

Lysaght Alpine Club News

Views and News of Management and Members

May 1997 Vol 8.1

At the Cross Roads

Our club is going through a period of major change. For this reason, this newsletter includes a lot more from the Presidents Report to members at the AGM than in other years. There is nothing wrong with change. The world about us is changing all the time and the difficulty is to identify how we are affected and the action required to adapt to it. You should take the time to read the extract from the Presidents Report.

If you have not previously thought about racing with our club, think about it during this year. Think about you and/or your children going to training week-ends next year. Talk to other members while you are at the lodge. Ring Graeme Williams (042-844093) and discuss it with him. You will get to know other members, have fun, become a better skier, and have your costs subsidised. Remember, you don't have to be the best and fastest in the world, just go along and enjoy the training and race events. Everyone should have a go, except for old codgers like me and Peter Gracie.

If you are 55 or over, or hope to get to that age one day soon, consider going in our seniors section of the Martini Rossi X-Country race in the second week of August. If you can walk 8 km, you can do it. Some people will race hard, others will do an easy walk. Either way, you will enjoy the challenge. Have a go. Start planning now for next year.

Ces Chora who came from Polska tells me that the Australian spelling of Kosciuszko has changed from Kosciusko, and that although the correct pronunciation is Koshushko we still pronounce it as before. Did I say that right?

As I write this newsletter I am really looking forward to the winter and having a great time at our lodge in the snow. It makes me realise how fortunate we are compared with all those people who have nothing to look forward to in the winter and hate it.

Do you ever think about the time and effort and worry that our committee members put in on your behalf so that you can enjoy a few days at the snow? You should! They all spend long hours in travel, planning, meetings, answering criticism etc. We should all be very grateful that we have such a good team of people working on our behalf.

Big Changes at Lodge

As programmed, the foundations and concrete structures up to the level of the kitchen floor have been completed on time. This is a tribute to the abilities of Ross Livermore and Ron Fitzgerald. Most of the work so far has been by professionals and members with specialist skills on 6 working bees but our general members will be required next summer to help with the building and fitting out of the new kitchen and storage areas.

The lodge will be reserved for working bees on the 7th and 21st November and the 5th December. The lodge will also be reserved on all weekends from 30th January to pre-Easter 1998 for working bees. Helpers will be required for many tasks such as electrical, carpentry, painting, cleaning, cooking, carrying, helping etc. So why not plan to enjoy one or two of the best week-ends you will ever have by attending the working bees. While you are thinking about it, right now, ring Kevin Bourke on 042-293159 and have him record you as a possible attendee.

The Best Medicine

A friend of mine in his 50's was having difficulties performing his marital duties and was referred to a specialist who said "Well, I can give you a hormone treatment that will last 3 or

4 years that will cost you \$10,000. A better treatment is an operation that will last 15 years but cost \$20,000."

My friend was very concerned about the cost so the specialist suggested he go home and discuss it with his wife and return the next day.

When he returned the next day the specialist asked "well, what have you and your wife decided to do?"

The reply - "we're going to re-do the kitchen".

This story has nothing to do with Ross re-doing our kitchen.

Where's the Grand View

In South East Brisbane of course overlooking Morcton Bay! Two of our long standing members, Gerald and Karen Brock, are the owners and managers of The Grand View Hotel at 49 North St., Cleveland Point, Qld. 4163. Ph.07-3286 1002. It is 150 years old and has many bars, restaurants, a coffee shop, and lots of entertainments. If ever you are travelling through Brisbane, book in to stay at one of their bed and breakfast rooms. You can be sure of being looked after by Karen and Gerald better than any other place you ever stayed. Oh, and mention my name so I get my commission.

History

I think the time is about right to start reporting the history leading up to our move from our original lodge at Wilson's Valley to our present building at Perisher. I propose to do this in a series of instalments in the Newsletters. History is made up of facts and opinions, for example, Whitlam and Kerr have both reported that Kerr dismissed Whitlam in 1974, but their reporting of events leading up to the dismissal look very different. For this reason, I invite all members to give me articles or comments to include in our history record (not about Whitlam and Kerr please). This could include a different perspective on an event I have reported or an interesting anecdote.

