

# ALBERT TERRACE

PORT HILLS CLIMBING



**Albert Terrace**

Revision C

Tony Burnell (2021)

# Albert Terrace

## General

*Inclusion of any climbing area or climb in this guidebook does not mean that there is any R of public access.*

*The Port Hills Crags are home to rare species of geckos & native flora & fauna take care not to disturb wildlife or damage native plants.*

Most of the routes were climbed by Ross Cullen in the mid to late 90's, initially climbed as trad. routes or soloed. Fast forward to the early 2000's & Albert Terrace had the dubious honour of being the first crag in Chch to be retro bolted on a wholesale basis, most of Ross's climbs became bolt ladders practically overnight courtesy of CPIT. The best routes are probably the steeper ones oddly a couple were spared the drill. Most of the routes are in the lower grades & so it is popular with beginners & those transitioning from indoors to outdoors.

Poor route descriptions online & from earlier guidebooks coupled with a lack of research led to the retro bolting, renaming & claiming of the routes "Dirty Washing" & "Leonie" in 2014/15 both of which were climbed by Ross Cullen in 1997. There is also some confusion around the routes "Naked Ape" & "Peggy Peggy Phew" so in this guide you get my interpretation.

## Access & Restrictions

Except for Albert Terrace Main Cliff, which is on CCC Land, all crags are in Mt Vernon Park & owned by Port Hills Park Trust.

**Restrictions:** Approval for bolting climbs in Mt Vernon Park must be sought from the owners.

**Restrictions:** Dogs must be on a lead during lambing season

**Permission:** None required

### Albert Terrace

GPS: -43.595748, 172.778109

Distance: 450mts

Walk Time: 5 mins

Ownership: CCC Land

### Albert Promenade

GPS: -43.595748, 172.778109

Distance: 500mts

Walk Time: 8 mins

Ownership: Mt Vernon Trust reserve

### Crucifix Cave

GPS: -43.595748, 172.778109

Distance: 350mts

Walk Time: 5 mins

Ownership: Mt Vernon Trust reserve

### Cave No2

GPS: -43.595748, 172.778109

Distance: 530mts

Walk Time: 10 mins

Ownership: Mt Vernon Trust reserve

### Polka Wall

GPS: -43.595748, 172.778109

Distance: 800mts

Walk Time: 15 mins

Ownership: Mt Vernon Trust reserve



This climbing area is at the lower end of the Mount Vernon Gorge Track at the end of Albert Terrace in St Martins, from the roundabout at the junction of Centaurus Rd & Wilsons Rd go down the side of the Mobil garage (Albert Terrace). Drive past the school & go to the end of the road, park here. Follow the footpath through two gates into the canyon, the main cliff is visible on the true L.

## Climbing Notes

*By choosing to climb here you accept responsibility for your own personal safety & decisions, neither the first ascensionists nor the author accept any responsibility for the condition of any fixed equipment.*



*Replacement of fixed gear is a costly & time-consuming exercise so please do your bit, lower or top rope off your own quick draws. Only use fixed gear for abseiling, by doing this you will extend the life of the equipment considerably.*

Climb with care, test all holds before you pull on them, check your placements & wear a helmet. It's always a good idea to take a brush & clean the routes, it will be appreciated by the next visitor to the crag.

Tracks are marked in

**YELLOW**

Sport routes are marked in

**RED**

Trad or mixed protection climbs are marked in

**GREEN**

Dry tooling climbs are marked in

**BLUE**

*The following Abbreviations / Definitions have been used:*

#Br - Denotes the number of bolt runners.

Dt - Denotes dry tooling route

Sp - Denotes Sport Route.

DBA - Denotes anchor / belay station

Tr - Denotes Trad Route.

Ns - Not Shown on Topo

Mp - Denotes Mixed Protection Route (bolts & trad)

R & L - Denote R & L

## Grading

The 'Ewbank Grading System' is not the best grading system when applied to mixed pro or 'boldly' bolted routes as it provides little in the way of information & are normally accepted as just the technical difficulty of a particular climb, it can be tricky to use these grading systems when trying to assess the actual seriousness of any climb.

