The Bulletin

RUAPEHU SKI CLUB

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March 2020



Charlotte and Freddie Rea fly the flag at RSC Hut. Photo: Tim Sharp.



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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Welcome back from the festive season. I hope everyone had an enjoyable recess from work with their loved ones. Like me, I'm sure everyone is back under the usual routines of work and family life.

I was fortunate to spend a few weeks in British Columbia enjoying some great skiing. One of the great aspects membership in our Ski Club is the opportunity to travel overseas with others from RSC

For many years I've gone to Davos to visit our past resident ski instructors. I have always had a great time. The problem is that because our contacts are instructors, they are working and could not always ski with me.

I know of a number of RSC families that have recently been in Japan skiing together and have had a marvellous time. As overseas travel becomes more available to us, I think this is where Club life can extend beyond our beloved Ruapehu.

Since the last Bulletin, we have lost a number of highly respected and beloved members. Among those are Roger Manthel and Joe Gabriel. Both are special to me as they were good friends of my father.

Roger has been an enthusiastic and dedicated member of RSC for many decades and was crucial to the development of RAL as a commercial entity. He was a director of RAL for many years and served as chairman.

Joe is a past RSC president, Lodge Officer, Heritage Trust guardian and Glacier Hut curator. He has served on the RSC Executive in these roles and others for as long I can remember. I have always viewed Joe as a guiding steady hand and have always had immense respect for him.

Since Sheryl's departure, and having to

fulfil so many of the duties she performed ourselves, we can certainly confirm the value she added to our endeavours. Her modesty prevented us from understanding the true extent of the void she has left.

I offer a debt of gratitude to the Committee members and those outside Committee who have stepped up to ensure that the Club continues to operate on a "business as usual" basis as we move on.

Those people include Vice Presidents Fiona Willison and Marion Quinn, Treasurer Heather Chao, Club Captain Catherine Gafa and Matt Lamb.

It is obvious that we must recruit another Administration Officer, and before the onslaught of subscription receipts and accommodation bookings. To that end, we are fortunate to have Fiona driving the recruitment process.

Publication of the position has had an overwhelming response and the prospective candidates are under assessment already. The next steps will include appointment and induction into, I'm sure you all agree, is a complex and unique role.

Another pressing but very satisfying task for us is the fulfilment of our maintenance and work party programme. Work parties are a vital part of any ski club but especially RSC, by virtue of our size.

Without work parties, it would be necessary to engage contractors for all maintenance operations. That would require significant increases in our membership fees. However, work parties also promote the spirit and soul of the Club.

They are an immense source of comradery, satisfaction and enjoyment. I invite you all to check out the dates on our web site and to sign up.

Richard Nelson, President



Whakapapa skifield in 2019. We had a good snow year. Photo: Peter Otway.

THROUGH THE LODGE WINDOW

RSC ski season bookings open on May 1st, so be sure to get your bookings into the Office by then.

Booking details are printed on Page 5 of this Bulletin.

The ski season in Happy Valley is scheduled to open on May 30th.

Other parts of Whakapapa will open in the following weeks, followed by Turoa on June 27th.

The Bulletin has been told that the reference in Kath Harrison's obit to **hot lava** flowing down Happy Valley in full view of folk in the Boomerang Lodge was not quite right.

Our informant says there hasn't been any lava down there for 5000-10000 years, a little while before skiing on the mountain.

Ruapehu Alpine Lifts may have to strengthen any towers on the **Sky Waka** gondola which are found to be in a lahar path.

RAL chief executive Jono Dean said four of the 14 towers are potentially in the path of a lahar (volcanic mudslide).

Massey University is doing new modelling of the lahar path and advice from a structural engineer will help determine whether any strengthening work is needed, Dean said.

A daily cap on the number of people who can walk the **Tongariro Alpine Crossing** could be considered in the wake of the Whakaari/White Island disaster.

The December eruption has prompted a review of hazards at all geothermal and volcanic areas on Department of Conservation land.

Since the Crossing was last closed by volcanic activity in 2012, patronage has soared and more than 140,000 people completed the walk last year.

DOC spokesman Steve Taylor said a daily cap is something DOC will consider in future to ease congestion and reduce environmental damage.

It would also have the benefit of reducing the numbers exposed to volcanic risk.

THE RUAPEHU SKI CLUB

(inc) Founded 1913

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President: Richard Nelson Vice-Presidents: Carl Burling, Marion Quinn, Phill Thomass, Donald Webster, Fiona Willison Secretary: Louise Blair Treasurer: Heather Chao

Immediate Past President: Adrian

Adriaansen

Captain: Catherine Gafa Vice-Captain: Paula Cooper Committee: Arran Birchenough, Jeff Davies, Damon Forsyth, Sam Hood, Richard Horton, Simon Hunt, Nils Johannessen, Nina Thomas, William

Geddes

Patron: Peter Brady
Patroness: Barbara Scelly
Auditors: Hart and Co.
Admin Officer: To be advised
Lodge Officer: Carl Burling
Hut Officer: Simon Hunt
Chalet Officer: Phill Thomass
Turoa Officer: Donald Webster
Heritage Fund Guardians: Richard
Nelson, Adrian Adriaansen, Robin

Dallas, Bernard Smith

Fund Treasurer: Mike Wardle Glacier Hut Custodian: Joe Gabriel Ruapehu District mayor Don Cameron has been appointed as the new chair of the Walking Access Commission Ara Hīkoi Aotearoa.

The appointment is for a three-year term and he takes over from longstanding Commission chair John Forbes.

Don Cameron is an experienced farmer and mountain biker and has been mayor of Ruapehu District since 2007.

Ryan Carr in a time of 1h 43m 24s won the **annual Goat run** at Turoa in a time of 1 hour 43 minutes and 24 seconds Kaya Corporaal (1:45:54) was second and Richard Harris (1:47:34) was third

The women's division saw a photo finish for first in what looked like a dead heat. Checks showed that **Jennifer O'Callaghan** was the winner in 2:09:35, a fraction ahead of Corrinne O'Donnell (2:09:39).

For just the second time in 16 years, the course for the Goat trail run was changed to avoid dangerous weather.

Instead of running from Whakapapa to Turoa, via the Round the Mountain Track, the course was only at Ohakune and Turoa.

A Belgian tourist's locator beacon led rescuers to him in a rocky valley in Tongariro National Park.

The 18-year-old set out at 6.30am to hike the 43km Tongariro Northern Circuit.

