

# SPRING 2022 NEWSLETTER



## **Elouera Ski Club Ltd**

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

**Elouera Ski Club Ltd.  
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

After writing depressing reviews of the problematic COVID 2000 and 2021 seasons, it's great to be able to write on a positive note. The 2022 season still had some COVID but we managed to keep the lodge full and nature responded with generosity. Lots of snow over a long season; fantastic!

The full lodge and dodging COVID needed some hard work and I want to particularly thank Judy Jenkinson and Gary Jeffery for their unstinting work in organising bookings and room allocations and making many booking alterations through the season. All the lodge captains deserve a special thanks, as well as everyone who provided them extra support in their critical roles. Many captains and the other members and guests in their teams took on the extra duty of coping with COVID evacuations. This work ranged from catering for those in isolation rooms, assisting with packing skis and lockers, to room clean up and ventilation.

The "let's all pull together" ethos of this club is fantastic and it came to the top again this season.

As I have communicated over the past twelve months, we are planning a major refurbishment of the lodge. It's 37 years since the lodge was constructed in 1985 and we have another 36 years ahead on the current lease. Currently, we are waiting on snow clearing and a scheduled site meeting with National Parks prior to the DA submission in late November. The cost of the work (mainly cladding, fire sprinklers and other safety items) is estimated at \$750,000.

All businesses and households are under cost pressures and our club is no different. However, as a club we are taking on a major expenditure. Both factors have necessitated us raising our rates for 2023, specifically annual subscription fees by 10% and accommodation fees by 15%. We have uploaded to the website the rationale for this increase and I encourage you to read that document, linked below. In summary it's a multi-pronged rationale with member bookings squeezing out the higher value guest bookings, increasing costs and our building plans.

It's a pleasure to have Linda Broome contribute a short article to this newsletter. Linda is the research leader on the Pygmy Possum and our club provides accommodation for an annual possum survey team. It's a great story. Thanks Linda.

In other news CPSR has lodged a DA to replace Guthrie's poma with a chair. It's a \$3M project with Doppelmayr engaged to supply the new lift.

Our July AGM was attended by 50+ members, a great turnout. For those who couldn't attend a synopsis of my report is provided at the end of this newsletter.

Thanks for your support and encouragement keep well,

Regards

Jon Barber

Club revenue changes rationale document:

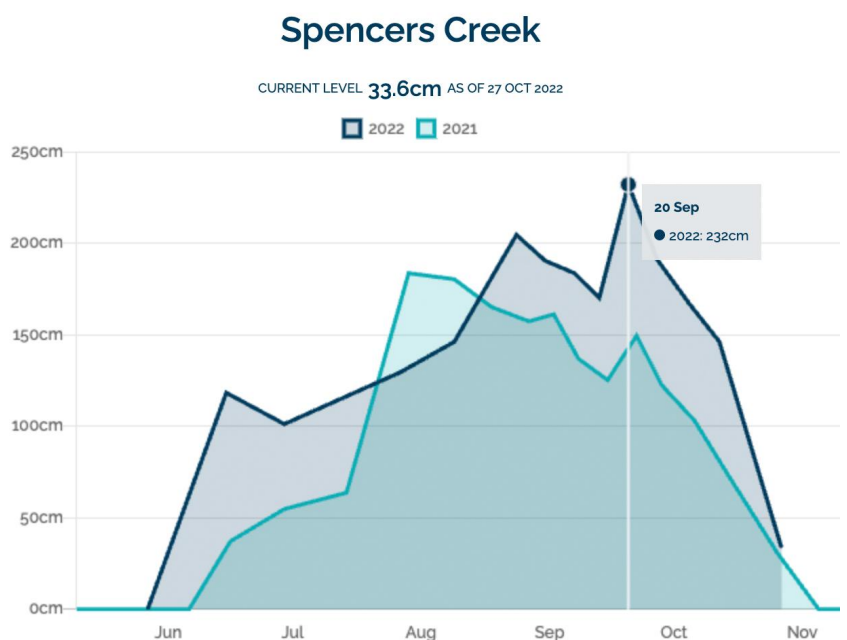
[https://eloueraskiclub.asn.au/newsletters/archive/2023\\_Rates\\_Notice.pdf](https://eloueraskiclub.asn.au/newsletters/archive/2023_Rates_Notice.pdf)



From the rear of the lodge, looking over the games room. Photo credit: Dave Smith

## WEATHER

What a bumper season!!! We had an early season snowfall and consistent coverage with some beautiful bluebird days. The snow depth went up more than a metre in a week through very persistent snow lasting several days with a huge dump mid September seeing 232cms at Spencer's creek, the highest since 2017. If you'd like to see how it compares to other years check out the Snowy Hydro live data generator.