NZ	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
American	5.8-	5.8	5.9	5.10a	5.10b	5.10b	5.10c	5.11a	5.11b	5.11c	5.12a	5.12b
Euro	4c	5a	5b	5c	6a	6a+	6b	6b+	6c	7a	7a+	7b

In this guide you will see a suffix to the grades (S1 – S3) this is to provide the climber with additional information on the overall seriousness of the climb.

S1 - A straight forward climb with good protection & a low risk of injury from a fall.

S2 - Reasonable protection, but a fall could result in injury.

S3 - Protection is marginal or non-existent & a fall could result in serious injury.

Climbers should remember that this additional suffix to the grade is my opinion & in no way scientific, gear can fail, rock can fail & any fall can result in injury.

## West Side of the Canyon

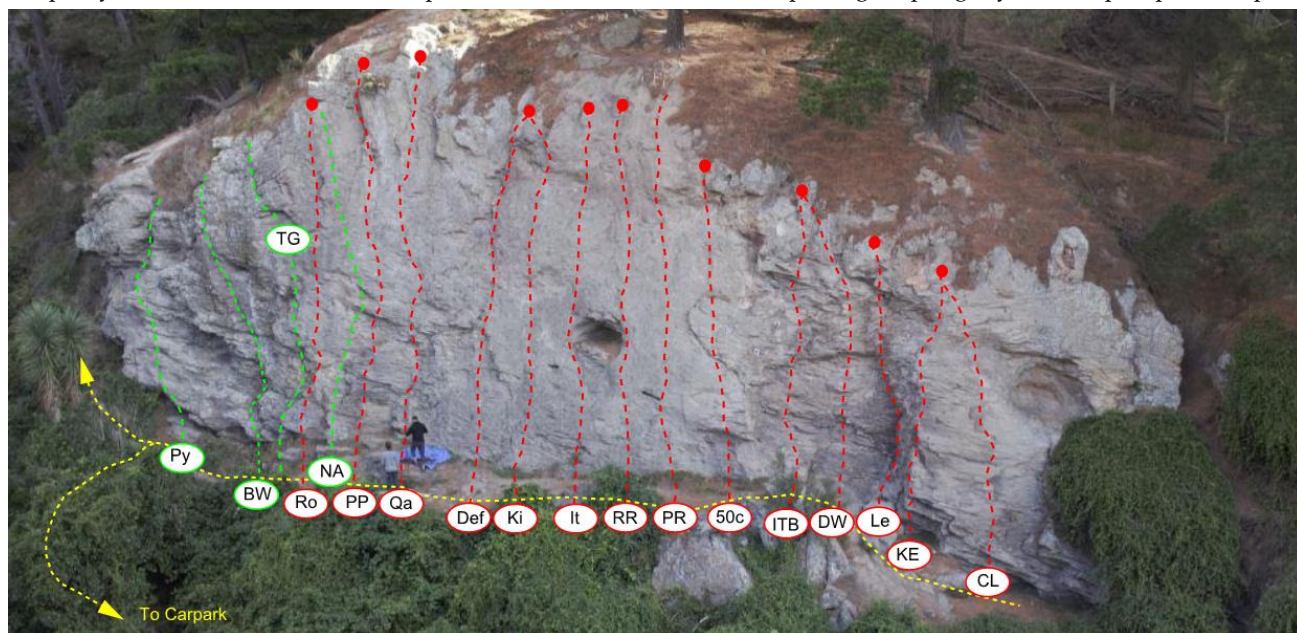


*The first recorded climb on the West Side of the canyon is on a small buttress located 20mts from the North end of the main cliff.*

<b>Pot</b>	<b>Potato</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>	<i>Ross Cullen, 1997</i>
This climb is on a small boulder before you get to the main cliff, climb straight up the R hand side of the face.						
<i>A climb called Virgo was claimed in this area in 2014, it is not clear if this is the same route.</i>						

## Main Cliff

NS      **Small Boys**      13      S3      Tr      0Br      *Ross Cullen, 1997*  
Not Shown on Topo. A short climb, start off the steps, climb up into a scoop about 1.0mts off the ground, exit to the L side of the bulge via a notch.