He activated his beacon in the early afternoon after he missed a turn and got lost in the rocky Oturere Valley.

The deadline for the June Bulletin will be **Friday May 15th.**

All items should be with the Editor by then.

THE BULLETIN

Founded in 1936 by Jock and Fitzie Graham. **Editor:** Alan Graham, 63 Messines Rd, Karori, Wellington 6012.

Telephone: 04-476 4598.

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PO Box 8064, Symonds St.

RSC BUNK BOOKINGS

Winter Bookings 2020.

Bookings for the 2020 ski season will open on May 1st. Any bookings before then will not be confirmed or processed until later in the month. As in past years all bookings should be confirmed by the last week in May.

Your bookings will be confirmed as soon as possible after receiving your request, as long as subscriptions for all those on the booking have been paid and there are sufficient funds in your deposit account to cover the requested accommodation.

The actual bunk authority with bunk numbers will not be sent until 48 hours prior to the first night booked.

This has shown that we can better manage the allocation of bunks, after the cancellations have been processed.

Please ensure you have your bunk authority with you, even if on your mobile device.

School holiday bookings.

Due to the usual high demands for school holiday bookings, preference will be given to members who have completed an extra work party this season.

If the number who have done an extra work party and therefore qualify for a priority exceeds the accommodation available, a ballot may be held. If there are any remaining bunks these may also be balloted

Any bunks available after June 10th may be booked for shorter stays.

Preference is given during school holiday weeks for member families with school aged children.

Bookings may not be for more than seven nights at the upper level and any extra nights maybe reallocated to the Chalet.

Bookings with guests.

Our booking rules state that nonmembers guests are not able to have their accommodation confirmed until two weeks prior to staying. This has meant in some cases that members have not wanted to make bookings with such short lead times.

Where possible these bookings can be confirmed at the Chalet and then once the two week period comes up and there is space at the upper mountain we will endeavour to move the booking to the Hut or Lodge.

Cancellation Policy.

All bookings are in effect from noon on the day of the first night of residence until noon of the day following the last night of residence.

Cancellations (online or by email to the Office) must be made 48 hours prior to the first booking date. (eg Friday night cancelled by midday Wednesday prior).

A cancellation fee will apply to all cancellations regardless of notice unless done through the website. The cancellation fee is \$5.00, and all alterations to bookings will incur this administration fee per person affected, irrespective of the date of alteration. School holiday cancellations have a two week cancellation time-as per the booking rules.

Subscriptions.

These will again be emailed or posted at the end of March for payment in April. Please remember to contact us if you have changed your email or postal contact.

AGM NOTICE

Nominations for the RSC Committee will close on April 10th ahead of our AGM on June 10th.

The venue will once again be the Royal NZ Yacht Squadron at Westhaven.

Nomination and proxy forms are available to download from Club documents on the website.

Any Notices of Motion must be with the Secretary (email to the Administration Officer) by April 24th.

COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS

It is that time of the year again when we call for nominations for the Committee. We have had in the past couple of years only met our minimum required numbers for the Committee and we always welcome new faces.

To be eligible to stand as a Committee member, to nominate or second someone for the Committee you must be a senior member of the Club, must be financial and must be eligible as per section 15 of the Constitution (available on the website for more details, Nomination and Election).

Nomination forms can be obtained from the website – look under Club documents.

Nominations close on April 10th. Please forward the completed nomination form to the Administration Officer (admin@rsc.org.nz) by this date.

Nominations can be emailed in as a PDF but **must be signed by the proposer, seconder and candidate** who must also give a short summary of why they want to be on the Committee.

Being a Committee member requires some commitment from the person nominated. Committee meetings are held in our office on the second Tuesday of every month except for January. The May and November meetings are held at the mountain and will be in the weekend closest to the second Tuesday of the month.

The type of work on the Committee is wide ranging so if you have building skills, financial abilities, house-keeping skills, an interest in ski activities, legal expertise, marketing or good old plain common sense, then please look to stand.

In order to facilitate our communications with you, or you with us, please make sure that your current email address is the one we have. A quick email to the Admin Officer if you have made changes in the last couple of years would be appreciated.

HOUSE COMMITTEE

This is the time of year for HC to work on stores lists and any housekeeping matters that may have arisen over the previous season.

If any members have noticed something in this area that requires attention eg vacuum cleaners not working, curtains with broken hooks, or a food item that you consider should be a staple – please let the Administration Officer know and it will be passed on.

We know about the individually wrapped tea bags! Apologies to those who pulled early morning tea duty!

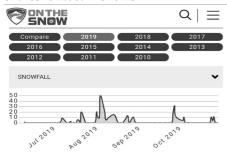
Work parties are how we prepare our buildings for the season. Whether it is a grand construction or counting the cutlery, we need you.

This is a great way to meet other members and appreciate the mountain in its other persona.

Please sign up and be part of keeping our Club running. Work party dates elsewhere in this Bulletin

SKIING INSURANCE

Is your Ski Club an insurance company? Last year we had a shocking start to the season, as you may remember. Snow levels were dismal as we inched closer to the school holidays, as the graph from onthesnow.co.nz shows



As a new Committee member, I was surprised that leading into the July school holidays there were many requests for special consideration to cancellations of the school holiday bookings.

And a motion was approved by the Committee to waive the usual school holiday booking rules and use the weekend rules, in light of the exceptional circumstances.

This meant that instead of a 2-week cancellation period it was reduced to a 48-hour cancellation period. This sounds like just the kind of action a club would do to support the membership, doesn't it?

There were 21 bookings cancelled for 75 different people. Totalling \$17,741 worth of bunk nights.

This was not just a loss of revenue, but refunds of paid for bookings. That \$17,000 loss of income meant that the Club had \$17,000 less to spend on essential building maintenance and improvements to our four buildings. Which are things we can all agree are desperately needed."

What this means is that last year, RSC acted as a travel insurer for those members. If the snow's bad in Japan or Canada and you decide not to go, you don't get a refund on your prebooked accommodation.

If it's rainy in Fiji, you can't just cancel and expect a refund or your booking to be transferred to dates that are more favourable. If you do want this flexibility, you take out travel insurance, or carry the risk yourself.

Travel insurance for a domestic ski holiday week costs about \$90 for a family. Sure, there are conditions under which you can make a claim, and these do include a lack of snow. I did a search and "pretend applied" for cover with One Cover, Covermore and the AA.

