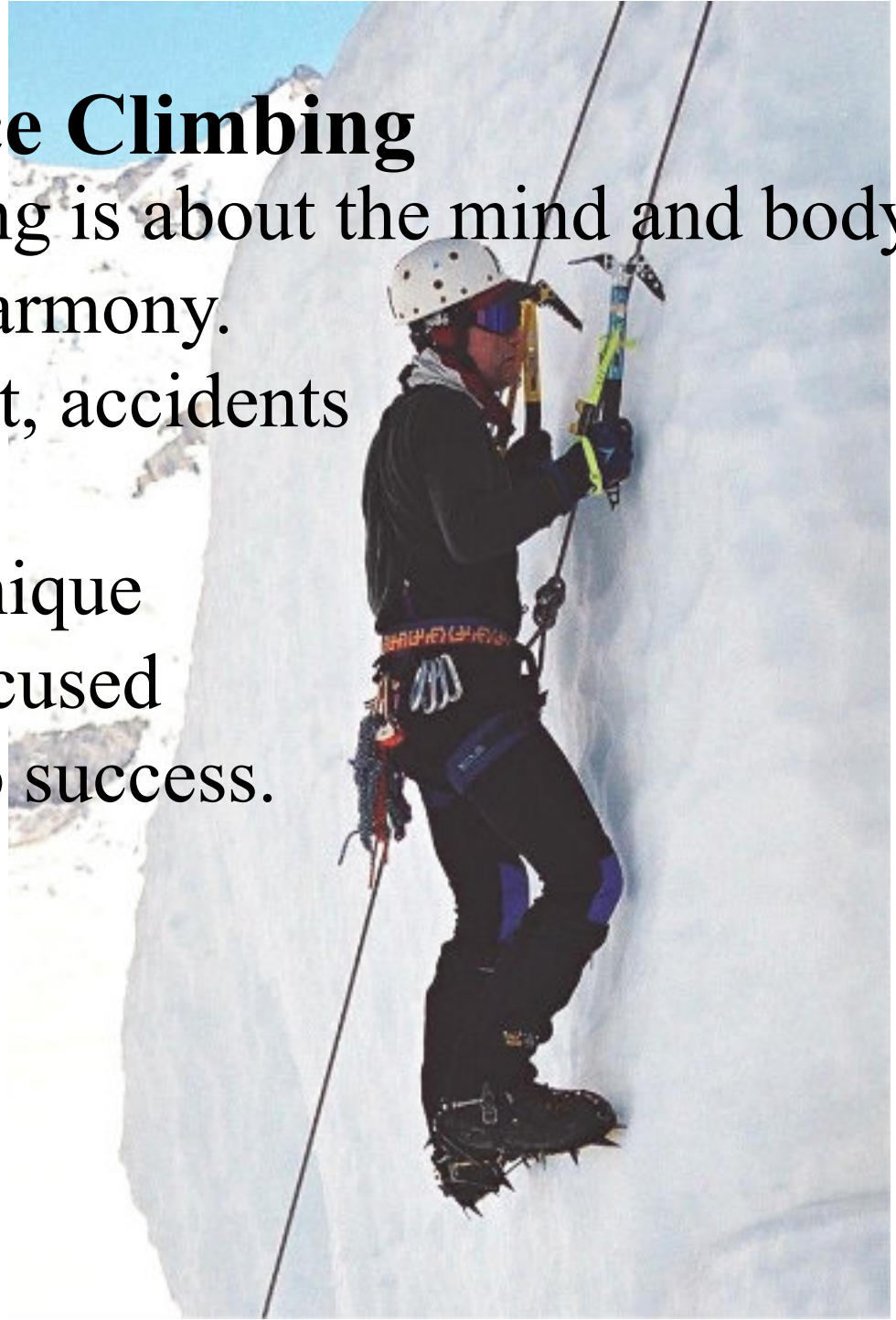



Great team

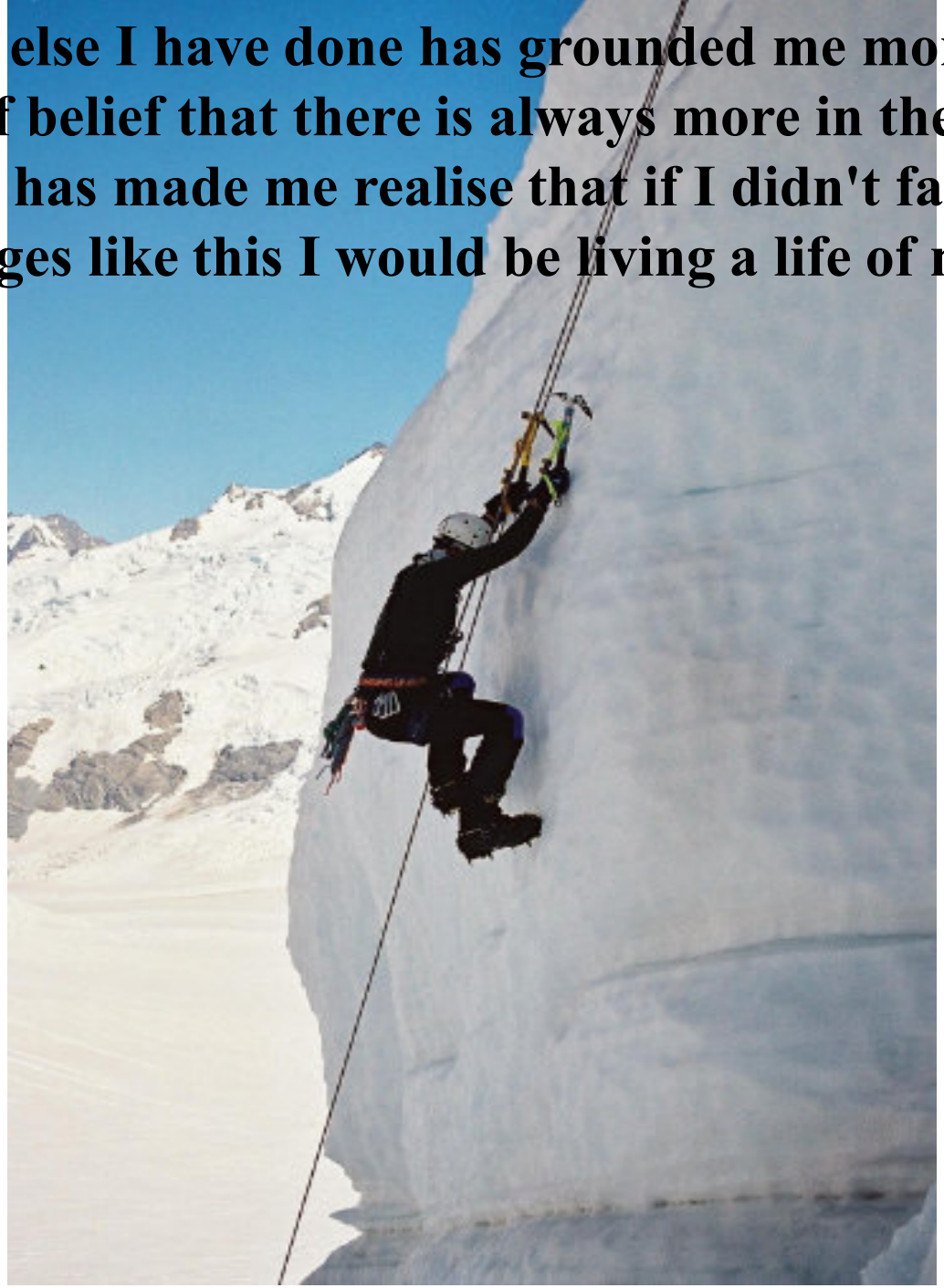

Joy of being alive

Ice Climbing

- Good climbing is about the mind and body working in harmony.
- If they are not, accidents happen.
- Control technique & keeping focused are the keys to success.



Nothing else I have done has grounded me more or built a self belief that there is always more in the tank.
This has made me realise that if I didn't face up to challenges like this I would be living a life of mediocrity.




The top of any climb gives a great sense of achievement but makes you realise how insignificant you are in this pristine environment

FOR ME THE PENULITMATE CHALLENGE



Practice & skilled use of gear safe lives



Practice makes perfect



Tools used for Mountaineering



Technical Ice Axe & Hammer





Hi-tech Boot Crampons



A QUOTE TO PONDER

The more improbable the situation and the greater the demands made on the Climber, the more sweetly the blood flows later in release from all that tension. The possibility of danger serves merely to sharpen awareness and control. And perhaps this is the rationale of all risk sports. You deliberately raise the ante of effort and concentration in order, as it were, to clear your mind of trivialities. It's a small-scale model for living, but with a difference: Unlike your routine life, where mistakes can usually be recouped and some kind of compromise patched up, your actions, for however brief a period, are deadly serious.