<https://www.snowyhydro.com.au/generation/live-data/snow-depths/>

## PYGMY POSSUMS

Ours is not just a winter season lodge, of course it's also a wonderful summer venue too. Dr Linda Broome and her group of volunteers use the lodge annually as their base for Linda's important research work, aimed at conservation of the beloved Pygmy Possum. She shares with us her time there in her article:

### MOUNTAIN PYGMY-POSSUM MONITORING PROGRAM

A team of enthusiastic mountain pygmy possum trappers has been staying at Pygmy Possum Lodge during the last 2 weeks of November every year since 2009. The annual possum survey has been going for much longer, initiated in 1987 and is now one of the longest running small mammal monitoring programs in Australia. The program is now part of DPE Saving Our Species and the NPWS Kosciuszko National Park Eco Health monitoring initiatives. We used to stay at Southern Alps but in 2008 a kind group of members suggested we should try Pygmy Possum Lodge and we haven't looked back; it is much more suited to our requirements, and it is all about Pygmy Possums after all!

For the nine days of the trapping program, we rely on a team of up to 15 very dedicated volunteers, two of whom have been helping every year for more than 20 years and another 5 for ten or more years. Their experience with the trapping sites and techniques are essential and we can pair them with less experienced helpers. Five sites are trapped for four nights each, with 75-100 live-capture traps set at each site. That makes 1860 trap nights and a whole lot of dirty traps to wash! (Don't worry, we do that in the workshop!). Each pygmy possum trapped is given a health check, assessment of breeding condition, provided with a microchip, weighed, and released. The microchip allows us to track individuals, determine how many possums there are and how long they survive. The longest-lived one so far has been ten years, but most have shorter lives. Over the years we have seen dramatic declines in numbers during periods of drought, e.g during the millennium drought of 1999-2009 and more recently from 2018 to 2021. Bogong moth numbers (which we also monitor) were so low over the last few years that in December 2021 the IUCN declared the bogong moth endangered. The major cause is thought to be drought in their inland breeding grounds, combined with intensified agriculture. This is of great concern for the moths, the possums who rely on them for food and us in respect of climate change. On the upside our cat trapping efforts at Whites River and Blue Cow have increased possum numbers.



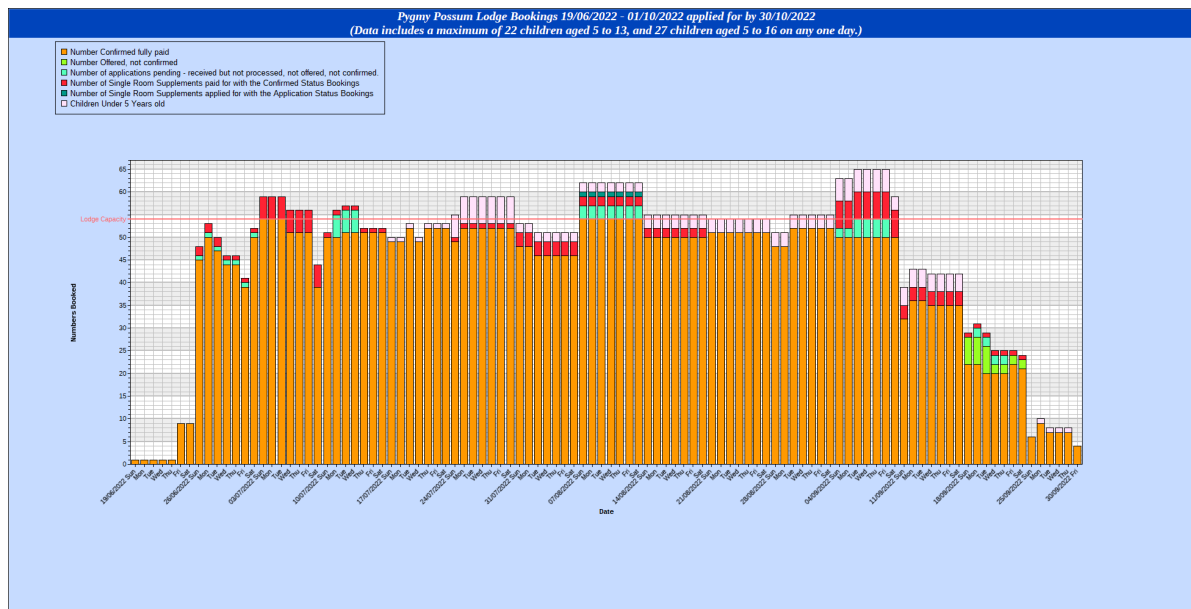
We are hoping the rains have been good to both the possums and the moths and we will find both will have increased when we do our surveys this November. We all look forward to our annual sojourn to Charlotte Pass and are very appreciative of the accommodation at Pygmy Possum Lodge.