I appreciate that we all want to maximise ski days when we've taken time off work. We've all been frustrated with Ruapehu's vagaries.

However RSC is more than just a commercial skiing trip, it's our winter community, where we are nurturing our friendships, creating memories and hopefully skiing those spectacular Ruapehu bluebird days.

I now believe that members asking the Committee to make decisions such as this, compromise the financial stability of our Club and put individual needs ahead of the RSC community.

I'd like to hear your opinion.

Thank you Louise Blair

BOUND BULLETINS

The Graham family has donated to RSC a 24th volume of bound Bulletins, this time covering the years 2017 to 2019.

Copies dating back to 1936 have been donated to the Office and the Lodge, while books covering recent years are also in the Hut.

These make good reading in the Lodge or Hut on a clagged-in no-ski day. But please do take care of these books.

SKI TRAIL APPROVED

A 60-kilometre ski trail route across the Harris Mountains in Otago has been approved and should be ready by winter. Queenstown Lakes District Council has granted resource consent for six huts to be built between Coronet Peak and Treble Cone through the Mahu Whenua conservation area.

Arrowtown adventurer Erik Bradshaw has formed the Mountain Turk Club that will own and manage the huts.

The ski trail is based on European models such as the Haute Route that links Chamonix and Zermatt.

It will take between three and four hours to ski between huts, including two 700 metre climbs. The trail will also be used in summer by hikers.

OTAGO BUYOUT APPROVED

Cardrona Alpine Resort has been granted Commerce Commission approval to buy the **Treble Cone ski area**. Both skifields are operated out of Wanaka in Central Otago.

The sale will add to the assets of Cardrona, which already owns New Zealand's largest skiable area after a deal to combine with the neighbouring private Soho Basin ski area.

Commission chairwoman Anna Rawlings said it was satisfied the acquisition was unlikely to substantially lessen competition in any relevant market.

ROGER MANTHEL

Roger Manthel, who has died Wellington aged 87, was an RSC member and RSC Committee man, and served 17 years as chairman of RAL.

Roger was prominent in business in

Wellington and his family car dealer Manthel Motors occupied a prime site in the capital's CBD.

In RSC Roger and his brother Neil were regular skiers and Roger was on the Club's Committee during 1969-73.

He was director of RAL for 25 years 1973-1998 and was its chairman in 1981-1998. Following his retirement from that post he was a Trustee on the RAL Trust. When he became chairman, RAL had three single chairlifts and five surface lifts. By the time he reached the compulsory retirement age it had grown enormously.

Highlights were the acquisition of Happy Valley, the takeover of the National Downhill T-bar and the merger with the Top O' The Bruce.

This saw RAL move from just a chairlift operation to a complete skifield including cafeterias, gear hire and snow school. Roger was a member of the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club for 75 years and was Commodore from 1977-1980, following his father Noel who was

We extend our condolences to his family.

SCHOOL SKI CHAMPS

Commodore from 1945-1947.

In the December Bulletin we reported that due to bad weather only the slopestyle event was held at the North Island Secondary School Ski Champs.

In fact after the first two days were cancelled, two events were held on the Wednesday, namely a giant slalom at Whakapapa and the slopestyle at Turoa. **GS results:** King's College A 80 points, Diocesan School for Girls 77, King's College B 74 points, St Kentigern 74 points, St Cuthbert's 72, St Mary's Auckland 71 points.

JOE GABRIEL

Joseph Gabriel who has died at Auckland, was the President of RSC from 2002 to 2005. He had a long term as Lodge Officer and was elected as a Life member of RSC in 2008

Joe joined the Club Committee in 1987-1995, and was a Vice-President in 1995-2002. After his term as President he was the Immediate Past President in 2005-2008, for a total term of 21 years on the Executive. After that he continued to assist the Club as a guardian of the Heritage Fund and as the custodian and caretaker of our museum Glacier Hut

This wee hut at the back of the Lodge was built by Club members in 1923 and at that time was the only building on the mountain above Chateau level. It is now a Category 1 (highest category) Historic Place.

Joe's speciality on the Committee was maintenance and he was Lodge Officer from 1992 until he succeeded Bill Speight as President in 2005.

That is 13 years in charge of our flagship building, a wonderful contribution to the Club. We have always been grateful to folks like Joe who can fix things.

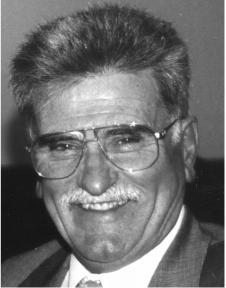
This time included the big eruptions of 1995 and 1996 which dumped large amounts of nasty ash on the Lodge gutters and snuck fine ash inside through windows. The Bulletin printed a photo of Joe and Bill Speight painstakingly digging solidly frozen ash out of the Lodge gutters.

He also made the front pages of several newspapers when digging out the front door after a blizzard.

A highlight of Joe's term as President was two functions in 2003 to celebrate 50 years since RSC Lodge was built.

One was a lunch held at the RNZYS clubrooms in Auckland and the second was a dinner at the Lodge during Winter Party. Large numbers of Lodge builders attended the first function and a dozen were at the





Lodge party where everyone dressed in gold and black.

Joe played the guitar and was regularly called upon to accompany singalong sessions at the Lodge.

We extend the Club's condolences to Allanah and all members of Joe's family.

INSTRUCTOR FOR 2020

Manuel Fischer from Seon in Switzerland will be our resident ski instructor for 2020.

Manuel was employed at the Swiss Snowsport School in Davos as a certified kids ski instructor during the winter season 2015-2016.

In January 2016 he started his ski instructor education by completing the level 1 course

He continued his education to become a fully certified ski instructor by March 2018 and achieved by October 2019 the Snow Sports Instructor with Federal Certificate of Higher Vocational Education and Training.

Whilst working at our school Manuel Fischer taught children, teenagers and adults both in group lessons and also as private guests.

He had the opportunity to use his very good technical and practical knowledge and he put this to good use in his instruction and proved to be a very patient instructor.

Manuel is a willing and flexible instructor with great initiative. We were always very satisfied with his work, which was carried out with great competence and understanding.

Thanks to his flexibility he is of great use to us with our international clients and was always a great asset to the school.

He was always friendly and polite with guests, colleagues and his employers.



We can recommend Manuel Fischer best to every prospective employer. We wish him all the best for the future and much success.

We would be very happy if he were to join our team again next winter.