A.Alvarez (1929 -2019)

The Savage god


Avalanche terrain on the Tasman
Avalanches generally occur on slopes between 20 & 45%



They kill people

There are only two types of mountaineers and that is young ones and old buggers like me

Avalanche safety equipment












Time to relax and reflect

Mt Aspiring



IT STILL TUGS AT MY HEART STRINGS



MY FINAL THOUGHT

- *If the mountain lets you touch it you have been lucky*
- *If not go in peace as there is always another day*
- *Show no anger or resentment as we have seen nothing compared to the life of the mountain. Return because it will be there, and if on that day it allows you to share the treasures it hides do so with respect and humility.*



Rodger McCormack

I have a different pass time now



Thanks for listening
Any questions or comments

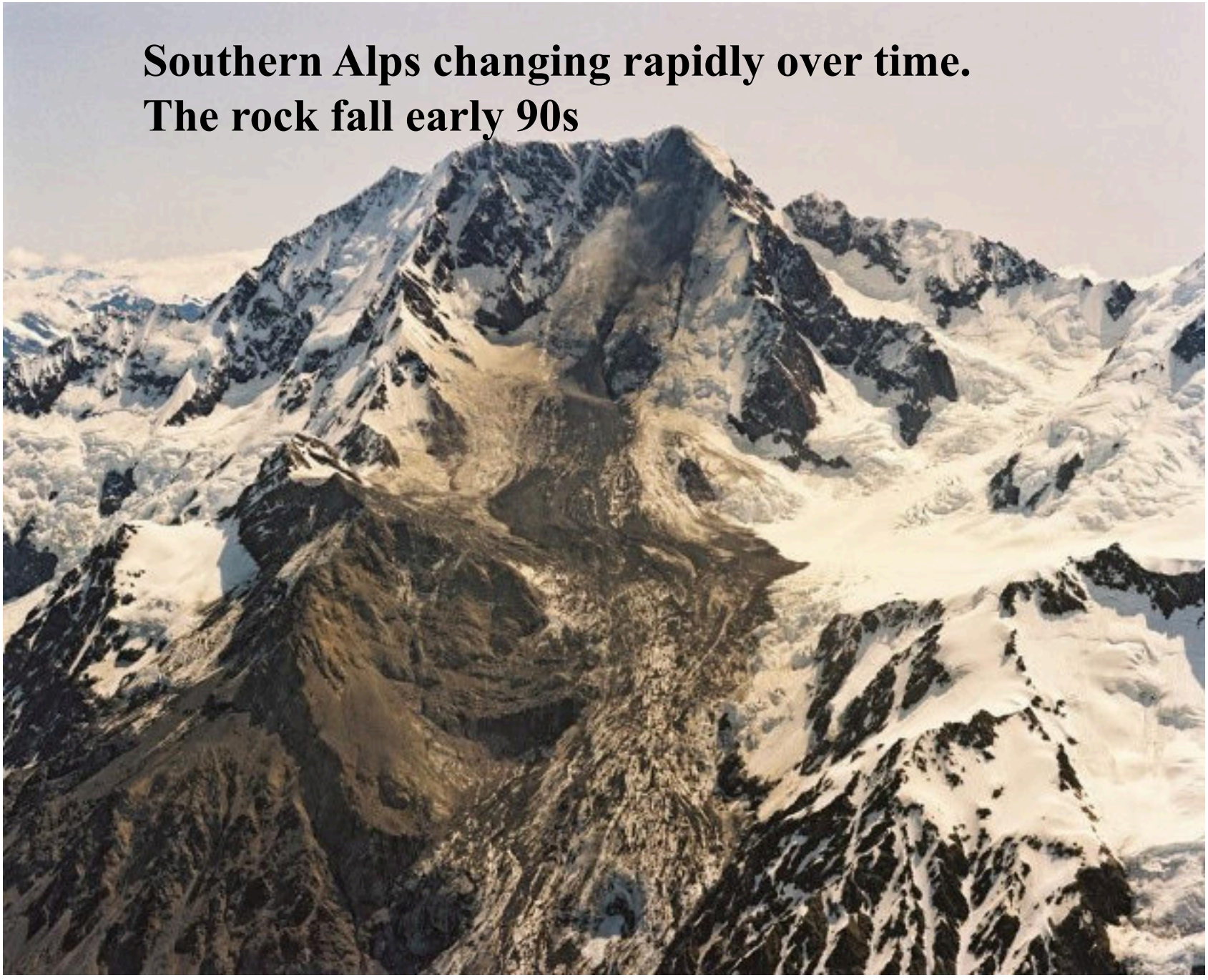
WE DO IT BECAUSE

- You are constantly aware of the awesome power of nature.
- You become acutely aware of your own strengths and weakness.
- Mountaineering is a great leveller.

