

LYSAGHT ALPINE CLUB NEWS

VIEWS AND NEWS OF MANAGEMENT AND MEMBERS MAY 2000 Vol. 11.1

2000 – Take a Guest (Editor)

Last year we had a very low level of bookings. You can help to correct this by taking friends down to the lodge with you, or suggesting to friends they visit our lodge, in the winter or summer. There are many visitors to our lodge who do not ski. They just go for a "different" holiday. The building is beautiful, fittings are excellent, in the winter months they can enjoy the fine food and snow atmosphere, in summer months the fresh high mountain air and scenery. All this at very low cost.

However, it should be remembered that our lodge is not available to the general public. There are two main reasons for this. First, we are registered as a non-profit company operating for the benefit of our members and their friends and do not have to pay income tax (GST still applies though). Secondly, we want to ensure that persons are not booked into our lodge do who might behave inappropriately or damage it.

Many of our members put a lot of their time into running the lodge for you, so why not do your bit by approaching some of your friends and getting them to visit our lodge this year.

At the time of writing this, there were some vacancies left in June, July, late August, and September.

DO IT NOW! For bookings and enquiries, ring John Dengate (02) 4275 6984

Names and Addresses (Editor)

Would you like to know the names and addresses of all of our other club members? Our membership is now widely dispersed and I am sure most members would like to be able to communicate with some other members from time to time or at least know who the other members are. I belong to a number of organisations that circulate membership lists, eg golf clubs, bowling clubs, probus clubs, etc.

It has been suggested that before our list is circulated we give members the option of asking that their name not be circulated. Of course, any member asking for this will not receive a copy of the list either. Please write to the club secretary before June 2000 if you do not want your name and address circulated to other members.

Old Skis Gone (Ron Fitzgerald)

Working bees in November and March did the usual maintenance. In addition, **30 pairs of skis with tape on them and therefore unused over 2 years were placed under the rumpus room.** If at some future time you can't find skis that you have not used for some years, maybe that is where they are.

The AGM (Editor)

President Simon advised that although we had to increase our charges this year, we are competitive vs. other lodges, and still provide very much reduced costs compared to commercial accommodation in the snow or anywhere else.

He then gave a detailed report about the increasing costs of running the lodge and losses over the

past few years. The fixed costs are over \$40,000 per year to keep the lodge available for members, whether they use it or not. The committee decided the time was appropriate to cover part of these standing costs in the annual membership fee. Simon thanked all committee members for a job well done and made special mention of Richard Taylor and Russell Viles who are retiring from the committee this year after many years of service. The lodge managers did an excellent job last year but have now advised they will not be able to return this year so Ross Livermore is in the process of selecting new managers.

Darren Morris reviewed the financial results as per the Annual Report. The main problem was the lodge utilization at 75% being well down on previous years, mainly reduced associate bookings, but increased child bookings. Summer bookings were good. Our investment reserves at \$98,000 are OK. We are targeting for 75% utilization this year, which should give us a break-even at the new rates.

Keith Chapman advised the National Parks is making major changes to the sewerage system which may result in a \$12,000 to \$14,000 surcharge at some future time. This has not been covered in this year's budget.

Graeme Williams was unable to attend and Noel Arnold read his report summarising the junior training weekend in July and races in September. The Junior champions for 1999 are Renee Bartsch and Ben Zeller and downhill Sian Bilboe and Jai Restante. The 1999 club combined and X-country champion is Friedl Bartsch and the new downhill club champion is Aiden Burke.

At the end of the meeting the following new committee was elected:

Simon Smart Skimaster/President
John Dengate Deputy Skimaster
Keith Chapman Secretary
Darren Morris Treasurer
General Committee members:
Mary Holland Maree McCulloch Kevin Burke
Ron Fitzgerald Brian Harrison Ross Livermore
Graeme Williams

Travellers (Various)

In Jan 2000 Ian Gracie was working on a new film "Moulin Rouge", filmed somewhere in the world but I know not where. Keep your eye out for it. He and Sue Gracie skied our slopes in Aug/Sep with children William(1yr), Alice(5) and daughter Emma 7 years who enjoyed the Olympic.

Malcolm & Fran Gracie in January to Paris & Cortina for seminars & skiing.

Peter & Judith Gracie to Europe in March/April and some skiing in Switzerland.

Peter, Anda, Tia and Andris Arnold moved to Denver USA in March 2000, for 12 months. Needless to say, they have already spent plenty of time on Colorado slopes where 6 year old Tia is fastest. Betty and Noel will spend a month with them in May/June.