Yours sincerely,

Schweizer Schneesportschule Davos

Daniel Ammann

RSC has hosted Swiss instructors, as well as one Frenchman and one Swede, most years since 1960.

The instructors were originally chosen by Walter Haensli, then by Peter Prader and now by Hanspeter Angerer of Davos, who himself was the instructor in 1972.

The instructors work for the RAL snow school which has the sole rights for Whakapapa, but they are always allocated an RSC class where possible.

They mostly visit us just for the one season though some have come back for a second year.

We welcome Manuel as the latest in the long line of Swiss visitors to RSC.

MANUEL FISCHER

Name Manuel Fischer

Address Unterdorfstrasse 40 CH-5703 Seon

Phone +41 79 548 24 46 E-Mail manuel-fischer@gmx.ch Date of Birth February 17th 1993

Nationality **Swiss**

EDUCATION

09/2016 - 09/2019BSc Engineering and Management

University of Applied Sciences

Northwestern Switzerland 01/2015 - 01/2016Technical professional maturity

certificate Minerva Aarau

08/2008 - 08/2012Apprenticeship as a polymechanic Vocational college Lenzburg

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

12/2015 - nowSki instructor Swiss Snow Sports School

Davos

05/2015 - 11/2015Polymechanic Plansee Powertech AG, Seon

Polymechanic F. Borner AG, Reiden 11/2014 - 04/2015

08/2012 - 04/2014Polymechanic Plansee Powertech AG, Seon

LANGUAGES

German Native English Advanced French Intermediate

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

04/2015 - nowHead Coach of the Ski Team Aarau

05/2012 - 04/2014Professional ski racer at the

Zentralschweizer Schneesportverband 11/2012

3rd place at the Swiss Championship for

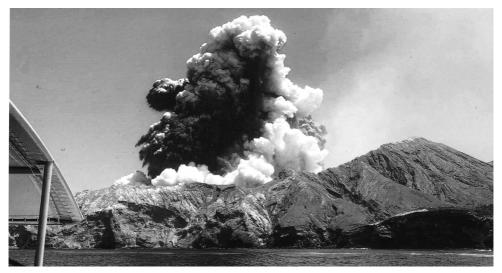
polymechanics

INTERESTS

Sports Skiing and cycling

Travelling Europe. Asia and elsewhere to discover new

cultures



The fatal eruption of Whakaari/White Island on December 9th.

FATAL ERUPTION

There were 21 people killed, most of them tourists, when the Whakaari/White Island volcano suddenly erupted on December 9th.

Helicopters and boats were used to evacuate 39 people from the island, but many were severely burned and 13 died in hospital.

Six bodies were recovered from the island and two other people are missing, probably drowned at sea.

Some patients had burns to 90 percent of their bodies, and 1.2 million square centimetres of skin was rushed from the US for victims.

The eruption occurred at 2.11pm when a group of tourists from the cruise liner Ovation of the Seas, berthed at Tauranga, was visiting the island.

The 47 people on the volcano were 43 tourists, mainly Australians, and four Whakatane based tour guides.

The main eruption was followed that day by three more. The ash plume rose to 3500

metres above the volcano.

Whakaari/White Island is 48km off the Bay of Plenty coast. Whakatane and Opotiki are the nearest towns on the mainland.

No one lives on the island which is privately owned by an Auckland family. The last previous fatalities were in 1914 when 10 people mining sulphur died in a landslide. Only their cat survived.

More than 20,000 people, 80 percent of them international visitors, have recently visited the volcano each year with licensed tour operators.

White Island is New Zealand's most active cone volcano and has been built up by continuous activity over the past 150,000 years.

It has been releasing volcanic gas at least since it was sighted and named by James Cook in 1769

The island is roughly circular, about 2km in diameter, and rises to a height of 320m. The exposed island is a peak of a much larger submarine volcano rising 1600m above the sea floor.

VOLCANO SAFETY

Fierce debate followed the fatal eruption on Whakaari/White Island as to whether it was safe for tourists to visit after the volcano alert level was raised from one to two.

People interviewed after the eruption, both scientific experts and the man in the street, were equally divided as to whether tourism should have been stopped when the alert reached level two.

GEONET uses a scale of 0 (no volcanic unrest) up to 5 (massive eruption) to rank a volcano.

Whakaari/White Island was raised to level 2 (moderate to heightened volcanic unrest) three weeks before the eruption.

The debate centred on the notion that all adventure tourism is inherently risky and that is part of the attraction. So were the visitors of White Island just incredibly unlucky or were tour operators negligent?

White Island Tours, the official tour operator for the island and owned by local iwi Ngāti Awa, warned its passengers: "There is always a risk of eruptive activity regardless of the alert level."

However, WorkSafe says getting tourists to sign waivers does not absolve employers from their obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

Employers have to ensure, so far as it is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of their workers and other people who could be put at risk.

White Island Tours was registered with WorkSafe and had previously won safety awards.

Which brings us to Ruapehu. One

senior politician noted that we happily ski on Ruapehu volcano when it is at level two. (It is currently at level one).

By and large RSC members are quite safe within our buildings. RSC Lodge and Hut are 4km from the crater and Ruapehu is likely to give notice before sending rocks (other than ash) further than 2km

Lahars (volcanic mudflows) can pass our buildings but they follow valleys whereas the Lodge and Hut are built on a ridge.

However, when out skiing or snowboarding at Whakapapa or Turoa, a person may well be less than 2km from the crater, within the main danger zone, and our members often climb up to have a look at Crater Lake.

The best we can advise is: Take heed of any GEONET warnings and if the alarm goes off while out on the slopes, head for higher ground and stay out of valleys like the Waterfall.

Members should obey any instructions from DOC, RAL or the Police.

The same applies to any instructions given by Police or Park Rangers on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing.

Ruapehu Mayor Don Cameron said he is confident in the safety measures operating around the volcanic areas.

"I'm confident we do have the right measures in place. There is a lot of monitoring that goes on there at the moment. GNS have instruments measuring the heat of the lake at Ruapehu, for example.

"Any heightened activity at Ruapehu or Tongariro, the Department of Conservation will put a stop to anyone coming through."

RAL REVIEWS 2019

By RAL Chairman Murray Gribben.

It's no secret that Winter 2019 was a season filled with challenges, changes and new beginnings on Mt Ruapehu.

Mother Nature wasn't overly obliging in delivering consistent and good weather this season, instead turning on storms, wind and icy conditions, but many guests were able to still get out onto the slopes and enjoy some great skiing and riding.