Not Shown on Topo. Start at a rock sticking out horizontally from the ground, straight up over two bulges

Not Shown on Topo. Just R of the rock, pull over the initial roof, then up & go up the R trending diagonal

Not Shown on Topo. Start at a small undercut below a cave, climb strenuously over the initial bulge then past the cave to a

BW	Black & White	14	S3	Tr	0Br	Ross Cullen, 1997
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TG	The Glimmerman	17	S3	Tr	0Br	Ross Cullen, 1997
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Ro	Rongbuk	17	S2	Sp	4Br	Ross Cullen, 1997
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NA	Naked Ape	19	S3	Mp	0Br	Ross Cullen, 1997
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wall at its steepest

Start straight up past the DBA at low level after the overlap & smooth bulge go L to an anchor

One metre R of the DBA at low level up past a BR in a L facing corner, go back diagonally L to the anchor.



<b>Def</b>	<b>Defenced</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Sp</b>	<b>4Br</b>	<b>★</b>	<i>Ross Cullen, 1997</i>
Start on the flat rock platform at ground level, up the vertical wall past 2BR continue up going R to an anchor in the groove.							
<b>Ki</b>	<b>Kinny</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Sp</b>	<b>5Br</b>	<b>★</b>	<i>Ross Cullen, 1997</i>
Start at the bottom of the natural S below a small hole at 2.5mts, climb straight up the wall							
<b>It</b>	<b>Itbeckonstan</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Sp</b>	<b>5Br</b>	<b>★</b>	<i>Ross Cullen, 1997</i>
Climb straight up on the L side of the large hole.							
<b>RR</b>	<b>Ramahana Road</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Sp</b>	<b>5Br</b>	<b>★</b>	<i>Ross Cullen, 1997</i>
Climb up the R side of the large hole & move L to the anchors							
<b>PR</b>	<b>Postman Road</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>MP</b>	<b>0Br</b>		<i>Stu McConney, 1999</i>
The only real evidence of this climb is the eyebolt in the head wall which is clipped before grovelling over the top. One must assume that you climb straight to the eyebolt passing the slot low down on the crag							
<b>50c</b>	<b>50 Cents Worth</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Sp</b>	<b>5Br</b>		<i>Ross Cullen, 1997</i>
There is a shield of rock that has been bolted on, climb up the L side of the shield direct to anchor							
<b>ITB</b>	<b>In Tims Backyard</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Sp</b>	<b>5Br</b>		<i>Ross Cullen, 1997</i>
Climb up the R side of the shield, starting L of a DBA at low level in a shallow recess.							
<b>DW</b>	<b>Dirty Washing</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Sp</b>	<b>3Br</b>		<i>Ross Cullen, 1997</i>
From the DBA at low level go straight up the wall.							
<i>Originally a trad line 'DW' was bolted climbed &amp; renamed 'In A Rush' in 2015</i>							
<b>Le</b>	<b>Leonie</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Sp</b>	<b>5Br</b>		<i>Ross Cullen, 1997</i>
Climb up the corner at the R side of the recess then the continuation crack above.							
<i>Originally a trad line 'Le' was bolted climbed &amp; renamed 'I Bit My Tongue' in, 2014</i>							
<b>KE</b>	<b>Kopus Edge</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Sp</b>	<b>4Br</b>	<b>★</b>	<i>Rob Blackburn, 1997</i>
The arête to the R of the corner, start on the arête then the face above.							
<b>CL</b>	<b>Chinese Ladder</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>S1</b>	<b>Sp</b>	<b>4Br</b>	<b>★</b>	<i>Ross Cullen, 1997</i>
A diagonal line across the final face start 2mts R of the arête.							

