



FEELING FOR DAYLIGHT: THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF JACK ADAMSON
Rhian Gallagher
South Canterbury Museum, \$44.95

This book showcases a superb, historically important collection of photographs, taken by Jack Adamson, Timaru-born pioneering mountaineer, gifted photographer and manager of the Mount Cook Hermitage in the late 19th century.

The collection of 450 photographs has been given by the Adamson family to the South Canterbury Museum where a selection, together with some of Adamson's photographic and climbing equipment, is currently being exhibited.

Not only was Jack Adamson a gifted photographer, he also had a way with words.

The book's title comes from his comment to George Moodie, a photographer with the Burton Bros, that "crossing a moraine in the dark was like putting your foot out of bed to feel for daylight".

Rhian Gallagher, a published poet, was working at the museum when she came across the collection and recognised that here was a story to be told.

She has achieved her stated aim to provide an introduction to Adamson's life and work – and much more besides.

She covers the early settlers and their communities, pioneer mountaineering and exploration, history and development of photography, and the beginnings of tourism in the region. Gallagher tells Adamson's story with the care and attention to detail and language that it deserves.

The photos themselves tell their own stories.

They are full of fascinating detail, and record the place and its people with a deep affection and understanding.

Included are stunning alpine scenes, dramatic detail of ice-sculpted terrain, tourist parties climbing via precipitous hand-cut steps, river crossings via tree branch ladders, colonial houses and farm buildings, interiors of huts, formal portraits and delightful relaxed family moments.

The tenacity, fortitude, staunchness and good humour of Adamson and his subjects shine from the photos.



Further interest is added with early maps, letters, timelines of the development of photography 1827-1900 and Mt Cook Hermitage and National Park 1862-2007, comprehensive end notes, a select bibliography and a glossary.

An index would have made the book more user-friendly, as would increasing the type size which seems uncomfortably small.

That aside, Adamson's story makes fascinating reading and the photographs are remarkable. This is a fitting tribute to Adamson and is very highly recommended.

Read the book and see the exhibition!

SUE MAXWELL

TOP CATCH: HOOK UP NEW ZEALAND'S TOP 12 SPECIES
John Eichelsheim
Random House, \$39.99

Popular fishing writer John Eichelsheim got hooked on fishing as a child and is still passionate about the sport.

In his new book, Eichelsheim spills the beans on how and where to catch the best examples of New Zealand's top fish species.

Eichelsheim draws on his own 40 years of experience fishing around the country to tell personal stories of his own "top catch" for each species, then provides biological/geographical information on the fish, the nuts and bolts of tackle and technique, the best way to eat them, and the current records (biggest fish ever caught, etc).

The author has chosen species with appeal for anglers in both main islands and has chosen those accessible to the average angler as well as some more "aspirational" species that need to be caught with specialist gear. He covers snapper, kingfish, salmon, trout, gurnard, tarakihi, blue cod, john dory, tuna, marlin, shark and hapuku.

As well as providing practical tips for catching a wide range of popular species, Eichelsheim's experiences and stories add a personal aspect to the book.

Top Catch is an enjoyable and informative book, perfect for both active and armchair anglers.

NIGEL BROWN