The highlight of the season was the opening of the new state-of-the-art Sky Waka gondola at Whakapapa, which welcomed 31,884 people on board through winter.

During the ski season mountain guests also sipped on 8136 hot chocolates at Knoll Ridge Café, devoured 6579 of the Snowflake Café's gourmet hamburgers and quenched their thirst with 15,693 Corona beers.

Other interesting mountain facts which reflect the challenging weather conditions encountered this season are:

The mountain's skifields required 6140 hours of paid de-icing this season (in comparison to 4962 paid de-icing hours in the 2018 season).

Whakapapa:

 24 days in August the winds were over 100km/h.

Turoa:

- 18 days were clear and fine.
- 13.2m precipitation rain, ice and snow.
- Highest wind speed was 270km/r.
- 74 blue dye days (Average 7-9L per year, this year 33L used. This environmentally friendly dye is laid to guide people down the mountain when the visibility is poor).
- Closed for 30 days due to poor weather.

SKIFIELD SAFETY

RAL Chairman Murray Gribben advises:

The Eruption Detection System (EDS) is operated by DOC and provides an alarm system to both Whakapapa and Turoa including audible alarms in high risk zones, radio tones direct to staff two-way radios and text messages to ski area management.

At Ruapehu, the primary risks from an eruptive event come from lahar (volcanic mudflow). These lahar travel in valley floors and can be avoided by people if they move to high ground.

At level 2, RAL has protocols in place which effectively mitigate any increased risks. This can include increased safety services (ski patrol) supervision, reduced operations on some lifts and or weather conditions or even full closure of certain lifts.

In all cases, operational decisions are made in conjunction and consultation with DOC and GNS personnel. Beyond the ski area boundary, DOC may impose exclusion zones to public.

Although both volcanic in nature, Ruapehu is very different from Whakaari in eruptive style and it is important for people to understand this means that the required risk management techniques cannot be compared easily.

It is a very timely reminder of how important it is we never take these risks for granted and again, our thoughts are with the /Whakaari/White Island whanau.

For this system to work well on the day, it needs:

- 1. You need to respond when you hear the alarm by moving to high ground. This means moving out of the valleys and onto the ridges as quickly as you can.
- Remain there until ski patrol or other RAL staff member confirm it is safe to move.
- 3. If you hear these warnings, and you are in a building, take shelter and stay there until advised otherwise

MOUNTAIN HOLIDAYS

Even by Ruapehu standards, last ski season was a shocker. Not enough snow, then too much snow, for too long, and then it blew and iced and rained and blew and iced and rained again. I bought new skis. They still have most of the factory wax on them.

We had booked our family of five into Turoa for the second week of the first school holidays of the season.

We looked at the forecasts and the snow depth as we got closer and closer to the booking date, and it was looking grim, really grim, and then we looked the weather again later, and it was going to be 'gales' all that week. And we all know what that means... SKIFIELD CLOSED.

We left it as late as we could – should we cancel or not? We'd be dropping a fair bit of coin on the five of us staying up there for six nights, including the time off work. What if we didn't get to ski? But on the other hand, the Club needs the money, and we wanted to be good clubbies, right?

We thought, oh what the hell, let's go and enjoy it anyway, perhaps not as a ski holiday, but as a MOUNTAIN HOLIDAY. So we drove the journey north from our nation's mighty capital. And it was great.

Yes there were gales and no snow and too much rain and I don't think I got a single run in all the time we were there.

But we had a wonderful time in Ohakune. Knocking about the town, walks along the river, raiding the Choc Éclair shop for choc eclairs and sausage rolls, cruising the farmer's market for rewena bread, hot pool soaking in Tokaanu, margarita lunches at the

Powderkeg, afternoon naps, and the kids got lots of quality time with their devices.

A highlight was the good yarns and laughs we had with Mike the custodian at Turoa. Mike is such a nice guy. Kind and thoughtful, and quick with a story and a grin. He runs a really good ship at RSC Turoa.

I thoroughly recommend you good Auckland peeps drive past a perfectly good Ski Cub and carry on around the corner and spend some time in Ohakune. Even when the weather warns you it mightn't mean skiing.

Membership of our Club is not just about the slope styles, it's the mornings and nights hanging out with your other clubmates, making new friends and deepening friendships with those you know already. And getting the vacuum cleaner out

So the next time the weather looks dodgy, and you are tempted to cancel your trip, stop a second and think about the great times to be had on your upcoming MOUNTAIN GETAWAY and get Mike on the blower to tell him to leave some dinner out for you cos you're coming down!

Yeah mate, he'll say.

Drew Blair

TIMELY DONATION

When philanthropist and national skiing champion Roy McKenzie was badly injured in a fall onto rocks at Whakapapa in 1953, he was taken to hospital in an ambulance he had donated to the Ski Patrol just three weeks earlier.

The location of Roy's accident on the in-run to the High Traverse is known on maps to this day as McKenzie's Mistake.





RAL wound up the 2019 ski season with a pond skim outside RSC Lodge. Photos: RAL.

RSC CALENDAR OF EVENTS				
March 202	0 14-15	Working parties		
Apr 2020	11-12	Working parties (Easter) Truck weekend		
May 2020	9-10 30 27	RSC ski season bookings open Working parties Happy Valley opens Whakapapa upper mountain opens		
June 2020	10 13 27 27-28	RSC AGM at RNZYS Westhaven, Auckland Whakapapa lower mountain opens Turoa opens Working parties		
July 2020	4-19 18 25	School holidays Academy 1 Academy 2		
Aug 2020	1 1 8 8 15 15 16-21 22 22 24 29 29	Christiania Derby Academy 1 Academy 2 Waimarino Trophy Haensli Cup Academy 1 Club Week (aka Winter Party) Academy 2 Junior interfield ski race NIPS Week One Academy 1 Rangatira Alpine NIPS Week Two		
Sept 2020	5 5 12 12 19 19 26 26-Oct 11	Tongariro Juniors Academy 2 Ngauruhoe Trophy Academy 1 Academy 2 Masters champs (contingency Sept 20) RSC Club champs School holidays		
Oct 2020	18 26	Turoa closes Whakapapa closes		

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome these new members: Maddison Ditchburn (Auckland). Arvid Ditchburn (Auckland). Denise Ditchburn (Auckland). We are pleased to advise that our recently retired Admin Officer Sheryl Brownlee has been appointed as an Honorary member of RSC.





