

SKI TRACKS

October 12

PRESIDENT'S RAMBLINGS

We held our AGM on the 26 June 2012 and it was good to see so many people turning up for what was a very interesting meeting.

Can I first say thank you to the Board for their efforts during the year, I know it is always hard to balance your own lives with the need of the club and there are some genuinely hard workers in the club. I would like to thank Peter Quinnell and Phil Oliver who have decided to step aside for this year and focus on his other interest. Peter has been the lodge maintenance manager for a number of years and has rallied a keen group of volunteers twice a year to do some critical tasks in the lodge and some of those tasks we just take for granted. Peter has indicated that he will continue to coordinate the maintenance from outside the Board. Thank you Peter for your help over the years and to Phil Oliver who has been a Board member for 4 years and our editor for two. I wish them well for the future.

In my last newsletter I asked if some of you had spare time to nominate for a position on the Board. Well this year there were two new Board members elected both with skills that will be of great benefit to the club. Peter White and Larissa Reed have been elected unopposed and Larissa has taken on the difficult position of Marketing Manager, a position we have not been able to fill for some time. There is still more vacancies if members would like to participate.

At our last meeting we elected all the office bearers for this year and organised two sub committees to look at our planning and leasing arrangements for the future. All new positions are on the web site so check out who is doing what for the club. You will be surprised at the number of people it takes to run this organisation.

I recently attended a meeting with our head lease Kevin Blyton to discuss our future and the new lease for the village. I am pleased to say that he is making good progress with National Parks and he was able to provide more certainty to Elouera Ski Club on our negotiations for the sub lease. This is all very good for those members who have keen to continue skiing in Charlotte Pass. Obviously there will need to be improvements made and a base cost for the number of beds we currently lease in the village.

Our finances will have to improve from this year to pay for the lease and do any upgrading to our facilities that may be required. We are currently the cheapest lodge in the village and I expect this to remain, however, if we do not increase our accommodation fees we will be running the club at a loss every year. The lodge needs constant renewals of plant and equipment and through the tireless efforts of both Peter, Geoff and team we have been able to get a lot of this cheap up to now but this will change. The new Work Health and Safety laws will also mean we will have to use more skilled labour to do the critical jobs that require specialised equipment and are in those difficult places, like painting the external walls and eaves, plumbing.

The whole Charlotte Pass experience has been improving year by year by CPV and they are now increasing the number of skiing days available to the village every snow season by using snow making, better grooming and improved equipment maintenance. They will also be purchasing more this summer for the next season. The sewage treatment plant was upgraded last year to meet improved EPA standards and to fully automate the plant for the variable number of people using the village. This has increased our charges from CPV but we still have the lowest sewage charge in the Snowy Mountains.

I am becoming more confident about our survival and about a better future for existing and new members. We continue to have the best lodge in the valley (our words) and we should be

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proud to bring our friends for a fantastic week of skiing or bushwalking. The low priced season tickets have also been taken up by some of our members this year and will be available for purchase up to March for next year so if you want to ski for more than a week each year they give you significant value for down hilling. Kevin Blyton has advised us that CPV will again have new and exciting specials for lodges for next year so please keep in contact for these as they are announced.

Our September Meeting was the best Board meeting I have attended for a long time and everybody has chipped in to provide support on the sub committees. We have seen some very positive changes occurring in both the village and in our approach to the next lease so it is time to put all the negative talk behind us and start being positive about the future.

Note it is the members who are on email that are getting all the up to date information on what is happening and on specials so if you want to have a chance, please send us your new email addresses.

A special thank you again to Geoff who is on his computer every day doing work for the club and is the chief organised for the PP lodge and Castaway units. This year as treasurer he has been required to prepare more reports and delve back into records to complete these reports. I know that the whole club continue to be in awe of your efforts and thank you for your time.

Richard van Putten

TREASURERS REPORT

Unfortunately we had a lull in bookings end of July to mid August with only a few guests using the best snow we have had for many years. This resulted in poor winter booking money (better than last year though) still not enough to make large inroads into our debt reduction.

A new system is planned for our priority Bookings, whereby bookings will open in mid February with the priority discounted price remaining till mid March this will give the members the opportunity to look at the bookings on the website and invite friends to join them even it means changing the bookings from one week to another with no penalty in rates.

LIFE AT PYGMY POSSUM

Liam Filson has stayed at Pygmy Possum lodge every year for 26 years, but not this year. He spent this season in the Cell Block at Charlotte Pass Village while working as a ski instructor. Liam's first visit to the snow was with his mother, Sue Little, one month before he was born. The following year his dad, Bill Filson, made a pulk and he towed young Liam all around the backcountry. (Pulk is the Norwegian name for a sled pulled by a skier and commonly used by the mother or father to take the baby out while they ski.) In the following years Liam was taken to every lake and every peak in the main range area. The area is so vast that they were not often seen but the pulk tracks in the snow showed where they had been. Lunchtime on a fine day was a time to get out and take his first steps on skis as he got older. As the years went by Liam learnt and perfected telemark skiing and then progressed to alpine skiing. His parents managed to get him to Pygmy every year in spite of school and university commitments that led him to graduate and work as an architect. This year between jobs, he was at Charlotte Pass as a ski instructor, starting at the bottom with looking after the kids but also instructing anyone in downhill or telemark techniques and taking people for day tours on snow shoes. How many other people have skied at Pygmy Possum every year since the lodge was built? Send your story into the editor.

LODGE OPERATION

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Our lodge runs semi automatically and it is important for lodge captains to understand what is provided to them in their notes to ensure their guests are able to enjoy the full benefit of our facilities.

Safety is the most important and all guests should be advised of the safety aspects of the lodge. Get them together and explain the following:

- exits,
- Fire information on the back of the bedroom doors
- fire alarms,
- use of showers with the bathroom door closed and
- Kitchen safety and the stove operation.

DO NOT CHANGE THE TEMPERATURE SETTINGS ON THERMOSTATS; THE ROOM NEEDS TO WARM UP ON ITS OWN BASED ON THE POWER PERIOD. THERE ARE DIFFERENT OFF PEAK PERIODS FOR EACH OF THE LODGE FACILITIES.