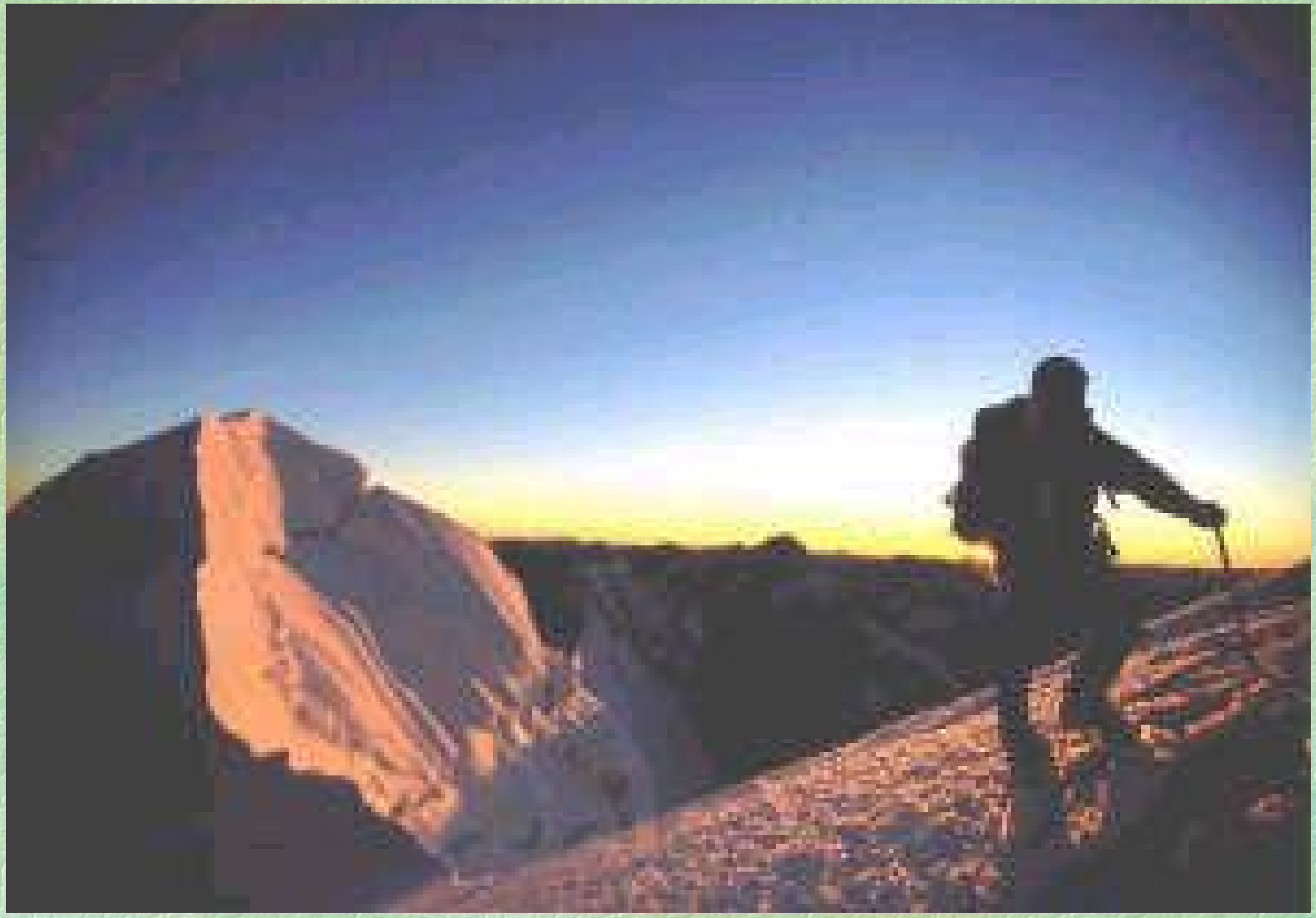


NOTHING FOCUS THE MIND AND BODY MORE THAN ICE CLIMBING

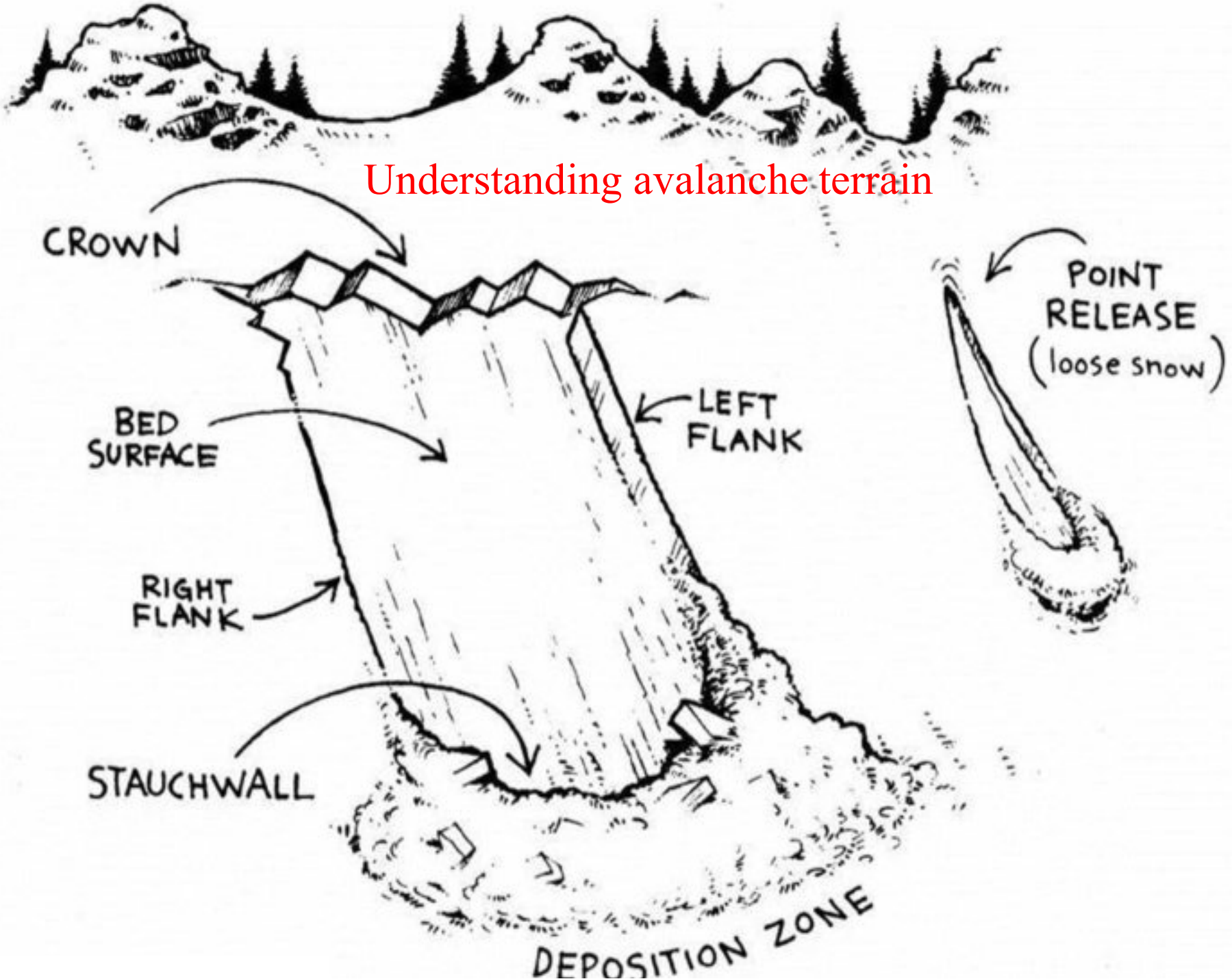



Southern Alps changing rapidly over time.
The rock fall early 90s


Peaks at the top of the Tasman Saddle just waiting to be climbed



Understanding avalanche terrain



Maverick

- One who shuns custom, the lone wolf, one who blazes their own trail and is willing to go against the crowd, an independent thinker.