## Albert Promenade

Albert Promenade is 40mts further up the valley track after, there are 4 recorded routes here & several bouldering traverse options, this crag is always dirty, there are no fixed anchors. Routes are described from the R as you arrive at this point.



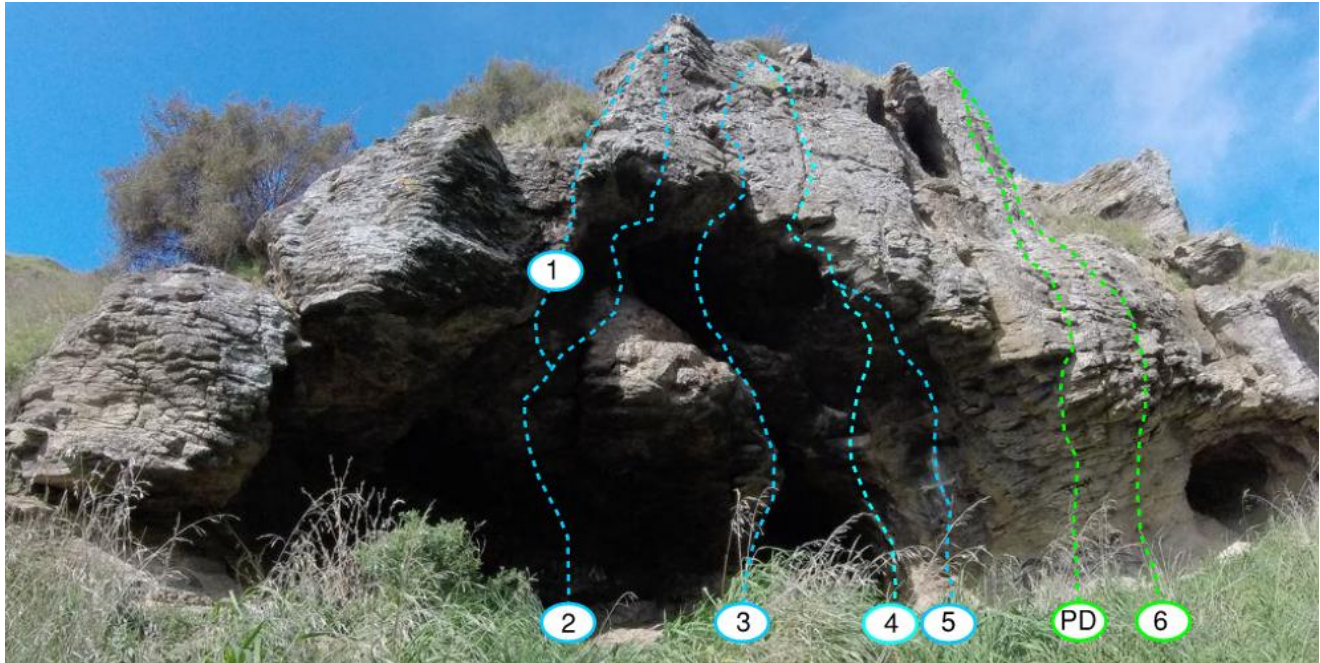
<b>JC</b>	<b>Jesus Carries the Can</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>Mp</b>	<b>2Br</b>		<i>John Reizinger, 1997</i>
Start just L of a corner at a graffitied slab, the word 'Jesus' written in the corner. Climbs the steep wall on positive holds, the hanger on Br1 is currently missing.							
<b>DS</b>	<b>Ducks on Stilts</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>		<i>Ross Cullen, 1997</i>
To the L of 'JC' there are 2 blocks on the ground in front of the crag, start here. Climb the weakness to the large roof, head L to the end of the roof then up to the top.							
<b>CJ</b>	<b>Clean &amp; Jerk</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Tr</b>	<b>0Br</b>		<i>Rob Blackburn, 1997</i>
<i>Originally top-roped. Climb the centre of the continuous overhang, reputedly great moves &amp; solid jugs. Supposedly had 2Br's on the adjacent line (GN) but they are non-evident.</i>							

Originally top-roped. Start 2mts R of where 'DAMIN' made his claim to fame. Pull over the roof near the L end of the overhang into a scoop, step R into the next weakness & follow this to the top. Supposedly had 2Br's added in 1998 but they are non-evident.