I have previously covered the start of our first lodge at Wilson's Valley. A copy of that report is at our present lodge. When we took over the Wilson's Valley Lodge in 1971, it was subject to a 20 year lease by the Port Kembla Ski Club Ltd. with the National Parks which expired in 1981, but the club had an option to extend the lease for 10 more years to 1991.

In 1976, the National Parks staff started hinting that our lodge did not really meet the standards they required and in 1977 tentative plans were developed to extend the lodge, but then in 1978 the National Parks started suggesting they did not really want our lodge to remain at Wilson's Valley and if we extended our lease to 1991, there might be no extension beyond that year. We dropped plans to extend the existing lodge.

In 1979 we started reviewing the range of alternatives available such as building in Jindabyne or buying a lodge in Perisher or Thredbo. (An interesting item in this research showed that Thirroul Ski Club purchased Maranatha in 1971 for \$35,000). We had been building up our cash reserves at the rate of about \$2000 per year but recognised we did not yet have the funds to build or buy, so we eventually settled on a plan to build up our funds to 1991 so we could act then as required. Mike Salon became our President in 1979 so he led the club during the developments from then on.

By the AGM in March 1981 we had developed a proposal in principle which was approved by members, to limit membership to 100 full members who would be required to purchase a debenture for about \$1000 either in one payment

or over 10 years. The goal at this time was to build or buy about 1990. At this time the committee included Mike Salon, Chris Townend, Warwick Kelly, John Dengate, Peter Gracie, Chris Brandis, Keith Chapmen, Friedl Bartsch, Noel Arnold, Ted Fairbrother, Jose Chicaro, Ron Fitzgerald, Kaye Mulligan, Robert McCulloch, Ron Pinfold.

In May 1981, at a Dinner function involving the National Parks, Mike Salon heard that a small number of lodges (such as CSIRO, Technology, Cooma and Illabunda) would be required to move from isolated positions into close proximity to other lodges in Perisher by 1984. This was later confirmed and caused a major change in our planning. I will continue with this in the next newsletter.

Annual General Meeting

45 persons attended the AGM on the 21/3/97. The following items were extracted from the minutes.

Presidents Report

President Simon advised that the committee spent some time focusing on what the future direction of the club should be. One of the key objectives of the committee must be to develop and maintain a club identity, a sense of camaraderie. In the past this has been inherent because original members came from a common background - they all worked at Lysaghts. At a later stage, the significant job of building a lodge helped bond people together. Working side by side with people for day after day under difficult and unfamiliar conditions can do wonders for developing long term relationships.

Over recent years, the links with Lysaghts have diminished. Most of our new members do not work at "Lysaghts". Lysaghts as an identity also does not exist, so it is often impossible to differentiate between a Lysaght employee and a BHP employee.

The committee has therefore developed a couple of strategies to try and build on the current club identity, and ensure its ongoing development.

First, based on feedback gleaned from members, we are attempting to increase family participation, without encountering the problems which other clubs have experienced by increasing their full membership numbers. We believe that by increasing family participation, we will keep hold of children of members as they grow up - who will have developed bonds between themselves.

To do this, we restructured accommodation rates last year to provide a better rate for adult children of members, and a markedly better rate for nominated ordinary members (which are often spouses).

Secondly, we have markedly increased the budget over the last 2 years for skiing development, which Graeme Williams will talk about in his report. This is a direct requirement of our Memorandums and Articles of Association which state we should "Develop and promote snow sports". Through monetary inducements, we are actively encouraging participation in Interclub Racing in both the adult and junior ranks. The aim is to develop our juniors so they continue to represent the club as adults and therefore help reinforce our club identity / camaraderie.

We also believe that as well as our racers, we should be developing / promoting snow sport for all of our members. Again we have provided financial incentives to all members to develop and improve their skiing.

With the new lease finally in our hands, the committee has to ensure that the lodge facilities (which are now 11 years old) are maintained in such a condition that they will at least see us through to 2025.