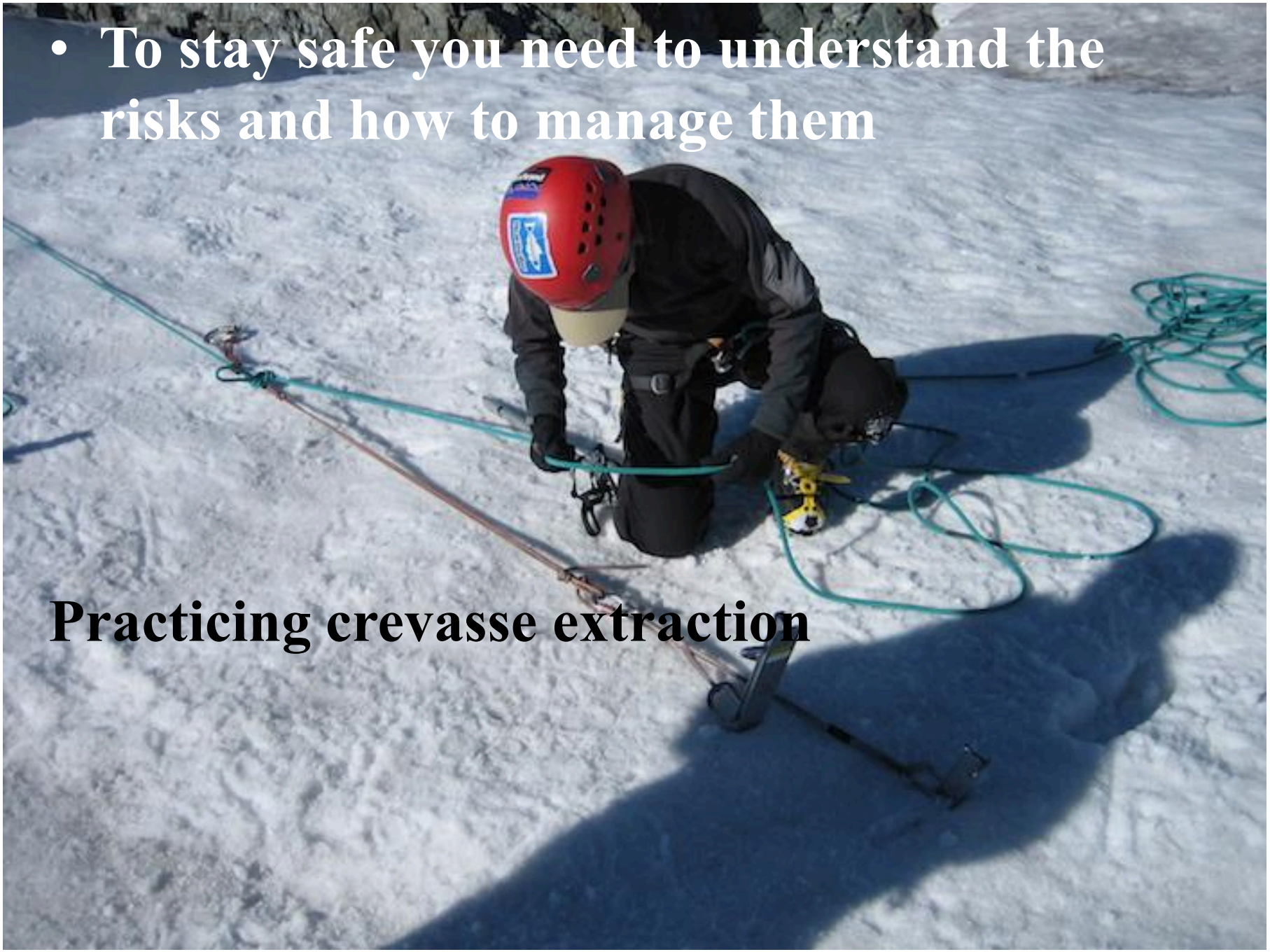
The Spiritual Side

Psalm 19vs1 NIV
"The heavens declare the glory of God
The skies & the earth proclaim the work of His Hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge."