## East Side of the Canyon

### Crucifix Cave

The Crucifix Cave is the first climbing area on the East side of the valley, just after crossing the stream a sidetrack heads steeply up for 20mts to reach the cave. 'Pigeon Dance' was the first route to be climbed here. Now there are a few lines of Br's for Dry-tooling'.



**1      One      M5      S3      Dt      1NBr**

Start as for '2' but above Br1 cross the void & head up the shallow open groove.

**2      Two      M5      S2      Dt      2Br**

Start below Br1 head up the crack on the L side of the central prow, once on the pedestal exit through the notch on the lip & go up the head wall.

**3      Three      M5      S2      Dt      3Br**

Start on the R side of the central prow, once on the pedestal exit through the notch on the R & go up the head wall

**4      Four      M6      S2      Dt      4Br**

Start at the rear R side of the cave, using the pigeon poo filled scoops make your way up & R to the lip, turn the lip & head up the groove above

**5      Five      M7      S2      Dt      5Br**

Start at the R side of the cave under the steepest part of the roof, work your way up past 3Br's to join '4' at the lip.

**PD      Pidgeon Dance      17      S3      Tr      0Br**

Ross Cullen, 1997

Start on the R just outside the cave where an undercut rib leads up onto the slabbier head wall, the holds at the start seemed a little disposable, possibly due to quake action.

**6      Six      17      S3      Tr      0Br**

Companion line to 'PD', start just a little further R.

