

Elouera Ski Club Ltd



**Pygmy Possum Lodge, Charlotte Pass
Kosciuszko National Park
And
Castaways Unit, Shoal Bay
ACN 002 703 988**

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Spring 2021 Newsletter

President's Message

I write this at the end of a very crazy and disappointing 2021 ski season; lots of snow but not many skiers. The spread of COVID resulted in lockdowns and an effective closure of the ski fields except for a lucky few. For a ski club, winter is our time and the good snow falls only added to the frustration. Moving forward the lodge is open for summer, so please take advantage of our beautiful mountains. Summer operation rules are a moving target. However, when lockdown lifts, rules will involve half lodge occupancy and fully vaccinated guests. This is in line with the current NSW Health guidance.

The 2019/20 bushfires, the 2020 winter with COVID 50% occupancy and the 2021 winter with near zero occupancy have obviously hit the club's bottom line. In 2020 we allowed bookings to roll over into 2021 which maintained our bank balance at +\$550k. In 2021 we choose to refund bookings and wipe the slate. We now have a balance of \$344k, with most bookings refunded. However, we have some major expenses ahead, including \$90k of insurance due in November.

As a club we need to repair the budget and rebuild our buffer. We are fortunate and thankful to prior boards that we entered 2021 with a strong buffer. It will be interesting to see if all ski clubs financially survive the last two years. The board recognises the financial impact of COVID has been mixed; some people are seriously impacted; others are little impacted. To balance these individual and club concerns we will raise 2022 accommodation by a modest 5% and leave subscriptions unchanged at \$100. This change adopts a user pay approach. A 5% increase won't fix our bank balance quickly, but it will help. Occupancy is the main driver of our profitability. So, if you can use the lodge or Castaways please do so.

Our July AGM was attended by 56 members, a great turnout. For those who couldn't attend a synopsis of my report is provided at the end of this newsletter. I ended the winter season with a mail out Winter 2021 #7 and I will soon mail Summer 21/22 #1. I hope I don't get to #7 again, we need some stability.

Thanks for your support and encouragement keep well, Regards Jon Barber

BOOKINGS UNDER COVID

The lodge will remain open after the winter season and will operate within the parameters of NSW Public Health Orders and restrictions. The current COVID Safety Plan will remain in force until otherwise advised by NSW Health. Lodge Captain(s) will have COVID Safety Officer responsibilities as there will not be a resident COVID Safety Officer and it is expected that all members and guests will comply with the COVID Safety Plan.

This procedure will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure it is operating smoothly. High capacity air purifiers have been installed in both dining/lounge areas to help to control aerosols and improve air quality particularly when natural ventilation is not feasible in winter. These should be left running at all times that a side of the Lodge is occupied. The speed of the fan can be adjusted but they should not be turned off.

FOOD STORE

Limited stock, check before you arrive!

Please check the food store docket for information on availability of items as there is limited stock.

It is your responsibility to record all food store items that are used and pay for them after your stay. We rely on your honesty by paying directly to the club using the club BPAY Biller Code and the BPAY Reference number of your booking.

MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

Get all your membership details online, including credit points!

Members are able to obtain an email of all the details of their membership by going to the "Membership" tab of <https://eloueraskiclub.asn.au/>. You will need to enter your membership number and the correctly matching surname on your membership record then click to have the details sent to the email address on record.

Contact membership@eloueraskiclub.asn.au to notify us of any changes in your address (or with other membership queries). Note that we no longer send a printed notification of the credit points accounts now that members have access to their credits information via the web query.

Credits used on bookings are debited immediately and a booking is Confirmed fully paid. Accommodation Credit bonuses for booking guests in with you are only credited once per year, usually in late November. Your guests need to have "joined" your booking by quoting your booking id when they fill in their form. We require all guests to fill in their own form, providing their own contact details. (We have reduced the number of people spaces per form to help prevent too many people being booked on the one form.)

CAN YOU HELP WITH THE HISTORY OF THE CLUB?

Elouera Ski Club was established 46 years ago with Pygmy Possum Lodge construction finished in 1985. Our membership base is changing so it is important that we begin to record the history of the Club.

As part of the longer term upgrades to the facilities to the lodge we have started to conduct a review of the framed works collected over the years with an eye to creating a more curated exhibition of the images.

Many works will form part of a heritage display that memorialises the history of the club and its members.

We have recently conducted a stocktake of all the works and some are still in very good condition and will continue to be displayed. Some will be hung in different areas of the lodge and some, which are too faded or have broken frames, may be retired.

We are hoping to collect images from members to assist the overhaul and work at showcasing the beauty of both summer and winter and the diverse activities that we enjoy at the lodge, be that downhill, cross country, snowboarding, snowshoeing or hiking.

These images will be featured on our Facebook page and some will be chosen to be framed and hung in our common areas.

The Board is also hoping members may be able to help:

- What was the original philosophy of the club;
- How were members 'recruited';
- Do you have interesting or amusing stories or anecdotes about the early days in the lodge or ski fields;
- Do you have any old photographs of construction or the early days; or
- Is there anything else you think might be of interest?

Please send your submissions to selina.springett@eloueraskiclub.asn.au

CAN YOU HELP WITH THESE IMAGES?



Who is the mystery horseman and what is his connection to the lodge?



What year is Cigana Lady from?