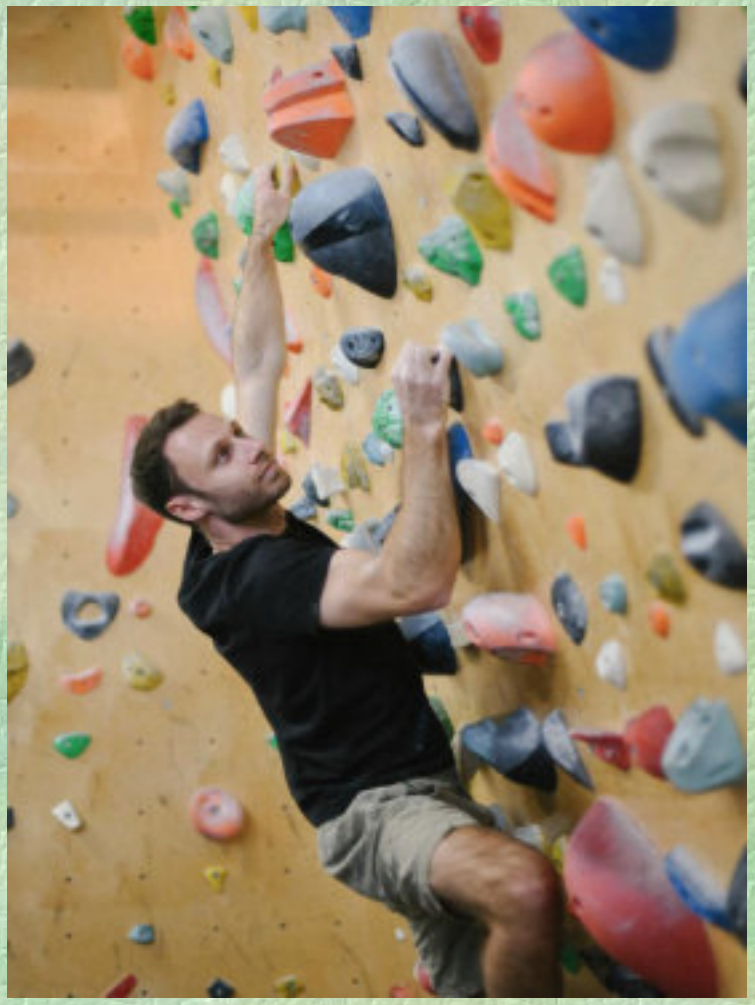
Knowingly or unknowingly, God walks with us every step of the way and I certainly felt his presence.

Rock climbing behind the Mt Cook Village
Helps get the head right



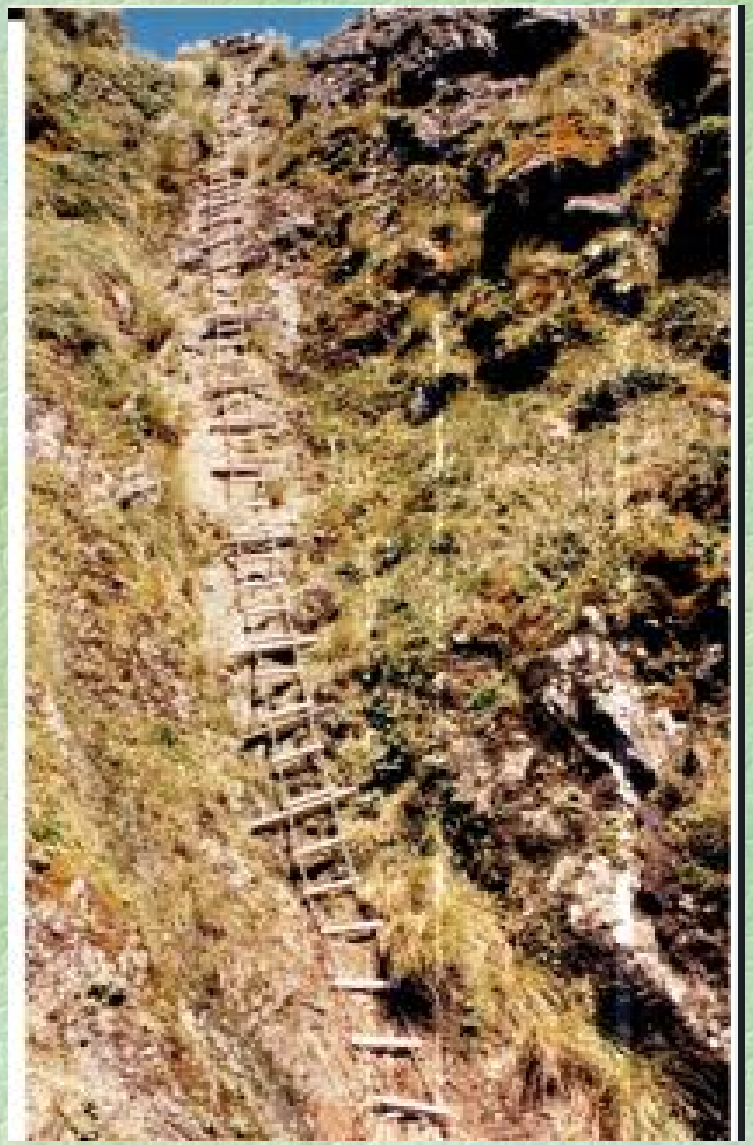

• To stay safe you need to understand the risks and how to manage them
Practicing crevasse extraction