Dr Linda Broome,  
Senior Threatened Species Officer, Department of Planning and Environment



## BOOKINGS

Our bookings have been as epic as the snow dumps this season. A mammoth effort by everyone involved, especially our incredible bookings team that work tirelessly to balance all of the reservation requests.



## FOODSTORE

A big thank you once again to Karen Marshall for her exceptional work organising the foodstore stocks for the Winter season. Sourcing all the products in the quantities required can be a challenging task! Thank you also to the number of other incredibly helpful members who have assisted with restocking mid-season.

The updates to the foodstore inventory management and online payment system has been exceptionally well taken up and a great success. We are grateful to Stafford Van Putten for getting the club started with this online inventory system. Our challenge for next year will be to get the stock counts accurate at the start of the season. This proved rather difficult this year as COVID got in the way of Karen being able to count the stock in the lodge in March.

## NEW FACILITIES

The new dishwashers are performing well with a large uptake in use. Thanks to everyone who helped to keep the communal kitchen running by emptying the clean dishes when the cycle was finished, even if they were not their own. With everyone pitching in, we're helping to improve lodge hygiene and reduce cross contamination of common bugs.

## MAINTENANCE

The lodge is now almost forty years old and what yeoman service it has given. As the board has previously outlined there are many areas we are tackling in the near future. The waterproof membrane behind the timber cladding has failed and evidence of mould is appearing in some rooms. The decking outside the west wing kitchen has given up against season after season of snow falling from the roof onto it. Mandatory fire safety alterations are needed, for example, all of our internal door knobs must now be replaced by door handles so that one only needs to push down on it to exit the room rather than fumble with turning a knob.

The balcony railings are being replaced in order to meet code, and we now require a sprinkler system throughout the lodge. The sprinklers are designed to increase the length of time occupants have to exit the building. Our fire exits need to be altered and safe egress routes are also being addressed.

## WORKING BEE DATES 2023

The dates for the Work Parties at the lodge in 2023 have been set to 26th March to 2nd April, and 5th to 12th November. We trust that this will enable interested members to volunteer their skills and energy to help out. The work party dates and other significant dates are detailed in the club calendar at the end of the newsletter.

## BOOKING RATES 2023, AND WINTER PRIORITY BOOKING ROUND

The members' Priority Booking round for Winter 2023 will be open for applications on 1st December 2022. The 2023 winter season booking period starts on Sunday 2nd July, and finishes on Sunday 1st October. The full schedule of booking rates will be available on the website. It is also possible to take a booking to the "Preview" stage to get a quote of the booking fees. The club only sees the Submitted bookings, not the Previewed.

The priority booking round closes on Tuesday 14th February. This is the most important date - only the applications which are submitted and **fully paid for** by this date qualify for consideration in the priority booking round. The order of receipt of the applications prior to this date has no bearing on the outcomes of the priority booking decisions.

## INVOICING AND PAYMENTS PROCESSING

The invoices for the membership annual subscriptions and the capital works contribution levy will be emailed in February 2023, and are due to be paid by 31 March 2023. The invoices will also be available prior to February 2023 via the Membership portal on the club web site.

## SECURITY TIPS - BE WARY OF WEB LINKS IN EMAILS

It is common practice for businesses and organisations such as the Club to send you web links in email messages. It is important that you are aware that:

- Bad actors can try to impersonate email senders, and will try to lure people into clicking on a potentially harmful link. (This is called a phishing attack.) To protect yourself from such,



check the web address to see where a link directs to before you click on it. If it is not familiar or expected, it is wise to not click on it.

- Not every email that purports to come from a person whose name you recognise, is actually from that person. This is easy to detect - if you look at the actual email "from" address and it is not the email address of your known person, don't open the email. If you have opened an email and then think it looks suspicious, check the headers. Be very wary of clicking any links in a message which is unexpected and out of character.

## NEW DOUBLE CHAIRLIFT IN THE VALLEY

Announced in 2020, the chairlift is to replace the existing Guthrie High Speed Poma, increasing lifting capacity in this area of the resort by more than 100%. The DA is now on exhibition for comment. Although no date has been set we hope the DA will go through early in the new year.

Comments are open until the 10th of November.