A little bird told me that the Dengates spent a few weeks enjoying the powder and sunshine in Whistler, Fernie and Mammoth in January and February, and enjoying the challenge of the double black diamond runs, as well as the shopping

Soldiering On (Scott Leonard)

One of our members, Captain Scott Leonard, has been serving in Dili since just before Christmas. It is amazing that modern communications allow a soldier serving overseas to communicate with friends daily by email including sending photographs taken that day.



The following is an extract from one of Scott's emails.

Thursday dawned and our first full day under UNTAET had its expected hiccups. Our main problems at this stage involve division of responsibilities. We were providing support to everyone under INTERFET (with some reimbursement) but under UNTAET we are limited to supporting Australian units and specific other countries under formal agreements. We will get there but it takes time. Transport between here and Australia has also slowed down and the 'oops' with the UN plane in Darwin didn't help.

Thursday afternoon we did some more Rules of Engagement training. It is valuable training, as you have to be so careful. There was one scenario where we were driving down a road and a group of 'locals' had built a (illegal) roadblock. I had to get out of the car and try to convince them that it was illegal and they should let us pass. They understood English but were demanding money and food. As the stalemate dragged on, I stood back and held my rifle up as the next step of force. They were still ranting and raving and although it was all our own people and inside our compound, my next option was to cock my weapon to put a round in the chamber. Thankfully, the 'mob' gave in and we were able to dismantle the roadblock and continue our trip. The legal officer was watching and was happy with our restraint. A realistic scenario and one I hopefully will not encounter on the roads here.

Ed comment: I think the above gives a very small insight into how our troops in East Timor have achieved a better result than any other peace keeping force anywhere.

Another Time (Editor)

I am presently doing a condensation of a book "John's Diary" written by one of our past soldiers and I thought, at this time, you might find the following extract interesting.

23/2/42 (Timor) We were almost surrounded, at least 600 Japanese paratroops ahead of us, a strong force behind us over 2,000 strong. We were almost out of ammunition. We had about 200 wounded, and finally the lack of air cover, and we could now see the fleet of 27 bombers overhead. We had done our job in holding them up for three days; our role was only intended to delay the force for one day.

One of the major things affecting the decision was the report that on the first day of the fighting a Japanese officer had been killed, was discovered to have plans of our fortifications, the approximate numbers of original troops, and plans of the Japanese invasion of Australia. These had been flown back successfully to Darwin. To us this meant we had managed a major achievement.

It was emphasized that no matter what the Japanese said about good treatment it was an old adage in the army "Any men who surrender to the enemy must from that point on consider themselves to be dead men." How often was I to repeat those words in the next few years.

Our response as a unit was apparently in favour of surrender. The final prod to do so was the circling by the bombers overhead.

We were ordered forward to the road, and their convoy moved up. Told to stack our arms on the road which we proceeded to do.

The next thing we saw was that the bombers were lining up for a run and that the bomb-bay doors had been opened.

We all, without exception, broke for cover on both sides of the road.

The Japanese officers were screaming orders to their own men, and from the way they were reacting, they were for them to rejoin their trucks because that was what they appeared to be doing. We didn't stop to watch!

I got away as far as possible, and looked up to see bombs pouring out of the planes approaching.

Could actually see them falling, to my amazement, and hear them, as some of them must have been of the shrieking type. Suddenly realised they were going to fall very close. Dropped to the ground and covered my head with my arms.

Next moment there was a loud explosion and I felt myself going feet up into the air - literally. When things calmed down a bit and I recovered from dizziness I had a look around.

The Japs had pattern bombed us, hundreds of bombs had been dropped on both sides of the road, and the road itself right among the Japs.

In our immediate vicinity of about 12-foot square, three of the corners were filled by one of us. A bomb had landed in the approximate centre and the three of us had all gone up in the air. I discovered I had a shrapnel wound in the right arm above the wrist and had lost the use of my fingers. I was bleeding profusely, and stopped this with left hand. Bleeding later stopped by somebody supplying a temporary dressing.

What saved us and the others on the sides of the road was that the bombs used were apparently anti-personnel bombs, due to explode outwards on impact and spray shrapnel sideways. However the ground on the sides of the road was very soft here, being almost marshy, and the bombs instead of exploding sideways went down a way, and the remaining force was upwards. There was quite a crater where ours had landed.