One area where we have had to pay increasing maintenance costs is the kitchen. At the time the lodge was built, we could only afford to install a domestic kitchen. The only non-domestic items in the kitchen are the dishwasher (which is not the original) and the gas stove. As a result we have replaced the oven, and the current cupboards are starting to fail. Other shortfalls are the distributed cold storage - ie. a fridge & freezer in the kitchen, a chest freezer in the dry store, another fridge in the foyer, and a coolroom downstairs! Not what you'd call optimal! Also, very limited bench space at a time when we are specifying that our managers do their own pastry and cake making.

We have therefore worked with a commercial kitchen designer, as well as past and new managers to develop initial designs of a new commercial standard kitchen. Ross Livermore and Ron Fitzgerald have worked hard during the summer to complete the shell of the first level of the lodge extension to house the extended kitchen.

Side benefits of the extension will be:

- Increased drying room area with segregated areas for boots & other clothing.
- Increased storage area which could lead to void being used solely for ski equipment - and don't we need that!
- Double sided cupboards between kitchen and dining room to enable current cupboards and bench in dining room to be removed (and hence improve access around tables). This should also enable a recessed hot water supply to be installed to replace the urn.

Treasurers Report

Treasurer John Henry advised that the overall performance of the Club this year was satisfactory. A surplus on trading of \$1505 was less than budget while the loss after depreciation and amortisation of \$6758 was less than the budget loss of \$12000.

The cost of catering supplies purchased by the managers this year was unfavourable and disappointing. Purchases were \$5300 unfavourable to budget (21% increase) and \$6500 higher than 1995.

The control process and accountability procedures have been reviewed and a structure tying budget catering costs to the Managers salaries instigated for 1997.

Captains Report

The club captain, Graeme Williams advised the new training program was able to be run with 12 juniors participating on a light cover. The instruction and training was very valuable and all juniors all recognised and enjoyed the need for skill improvement.

The Junior Interclub was cancelled due to snow depth but we were able to run the Junior Championships on patches of snow above the sundeck.

Our Downhill Champions were Justin Tierney and Renee Bartsch.

Our X-Country Champions were Justin Tierney and Renee Bartsch.

The under 12's was a clean sweep for Ben Zeller, and the Junior Club Champion was Justin Tierney. Clubperson Renee Bartsch and the Encouragement Award was won by Ben Zeller. The Junior Interclub was rerun later in the season and our strongest team could not compete. On the tricky downhill at Smiggins our small team managed to make a new course and also flew through the air without ski's.

The feedback from all juniors and families involved in the racing and training was very positive and an encouragement to continue more of the same.

Senior club racing had more success with the snow, with our Cross Country Team winning the Interclubs. In the Combined Interclubs we were placed third due to our downhill performance and depth.

X-Country Champion was Friedl Bartsch, Downhill Champion was Ben Salon, and Club Champion was Ben Salon.

The senior training was also a great success with 10 participants who all worked hard with some strenuous instruction.

The first year of the program didn't pull out the ex-junior skiers, now adults, but from the enquiries and enthusiasm from 1996, 1997 is looking to be more popular.

An excited team was again entered in the Perisher Cup which is a unique and very difficult competition. The team was placed 8th overall.

Our Veteran X-Country Champions are again Noel and Betty Arnold who have again requested assistance and some one else to take over the realm.

Outside club racing two good performers in X-Country in 1996 were Lucas Molloy and Friedl Bartsch who both had consistently high placings in all their races. Well done.

1996 was not a year of outstanding race successes but from all involved in the training and racing it was a success in encouraging and improving everyone's skiing skill levels and club spirit.

G. Williams invited questions, and N. Arnold raised the following issues:

In the past our major goal was minimum cost for all members. Our club policy was that members who are interested only in recreational skiing should not be required to contribute substantially to the cost of members who are interested in racing.

This policy has changed and I suggest members views should be sought on this change.