- <https://pp.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/daex/exhibition/da-2212013-guthries-chairlift-charlotte-pass-replacement-guthries-high-speed-poma>

## CASTAWAYS AT SHOAL BAY, PORT STEPHENS

With summer coming, why not book a holiday at our beautiful Shoal Bay Apartment? Close to the beach and special provisions apply for members, including a 20% discount for periods other than the Christmas holiday and Easter Holiday peaks, plus no requirement to pay the booking fee or security deposit.

<https://www.portstephensaccommodation.com/stay/castaways-unit-4-17-shoal-bay-road>

## SURPLUS TRUNK SALES

We have a number of surplus lockable storage trunks available for sale at Pygmy Possum Lodge. The sizes vary a little but are roughly: (L,D,H) 820 x 450 x 240mm. The cost is \$30. If you are going up to the lodge and would like to take one home, contact [storage@elouersaskiclub.asn.au](mailto:storage@elouersaskiclub.asn.au).

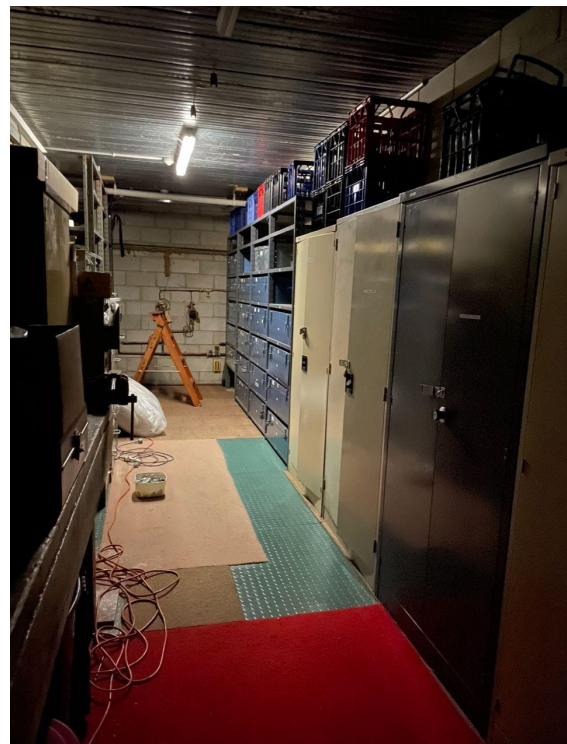


## NOVEMBER WORKING BEE REPORT

The mini November working bee has focussed on the ground floor this year with the aim of creating space and preparing for the main March working bee.

### Main achievements

- Necessary maintenance for the summer season.
- Organisation and rationalisation of tools and hardware.
- Most surplus member storage trunks removed from the workshop.
- Equipment cabinets moved from the east and west foyers into the workshop.
- A Lodge Captains Cabinet is now located opposite the driers in the laundry. It brings together things that are likely to be needed by Lodge Captains, e.g. light bulbs, spare kettles, a small piece of wire and Gaffer tape. This cabinet is accessible by Lodge Captains using the key located in the Master Lock box in the workshop.
- A new fridge has been purchased to replace the defunct unit in the west wing.
- A broad-toothed rat hole has been found.
- Many rat-nibbled polystyrene containers were sent to the skip.
- Filters on the air purifiers were changed.
- Three new microwaves installed in the east wing.





## CLUB CALENDAR

Priority Bookings Open (for the Winter Season priority period)	01/12/2022
Priority Bookings Close (applications and payments must be received)	14/02/2023
General Bookings Open (for the winter season priority period)	14/03/2023 or as soon as the priority bookings are determined.
Pre Season Work Party	26/03/2023 - 02/04/2023
Members Annual Subscription and Building Levy Fee Due Date	31/03/2023
Storage Hire Fees Due Date	31/03/2023
Call for Nominations for Board Positions, Notice of AGM	May 2023
Annual General Meeting	July 2023
Start of the Winter Season for Priority Bookings	02/07/2023
End of the Winter Season for Priority Bookings	01/10/2023
Post Season Work Party	05/11/2023 - 12/11/2023

Easter Sunday **9-April 2023**

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Have a short (150w or less) story about the Lodge you'd like to share? An iconic picture? We want you! Send us your submission to [pygmypossum@eloueraskiclub.asn.au](mailto:pygmypossum@eloueraskiclub.asn.au) and we will aim to get it into the next issue.

*You don't need to go to the US to relax in an Adirondack chair - just come to the lodge for this beauty made by one of our 'crafty' members!*



## FINAL NOTE

A big thank you to our outgoing editor Robin Griffiths for her contribution as the newsletter editor in recent years.