We lost a few killed and 60 wounded. However the effect on the road was felt to the full, and many direct hits had been made on the Jap convoy where the bombs had done their worst damage. They must have lost hundreds. We never did learn how many.

It turned out later that the Japs had orders to turn the convoy around if we surrendered, but in the excitement they forgot to do so. Nobody thought to radio the planes and countermand the order to bomb us, and the airmen being itchy to go, it didn't occur to them that the two convoys had obviously been joined together.

HISTORY (Editor)

Correction: In the May 1999 edition, I omitted Ron Fitzgerald's name from the initial building sub-committee. Sorry Ron!

The last issue reported we signed our lease in November 1984, which allowed us to immediately proceed with building. In the summer of 84/85, the land was cleared, foundations laid, the ground floor slab poured, brick walls erected, and first floor slab poured. The structure was then sealed for the winter.

A lot of this work was done by contractors, but a lot was also done by members.

The above makes it sound easy, Well it wasn't! It started with the blaster finding several large rocks that caused blasting and clearing going over time and budget, and Ross worked on ways of saving costs elsewhere. (He did this many times, God bless him).

The building committee had an enormous work load and produced a budget showing we would need to raise at least another \$70,000. The main committee as usual referred the problem to members and a survey showed 74% preferred to pay a call of \$700 (which was a lot more than it is now), rather than bring in additional full members. The threat of forfeiture of membership made John Dengate's job of collecting the money easier, but it still took a lot of work. Work was delegated out to many members such as insurances (Charles Ellen), cash flows (John Henry), member labour schedules for 85/86 - a really big job (Ted Fairbrother), Lysaght donations and Bank Guarantees (Noel Arnold), lodge fittings and furnishings, etc. etc. Everyone worked frantically and somehow Ross had the first stage completed in plenty of time before the season - well, in May 95, before skiing started anyway.



Of course, while all this was being done we were still organising the financing and running of our old lodge at Wilsons valley. We still had to maximise our income during the winter.

Schooldays (Anonymous)

These days an inspector checks 5-6 year old children at school for teeth, hearing, sight, etc, and taste. An inspector recently gave the class some rose flavoured lollies - no one could tell the flavour. Next she gave them honey flavoured lollies. After sucking for some time, with no answers, the inspector suggested, "what does mommy call daddy". A 6 year old girl suddenly spat out her lolly and yelled at all the kids "quick, spit them out, they're arseholes"!

Olympic Runner (Mike Salon)

Yes, I'm lucky to have won one of BHP's 10 allocations in the Olympic torch relay. I get to run about 1km, & my km is somewhere near Whyalla, SA on Wed 12 July, so I don't expect many friends to come over and cheer. However, it'll be a great moment, & I'm looking forward to it. This week (April) the torch came to Wollongong for a test run & I got to hold it to see how heavy it is. Not very, but it had no gas.

(Ed: Congratulations Mike - We will watch Win News)

Mike advised two debenture transfers have taken place in the last 12 months:

*13/9/99 Fred Curcio to Bill Edmonds

*13/12/99 Sandra Burke to Leon Delissen

Getting to Know You (Leo)

Leon Delissen is married to Veronika and has a daughter, Natalie, aged 11 years. He is 53 years of age and migrated to Australia from Holland in 1957. His wife of 20 years, Veronika migrated to Australia in 1960 from what is now Slovenia, formerly part of Yugoslavia. They live in Ambarvale which is a suburb of Campbelltown and have had an Automotive Exhaust business in Campbelltown for 22 years.

Leo advised:

Our introduction to skiing was in 1994 when we joined Stephen & Robyn Beckhaus for 5 days at Illabunda. The following year we went to Thredbo for a week with some other friends. I have joined the guys on a number of working bees at Perisher and again as recent as the last one from the 10th to 12th of March. We hope to be able to go skiing again this year as a result of having become a member.

One of my other interests is golf (I am President of Antill Park Country Golf Club in Picton) and, as Stephen may confirm, sailing, which is how Stephen and I first met. As a family we are interested in bike riding and spend most of the long weekends in various places, i.e. Canberra and Port Stephens, to satisfy that interest and do some sight seeing.

Editors Comment (Editor)

I currently have 22 email addresses that cover about 26 members. In April I emailed all addressees. If you did not get that message, it means I don't have your current email, so please send me an email and tell me and I will tell you all the others.

If you have an interesting story or a photograph of your travels or snow trips or babies, I would be very happy to publish some in future issues of the club news.

Thanks to all those members who contributed to this issue. I had so many I had to reduce some reports. Keep them coming.

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