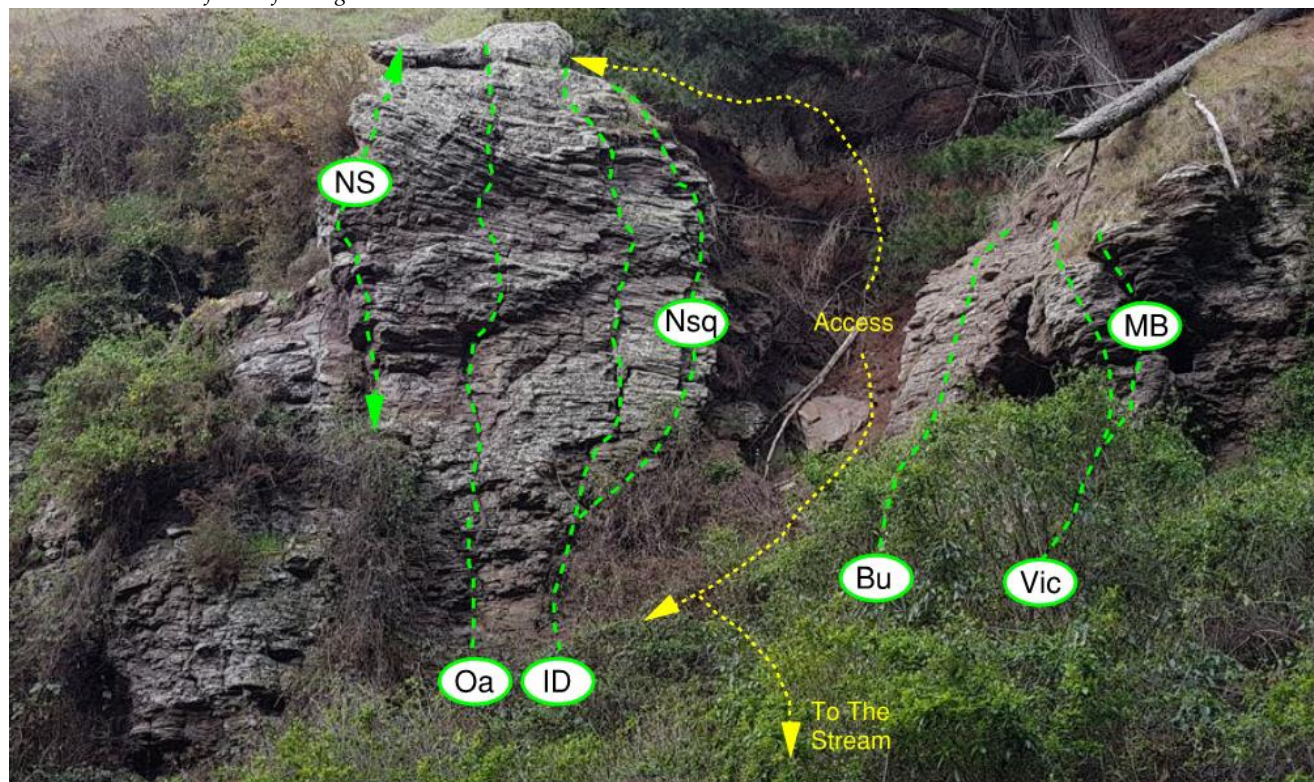


## Cave 2

Eighty metres further up the ravine, and just before a large cave, is a 14m x 10m crag with room for four routes, this buttress is very much overgrown & requires a good clean up, permission should be sought before this is done. The large boulders on top provide belays. Across the gully is a reasonable sized cave that has a few of short routes. Access this crag either by following the fence line up the hill from Crucifix Cave & drop down the gully, or from the base of the steps at the south end of Albert Promenade head down into the bush, cross the stream & go uphill to the crag.

This buttress is very much overgrown and requires a good clean up, permission should be sought before this is done.

Routes are described from left to right



<b>NS</b>	<b>No Secateurs</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Tr</b>	Ross Cullen, 1997
Start at the lower left corner of the rock & follow the prow to the top good climbing on good pro.					
<b>Oa</b>	<b>Oasis</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Tr</b>	Rob Blackburne, 1997
Go straight up through a shallow scoop to small roof following the crack, over the roof to climb the slightly bulging head wall.					
<b>ID</b>	<b>It's a Date</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Tr</b>	Ross Cullen, 1997
Start just R of 'Oa' at a jagged crack line, follow the crack then head up through two shallow scoops heading out L to finish.					
<b>Nsq</b>	<b>Non Sequiter</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Tr</b>	Ross Cullen, 1997
Start as for 'ID' but go R to follow the R edge of the buttress					
<i>The next climbs are to the R of the cave, the descriptions are vague so the lines are only indicative.</i>					
<b>Bu</b>	<b>Buster</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>So</b>	
Climb the slabby rib at the L side of the cavemouth.					
<b>MB</b>	<b>Mrs Brown Goes Left</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Tr</b>	Geoff Gabites, 1997
Climb the rib at the R side of the cavemouth.					
<b>Vic</b>	<b>Victoria</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>Tr</b>	Ross Cullen, 1997
The direct finish out R of 'MB'.					

## Polka Wall

50mts further up the canyon is a large wall, the easiest access is to keep heading up stream, where the path crosses the stream to the east bank make your way back down to the crag.

The crag is steep, undercut & around 12 mts high, there is a large pine tree growing close to the face at the North end.

Currently there is only one climb.





**LP      Lemming Polka                      17                      S3      Tr      0Br** *Ross Cullen, 1997*  
 Start at the large pine tree on the L

## *Upper East Wall*

*Further upstream as you leave the plantation there is a series of smaller walls, on one of these walls, 5mts off the track on the east side.*

**NS      Radiata                      12                      S3      Tr      0Br** *Ross Cullen, 1998*

Not Shown on Topos. Climb just L of the arete without using the pine tree for assistance.

**NS      Party Starter                      16                      S3      Tr      0Br** *Ross Cullen, 1998*

Not Shown on Topos. Start 3mts R of the pine tree, climb through the bulge and follow crack line up to crest