Upper: Members at RSC Club champs in 2019. Photo: Jane Pilkington. **Lower:** On the podium at the North Island Masters ski champs. Karen Williams (left) and Sarah Hamilton (champion).

FOURTH FOR HACKETT

Queenstown freeskier Margaux Hackett achieved her career best result when finishing fourth in the World Cup big air completion in Beijing.

'I'm super happy with my fourth place," the 20 year-old Hackett said.

Johanne Killi (Norway) was first and Giulia Tanno (Switzerland) was second.

YOUTH MEDALS

New Zealanders scored two medals in the 3x3 mixed nation ice hockey event at the Winter Youth Olympic Games in which skaters were placed at random in three-member teams.

Katya Blong (Auckland) aged 14 won a gold medal while Axel Ruski-Jones (Queenstown) aged 14 won a bronze medal after her team scored the winner with three seconds left on the clock.

The unique format means teammates have never played with each other before and often don't even speak the same language.

Luca Harrington (NZ) won a bronze medal in the freeski halfpipe.

Short-track speed skater Ethan De Rose (NZ) won a bronze medal in a mixed nation relay.

BIATHLON SUCCESS

New Zealand team flagbearer Campbell Wright scored a fourth placing and a sixth in his two biathlon events at the Winter Youth Olympic Games in Lausanne (Switzerland) in January.

The Wanaka based athlete, aged 17, competed in a field of 99 skiers in both events.

Winter biathlon is a mixed of cross-country skiing and rifle shooting.

First he came sixth in the 12.5k event. Wright said he skied well but dropped back on the shooting segment.

Then he improved to fourth in the 7.5k sprint discipline after missing only one target. Wright recorded a time of 19:45.01s, just 21.3s behind race winner Zawpl Marcin (Poland).

NO X-GAMES MEDALS

NZ skier Nico Porteous and snowboarder Zoi Sadowski-Synnott were outside the medals at the 2020 Winter X-Games in Aspen (Colorado).

Porteous finished fourth in the men's ski superpipe. He missed out on his first two runs and while he recovered strongly in his next run, he could not quite force his way into the medal spots.

Alex Ferreira (US) won the gold medal while Aaron Blunck (US) was second and Brendan MacKay (Canada) came third.

Sadkowski-Synnot was fifth in the women's snowboard slopestyle.

Using a new jam format, in which riders are ranked on overall impression rather than scored for individual runs, the eight finalists were able to complete four runs within the 35-minute competition window.

Zoi crashed on her second run and dropped to eighth, but did better on her last two runs.

Jamie Anderson (US) won the event for her 17th X-Games medal. Laurie Blouin (Canada) was second and Kokomo Murase (Japan) was third.

** Australian snowboarder Scotty James won his third X-Games gold medal in four years in the snowboard halfpipe.

** Zoi Sadkowski-Synnott was named as world Rookie of the Year by the US-based Snowboarder magazine.



Alice Robinson races in a World Cup giant slalom at Sestriere (Italy).

ROBINSON WINS AGAIN

Queenstown teenager Alice Robinson has scored her second win of the season in Alpine skiing World Cup giant slalom racing.

Building on her excellent win in Austria before Christmas, she won again at Kranjska Gora (Slovenia) in February.

This year up to mid-February she had a dnf, tenth, ninth, fifth and first.

She finished 10th in a World Cup giant slalom at Courchevel (France). The winner was Frederica Brigone (Italy).

Next, Robinson was ninth in a World Cup giant slalom at Lienz (Austria). She had the third best second run after being 18th on the first run. Mikaela Shiffrin (US) had her 63rd World Cup win.

Then Robinson was fifth in a World Cup giant slalom at Sestriere (Italy). Brigone and Petra Vhlova (Slovakia) tied for first with Shiffrin third, just 0.01s off a threeway tie.

Finally in Slovenia she won first place in 1m 54.32s, ahead of Vhlova in 1.54.66 while

home town hope Meta Hrovat (Slovenia) and Wendy Holdener (Switzerland) tied for third in 1.55.91.

Alice Robinson with her two wins joins Claudia Riegler (four wins) and Annelise Cobeger (one win) as New Zealand victors in World Cup ski racing.

Robinson also had a start in a World Cup super-g race but she had a ski come off and crashed heavily at more than 100km/h. She was not injured.

Despite racing under clear blue skies, the Bavarian Alps course was especially testing, after icing up overnight, which led to many crashes.

Super-g racing combines the speed of downhill skiing with more turns than giant slalom. Racers also have just one run to impress whereas GS has two runs.

** Alice Robinson won the Emerging Talent award at the Halberg Awards for NZ sport and a \$10,000 cheque from Sky Sport.

** Zoi Sadowski-Synnott was a finalist in the Sportswoman of the Year category at the Halbergs but the prize went to canoe racer Lisa Carrington.

VICTORY FOR HOTTER

Ohakune skier Jessica Hotter won a Freeride World Tour event held at Kicking Horse (BC, Canada) last month.

Arianna Tricomi (Italy) was second and Elizabeth Gerritzen (Switzerland) was third.

On one jump Jess landed on some small pine trees but kept on skiing.

The 26-year old won promotion to the big league after her outstanding results in last season's qualifying tour.

Jess spends part of her year working in the ski patrol at Treble Cone and working part-time as a freeride coach for Team TC.

Craig Murray (NZ) finished fourth in the men's event at the same meeting. The winner was Kristofer Turdell (Sweden) while Hank Bilous (NZ) was 13th.

In Freeride World Tour events riders are not able to ski through the course before the competition and can only plan their line by making a visual inspection from the bottom or using images of the venue.

Skiers and snowboarders are judged for line choice, control, technique, fluidity, air and style. The tour this year is giving equal prize money to men and women.

SILVER FOR BILOUS

Wanaka skier Hank Bilous won a silver medal at the first stop of the 2020 Freeride World Tour at Habuka in Japan.

A blistering high-speed run incorporating some huge air time saw him finish second behind two-time world champion Drew Tabke (USA).

Sidelined by illness, Bilous took a year off from competition in 2019 and resumed this year.

Craig Murray (Wanaka) finished in 12th place.

Jessica Hotter (NZ) was sixth in the women's event which was won by Hedvig Wessel (Norway).



Jess Hotter

SKIING COMES FROM CHINA

Cliff paintings of hunters in rugged remote north-western China appear to prove that Chinese were adept skiers as early as the Stone Age, Xinhua news agency reported.