Used Indoor climbing to build mental resilience



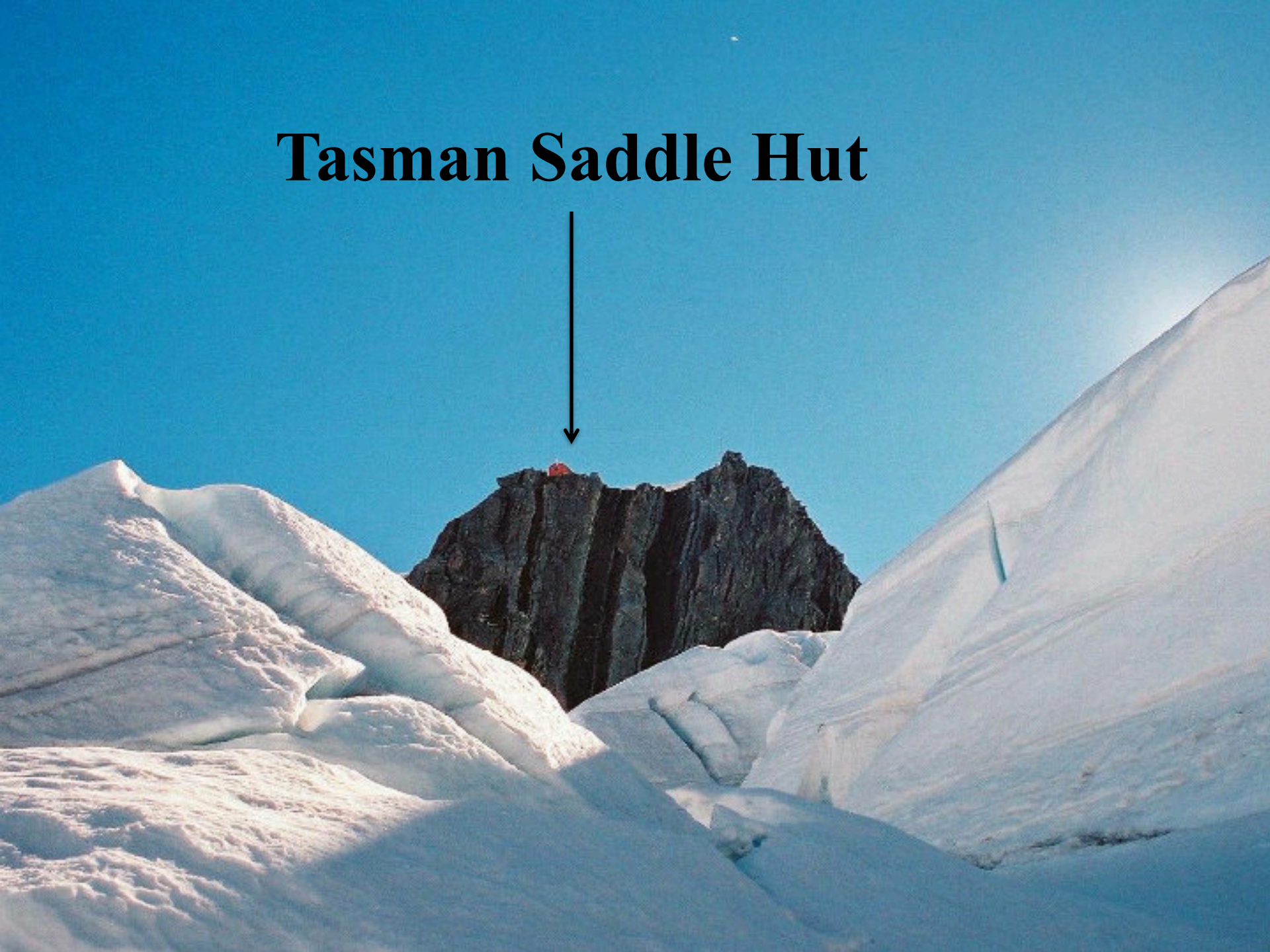
Ladder on Tararua Twin Peaks

Has to be done in the dark



Avalanche dogs are very Intelligent




Tasman Saddle Hut

Crater Lake on Ruapehu
Used to be able to swim in that



A picture is worth a thousand words



Peaks compared to Mt Cook









Summit Ridge on Mt Cook