Who is the stylish sunglasses skier

If you can help solve these mysteries, please let Selina know: selina.springett@eloueraskiclub.asn.au

CASTAWAYS AT SHOAL BAY



Unfortunately, bookings at Castaways have been impacted by Covid-19 lockdowns.

Members are encouraged to take advantage of a 20% discount available most of the year (except for a few high demand times, such as Christmas and Easter).

A new cleaner has been contracted to improve the standard of cleaning between bookings.

NATIONAL PARKS NEWS

Progress has continued on the Snowies Iconic Walk with completion of construction of the permanent toilet facility at Seaman's Hut and Spencers Creek bridge. This bridge at an altitude of about 1640m is the highest suspension bridge in Australia.



From Steelworks Engineering website

While the development of Iconic Snowy Walk has improved access to many areas of the park from Charlotte Pass including Trapyard Creek, Guthega via Snowy River and Spencers Creek and Mount Stilwell, it is important to remember that the alpine vegetation and soils are fragile, so keep to the tracks.

Further National Park news can be found at:

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Parks-reserves-and-protected-areas/Alpine-resorts/alpine-resort-round-up-newsletter-winter-2021-issue-43-210159.pdf>

AGM 2021

Held over Zoom the meeting was held on 27 July 2021. 56 members attended.

The following board members were reappointed unopposed: Nicholas Badger, Paul Greenfield, Judy Jenkinson, Malcolm Mathie, Stafford van Putten, Selina Springett and Jon Barber as President.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2021 (HIGHLIGHTS)

Occupancy

The 2020 winter season was operated under COVID rules with a 50% occupancy rate. Despite the risks of COVID the lodge operated successfully thanks to a lot of hard work by the COVID Committee, Karen Marshall & Julie Dowsley and our COVID safe officer Richard Mason. Spring, summer and autumn bookings were above normal.

The great support from the membership, through use of the Lodge, is appreciated.

The 2021 ski season had a full house for July to September. We were looking at our best season ever. However, COVID Delta and lockdowns means to date we are looking at a similar occupancy to 2020.

Financial Statement

Despite the winter 2020 occupancy of 50% we achieved a profit of \$23k to March 31 2021, compared to \$83K in the previous year. Insurance has gone up however, \$83k per annum, up from \$56k. This makes insurance one of our highest cost items. Unfortunately, however, after the 2019/2020 fires we have not been able to secure any bushfire cover.

Memberships

38 new memberships were purchased from 25 sellers. A big thanks to the departing members for their support. Many of the selling members are original members who purchased memberships to fund the lodge construction. In 1984, 600 memberships were purchased at \$2000 each. This provided \$1.2M to build the lodge. Some of these original members purchased multiple memberships, hence the disparity between the 25 sells and 38 buys. A big welcome to the new joining members. The membership sale process has been changed recently to better empower the seller, the current member, as compared to the buyer, who is not yet a member.

Achievements

A key focus of the board has been member safety, particularly in these times. Air filters improving air quality have been installed in each lounge to reduce circulating droplets and fine particles. All 92 smoke alarms have been replaced to bring them to current NSW standards. Four dishwashers; two per kitchen that have a 39min or 60min cycle time to improve sanitisation have been purchased. (These were chosen over industrial dishwashers due to cost and poor service support in the Charlotte Pass area.) In addition, a defibrillator has been installed in the games room adjacent to the first aid box for use in emergencies.

Following the 2020 fires we were granted an APZ (Asset Protection Zone) to clear undergrowth to 100mm in our lease area. This reduces the fuel load adjacent to the lodge and improves firefighter access around the lodge.

Future Plan

The lodge is 37 years old and the lease runs for 37 years to October 2058. The board has approved expenditure of \$150k for the current year to March 2022. This includes carpeting, internal repainting, additional lockers & a DA consultancy for upgrades to the external cladding.

Recarpeting is budgeted at \$60k, while cladding is estimated at \$200k-\$230k. Colorbond steel has been chosen to replace the existing western red cedar cladding which is degrading and posing a continual maintenance issue and fire risk.

DA approval for this work will include a BCA (Building Code Australia) audit, a bush fire risk assessment and other reports. This will trigger other projects highlighted by the BCA audit, for example, the need to raise the external banisters to 1m.

The board has approved the DA work and this will proceed from October, with lodgment in late 2021 or early 2022. We expect approval by March-April 2022. Firm quotations from builders will be obtained in October to November 2021 when the snow has cleared. A membership meeting will be held in December 2021 to disseminate & discuss this information. If we proceed, recladding would occur over the summer of 2022 to 2023.

Castaways

Continues to be an important asset for the club. It is our bankable asset as we can borrow against Castaways, but not against the Lodge. Castaways makes a small profit of \$8k annually. Please consider supporting Castaways with bookings.

Thanks

I want to acknowledge the work of the volunteers who help keep the club going. Firstly, Gary Jeffery for his work on the bookings. We have all spoken to Gary over many years & his efforts are fantastic. Peter Quinell is one of the founding members and a past club secretary and president. Peter has run the locker & trunks admin for the last few years and handed it on this year to Julie Dowsley; thanks to both of you for this work. Thanks also to Karen Marshall in stocking and organizing the food store; a complex task with the moving target of an on off 50% occupancy. Thanks also to Peter Hill and his team on the working bees. Finally, I'd like to thank the board for their help and support.