The paintings in Altay show humans hunting while skiing and therefore archaeologists suggest the Altay region was a place of skiing some 100 to 200 centuries ago.

Wang Bo, a noted researcher, said he had seen a picture of four people chasing cattle and horses, three of them on a long rectangular board with poles in their hands.

Skiing has become a popular pastime for China's burgeoning new middle class, with several slopes around the capital Beijing packed every winter weekend.





Upper: Ruth Minhinnick on the road to The Chateau in 1961. **Lower:** RSC folks outside the old tin Hut at Whakapapa in 1952. Minihinnick family photos.



Members of the RSC Committee at the Chalet celebrate the end of 2019 and the final attendance of the retiring Admin Officer Sheryl Brownlee. Photo: Adrian Adriaansen.



November skiing was available this year on weekends in Te Heuheu Valley. Photo: Harry Keys.





Upper: RSC Hut in 2019. Lower: The Knoll Ridge Café. Photos: Peter Otway.





Upper: Skiing at 2000 metres at Whakapapa. **Lower:** Skiing in Te Heuheu Valley. Photos: Peter Otway.









Snowboard events in the school championships at Turoa. Photos: NISSSBC.

MAGMA OR LAVA

By volcanologist Brad Scott of GEONET

You might be wondering what the difference is between magma and lava, or even what extrusions are?

So, let's start off at depth under the volcano and work our way to the surface.

Eruptions from active volcanoes are driven by the molten material that forms underneath them. This very hot, molten and fluid material is known as **magma**.

If large volumes of magma are stored at depth, volcanologists refer to this as a magma chamber.

These will typically be found at 1-8 km depth beneath the volcano and vary in size from a few tens of cubic metres to cubic kilometres.

The temperatures can be in the range of 700-1300 degrees Celsius! A volcanic eruption is driven by this molten material moving up through the volcano to a vent on the surface.

Once the magma reaches the earth's surface and has been thrown out of the volcano explosively, as ash and rocks, or has flowed from a vent it is known as **lava**.

It is essentially the same as it was under the ground, just the terminology we use to describe it has changed.

The most familiar way for magma to escape, or **extrude**, at the earth's surface is as lava flows or domes.

Gas-driven, explosive lava eruptions can also form 'fire fountains' of liquid rock.

However, the most common form is thick, slow-fast moving rivers of molten material - lava flows.

This style of eruption is usually called effusive. Lava varies in viscosity

(runniness and therefore speed of movement), chemistry and temperature.

If the viscosity of the lava at the vent is 'viscous or sticky' then it will not flow, and a steep sided pile of hot rock will form.

These piles of hot rock are usually called lava domes and can have lobes on the sides where it has tried to flow.

The surface is often rough and blocky because of fragmentation of the cooler outer crust during growth of the dome.

Volcanologists talk about the **extrusion** of a lava dome to the surface.

This is what happened at Whakaari/White Island following the December 2019 eruption.

GEONET SURVEY

GeoNet wants your feedback on the information it provides on geohazards.

The GeoNet website, app and social media channels (Facebook and Twitter) are busier than they ever have been.

It had 26,500 felt reports for an earthquake near Paraparaumu in January and more than 1 million people have visited the GeoNet website since the Whakaari/White Island eruption in December

"We want to make sure we are delivering the information you need before, during and after a geohazard event. We would appreciate you taking 10 minutes to fill in our survey.

"This will help us with new content on the website and clear messages after an event. Whether you use the GeoNet website, app, Facebook or Twitter pages we are keen to get your views.

"You could also win an emergency kit so you are better prepared should something happen."



As in New Zealand, the first skiing in Australia was done by Norwegian gold miners in the 1860s. They also claimed to found the world's first ski club at Kiandra (NSW). Sadly several historic buildings at Kiandra were destroyed by bushfires in January.

LOOKING FOR SKIERS

Dear RSC

I'm a Californian with a home among the Sierra's world class downhill ski areas - and some of the best X-C areas in the country. Unfortunately, I no longer ski and my home sits empty during the ski season.

I'm looking to connect with skiers who'd be interested in housing swap for same amazing skiing while putting me on the sunnier side of the equator during our ski season.

The economics are compelling:

While the day rates for places like Squaw Valley are a shocking US\$179, the locals ski for less than NZ rates. Multi resort passes purchased in advance are several hundred dollars and they amortize when spread over a couple months of skiing.

The lodging cost nets at zero and the

grocery costs are the same as in NZ.

And the location? One of the snowiest places on earth. But with California weather; it either snows or is clear and warm.

Surrounded by major ski mountains, family downhill skiing near the property, nationally renowned X-C in the housing area. Big snow free city 30 miles down the freeway.

The three bedroom house is fully equipped, technically sleeps eight but is more appropriate for a single family or two couples.

If I can find anyone interested in an epic winter season, I'll put some pictures up on a photo site. They needn't be club members. Any skiers you know - or have heard of!

Thanks for helping out!

Mike Schrupp schrupp_m@yahoo.com



Crater Lake at Mt Ruapehu. The lake (Te Wai ā-moe) is more or less round, is 400 metres across and is 100 metres deep. We went swimming there in past years but today the water is too hot and toxic to allow swimming.



Walking the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. Photo: DOC.

ACROSS THE SKIING WORLD

A rare lizard has forced a chairlift change at **Cardrona Alpine Resort** where DOC has declared a proposed lift site to be a nationally significant site for alpine lizards.

Ecologist Mandy Tocher said the site, just below the Captain's Basin, is home to several species of lizards which are found elsewhere in New Zealand but not all together as they are at Cardrona.

The proposed Pringle's quad chairlift was originally scheduled to be installed in time for winter this year.

Cardrona said it is surveying other lift locations and is looking to build the lift on a different a site for the winter 2021.

Gian-Franco Kasper of Switzerland is to step down after 22 years as president of the International Ski Federation (FIS).

Kasper, 75, was elected president in 1998, having previously held the role of secretary general from 1975.

He said he will give up his role at the 52nd International Ski Congress in Thailand in May.

Salomon has devised a running shoe designed to be given a second life as a ski boot.

The mix of materials in your typical running shoe, like polyesters, rubbers, glues and stitching, make it next to impossible to recycle the shoe in its entirety.

Salomon produces its recyclable running shoe using 100 percent thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU).

The running shoe can be ground down into tiny pieces which are mixed with new TPU and moulded to make the shell of a Salomon ski boot.

