



## AAC Publications

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### **Pioneer Heights, Rogers Peak from North and East**

Antarctica, Heritage Range

**After summiting Mt. Vinson on January 4, 2017, Larry Holmgren (USA), Nate Opp (USA), Liam Suckling (Australia), and I went old-school.** Instead of flying back to the Union Glacier, we spent two weeks traveling with skis and sleds, descending the Branscomb Glacier from Vinson Base Camp to the Cairns and Tulaczyk glaciers, through the icefall onto the Zapol Glacier, and then traversing the Nimitz, Minnesota, Splettstoesser, Balish, Schanz, and Driscoll glaciers to reach the Union Glacier. During this journey, which covered nearly 200km of challenging glacier terrain, we made the first ascent of Rogers Peak (1,521m map, 1,500m GPS), at the junction of the Splettstoessen and Rennell glaciers.

We established base camp for Rogers at the entrance to a bowl shared by Rogers and Peak 1,400m. On January 17, we passed below most of the east face of Rogers Peak until the true summit at the end of a long north-south ridge was visible. We cut sharply right, climbing through a rock barrier to reach the ridge, where 300m of nicely exposed crest led south to the summit (79.3444°S, 84.2436°W). The round trip from base camp was 13.3km and was completed in a leisurely six hours. A couple of pitches were 45-50°. [Although an obvious challenge, this is the first time a team has climbed any peak during a ski traverse to or from the Vinson Massif from either Patriot Hills or the Union Glacier.] This remote section of the Heritage lends itself to first ascents, and the northwest ridge of Peak 1,400m is one of many beautiful lines we observed. The crux, as in most Antarctic endeavors, is getting there.

– Jeff Reynolds, USA

## Images



An aerial view looking north along the ridge of Rogers Peak (1,521m), with the route to the summit, passing the lower northern top, from the 2017 base camp.



Looking south at base camp tents, the northern top of Rogers Peak (immediately above), and unclimbed Peak 1,400m, the first peak to the left.

## Article Details

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