There has been a huge 26% increase in the cash cost of running our lodge over the past 2 years (excluding the \$7500 interest to members in '94 and '95), as follows:

	1994	1995	1996
Costs of operation	\$99K	\$109K	\$125K
Included in the above, our racing costs have increased substantially as follows:			
	1994	1995	1996
Racing costs	\$220	\$1200	\$3500

(During subsequent discussion it was clear that the majority of members favoured the financial support being given to racing.)

Election of officers for 1997

President	Simon Smart (723771)
Vice President	John Dengate (756213)
Secretary	Keith Chapman
Treasurer	John Henry
Committee	Kevin Burke (293159) Ron Fitzgerald Ross Livermore Marie McCulloch Richard Taylor Graeme Williams(844093) Plus 1 other

Tourist Reports

Robyn and Rod Soranson, and John and Karen Henry went skiing in USA and Canada in February/March for 5.5 weeks, visiting 4 resorts in Colorado plus Lake Louise, Banff, Sunshine, Whistler and Black Combe. The best snow was in Colorado (fresh deep powder), but all the others had excellent snow. Canada was very cold -36C once but mainly -15C. They found toe warmers (chemical heater pads under toes) were essential.

Ian Heycox has moved from Whyalla to Townsville and John and Rhonda Creasey have moved from Darwin to Newcastle.

Graeme Williams has received a card from Alan and Alecia who are holidaying in Southern Spain on the Costa de Almeria and will then travel to the UK and Ireland.

Dianne & Keith Chapman have just come 'Out of Africa' - and Morocco, Spain, Paris and, of most interest to members of Illabunda, Andorra. They spent a great week with Alicia and Alan at their apartment in Soldeu which overlooks the slopes - wonderful views and fine skiing. They're working a very hard 6 day week and Alan is singing with a band 3 nights a week and solo for one. Alecia's teaching English to Spanish señoritas and Spanish to English girls -

never a dull moment at casa Clifford. They send their love to everyone - Alecia got teary when Di and Keith left - surprise surprise! The Chappies will take some photos down to the lodge this season to put in the family album.

All good things end and Di and Keith are now happy (oh yeah!) to be home after 8 weeks on the move. Keith's particularly enjoying sorting out the visa card accounts which are still rolling in. He shouldn't complain, as after all one of the bills is for his Moroccan djellabah which he plans to wear in the evening at the lodge. (Ed. I wonder if it's visible when he wears it). Who's coming down at the end of August?

New Managers Start

Our new lodge managers Paul and Kim Biddlestone arrived at our lodge on Monday 26th May and on the 30th and 31st May Ross Livermore, Ron Fitzgerald, John Henry and Simon Smart went to Perisher to advise them on lodge operations and test their cooking, which turned out to be very good. Paul and Kim are looking forward to meeting you and are keen to ensure your stay at the lodge this year will be the best ever.

Ski Ball Report

As an update on the Annual Combined Ski Club Ball, Richard Taylor reports that the Ball this year is on Saturday 25th October at the University of Wollongong Function Centre. This year's theme will be "pirates". So sharpen your wooden leg and train your parrot because it promises to be a swashbuckling event to beat all others!

While you are thinking about it, write it in your appointment book now.

New Members

People who sold their debentures (and in effect their membership) last year included D. Bolyn, M. Beckman, M. O'Brien, H. Papson, A. Harrison, and L. Harrison. People who purchased debentures and became new members included, Russ Hill, Paul Condran, Edwardo Furmino, and Jason Tierney.

If you meet up with any of these new members please make them welcome. I would appreciate hearing from each one later in the season with comments for inclusion in our next newsletter.

1996 Bookings

John Dengate has done his usual excellent job of organising our bookings with the result that we are again booked out for all of this season except for mid week periods in June, July and September.

Graeme Williams says that we have had a good roll up for the junior training week ends and an increased number of participants in the racing week ends. We will all be watching with great interest the development of our junior and young racers and their efforts on behalf of our club.

The next newsletter should be mailed in November. Please send me a note or ring me with items of interest, such as your visit to our lodge, visits to other lodges, people you saw or things you did. This is your newsletter - I just put it together - so please give me some items to publish.

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