Bushfires in January substantially destroyed the Selwyn Snow Resort skifield in the Snowy Mountains of New South Wales.

The resort's visitor and staff accommodation, ski hire facilities and workshops were burned out in the fire, and chairlifts were badly damaged.

The fire also destroyed historic buildings in the old gold mining town of Kiandra where Australia's first skiing took place in the 1860s.

British tour company Mabey Ski is offering to take patrons to ski four Japanese volcanoes in four days.

The tour will be open to 30 adventurous and self-motivated skiers and snowboarders on Japan's northern island Hokkaido.

Based around Niseko, one of Japan's most popular backcountry resorts famous for its light powder snow, participants will climb the Annupuri, Iwaunopuri, Shiribetsu and Mt Yotei volcanoes.

They will ski or ride in their craters and on their steep ridges and open bowls.

Uli Dinsenbacher has retired as general manager at Porters Ski Area near Christchurch after 34 years and is looking forward exploring skifields across the South Island next season.

Dinsenbacher arrived in New Zealand from Germany in 1982 and worked as a ski instructor before taking up his current role in 1985.

A Lego-obsessed couple in Britain spent six weeks and used 400,000 bricks to create a stunning Alpine ski scene complete with working lifts, trains and lights in time for Christmas.

Every year Mike Addis, 61, and his wife Catherine Weightman, 56, have carefully constructed a Christmas-themed Lego creation.

This year, to mark the 25th anniversary of their first ever creation, they decided to make take on their biggest project yet.

The result is a stunning 2.5m tall by 2.5m wide snow-covered Alpine ski resort which takes up half of their living room.

Ski and Snowboard Australia has announced a name change to Snow Australia.

President Dean Gosper said: "The change to Snow Australia coincides with the recent unification of the sport and reflects its responsibilities and connections in simple and elegant language.

"It embodies the organisation's truly unified, national vision and the sport's intimate connection with its terrain."

The new logo carries forward the heritage of the universally recognised Skiing Kangaroo.

Italian plans to create the world's largest skiing network are being hotly opposed by environmentalists who say the new ski lifts would scar a World Heritage mountain range that is often described as the most beautiful in the world.

The network would offer skiers 1300kms of pistes, expanding the existing Dolomiti Superski network.

It forms part of plans to promote the 2026 Winter Olympics which will be held jointly by Cortina d'Ampezzo and Milan

Currently the world's biggest ski network is considered to be Les Trois Vallees in France, which boasts 600kms of pistes.

A pair of 16-year-old snowboarders lost in the wintry Canadian wilderness kept warm until their rescue by building a fire and using their homework as kindling.

Search efforts next day found the boys who escaped without injury. They said they had kept warm by burning homework one of them had in a backback.

Beat Feuz (Switzerland) won the world's greatest ski race, the Lauberhorn downhill at Wengen in Switzerland. His time was 1.42.53.

Dominik Paris (Italy) was second in 1.42.82 and Thomas Dressen (Germany) was third in 1.42.84.

Feuz won the race for the third time before a crowd of 32,000 who arrived by mountain railway and helicopters. The course was cut to 2.95km following a heavy snowfall.

Silver Star Mountain Resort, located at Vernon (BC, Canada) has been sold to US company POWDR, which is based in Utah and owns several other resorts in the United States.

The previous owner, Jane Cann, will retain Schumann Resorts Ltd which holds 30-acres of development land on the mountain. The company owning the **Remarkables Ski Area** in Queenstown is charging drivers \$10 to use its road over summer, a move which has annoyed climbers and trampers.

NZSki said the charge is to help cover construction and maintenance costs. It said skiers help pay for the costs but summer users have not until now.

The recreation reserve is used by walkers, mountain bikers, climbers, hunters and tourism operators, while the ski company leases its site from DOC.

The number of kea at the Remarkables Ski Area in Queenstown has almost doubled in the past year, with seven known to revisit the area.

It follows a two-year predator control and habitat management by skifield staff and the Kea Conservation Trust.

What would have been North America's largest and highest-elevation ski area—a massive year-round resort called Jumbo Glacier in British Columbia—is never going to exist.

Jumbo Glacier Resort has been in the works for nearly 30 years. The ski resort, which was projected to have nearly 15,000 acres of skiable terrain and over 5000 vertical feet, was initially proposed back in 1991. It has spent three decades tied up in legal battles.

Located in an area known as Qat'mak, the region is considered a sacred place for the local indigenous people.

In January locals finally announced a plan to create an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area over a swathe of the Purcell Mountains. The designation aims to protect cultural values and biological diversity in the area.

Dave McCoy, a towering pioneer of the California ski industry, who with vision, hard work and a knack for the mechanical transformed a remote Sierra peak into the storied Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, has died. He was 104.



CLUB ITEMS & SERVICES FOR SALE

RSC Administration Office, P.O. Box 8064, Symonds Street, Auckland 1150
Website: www.rsc.org.nz email: admin@rsc.org.nz

Lockers

available

Lockers are available for hire in the Hut at Turoa and occasionally in the Lodge. email - admin@rsc.org.nz to find out what is

Annual Locker Rental Rates- applicable from when you are allocated a locker-

Ski- \$57.50 Gear \$28.75

Club Items

(Add \$3 for each order to be posted)
Name Badge (free to new members) \$12

PHONE NUMBERS

RSC Office 09-377-3856 Lodge 07-892-3824 Hut 07-892-3822 Chalet 07-892-3823 Turoa 06-385-8767

NEW MEMBERS COSTS

Two working parties.
Senior joining fee \$199
Junior joining fee \$99
Annual senior subs \$258.75 incl GST (\$225 plus GST)
Annual junior subs \$95 incl GST (\$82.61 plus GST)

ACCOMMODATION FEES (Effective May 1st 2020)

Members Senior	18 years and over	\$54
Members Teen	14-17 years	\$47
Members Junior	13 years and under	\$36
Members' children	7 years and under	\$28
Non-members	14 years and over	\$100
Non-members	13 years and under	\$67
Life Members		\$27
School group children		
School group parents		\$89

Off season rates (Chalet and Turoa)

Members Senior and Junior \$27 Non-members Senior and Junior \$32

Groups of 20 or more: please apply to Administration Officer for possible discounted rates. MEMBERS' CHILDREN AGED 8 YEARS AND OVER WHO ARE NOT YET MEMBERS PAY NON-MEMBER RATES.