

# *The Bulletin*

**RUAPEHU SKI CLUB**

Volume 86, No. 1

March 2021



*Tukino skifield on the eastern (Desert Road) side of Ruapehu. Tukino has three club lodges and two rope tows. Photo: Tukino skifield.*



## **CONTENTS**

- 2 President's column
- 3 Ruapehu news
- 5 Bookings for 2021
- 8 Memories of Moira
- 13 Northern ski season
- 14 Barrymore movies
- 15 Junior champion
- 16 World ski awards
- 17 RSC calendar
- 17 New members
- 17 Obituaries
- 18 XC skiing boom
- 19 Skiing E-sports
- 20 White Island charges
- 25 X-Games medals
- 25 World ski champs
- 26 World snow racing
- 30 World snow news
- 32 Club info page

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Kia ora koutou, hello everyone,

What a great summer it's been for most of us (unless you're a farmer or a Wellingtonian, for opposite reasons!), with people taking the opportunity to explore New Zealand.

And then suddenly the realities of Covid-19 came back to haunt us, with Level 3 and Level 2 being re-imposed, hopefully only for a short time. Meanwhile we are in the middle of our work party season and are hoping it can continue uninterrupted after last year's curtailment through lockdown.

One big change for the Club over summer was the closing of our office in the Viaduct Basin.

With our Club Vice-Captain Paula acting as Administration Officer and being based in Hamilton we hadn't used the office for a year, and we made the decision to surrender our lease.

Thanks to McConnell Dowell who have been such a generous landlord and friend to the Club over all the years we were based there.

I'd especially like to thank Paula who stepped into the role of Administration Officer last July when we were so uncertain about what was to come and what Covid would mean for the Club.

She has done an amazing job, and her knowledge of how Committee and the Club works has been a huge help in us working towards restructuring that role as Committee looks at new ways of working going into the future.

This was always a temporary position for Paula and we are currently looking to employ someone to replace her.

Thanks also to Richard Nelson, Richard Horton and Matt Lamb who put

so much time and effort into moving our office systems and website to the cloud, enabling so much more flexibility around our work practices.

Looking forward I've already mentioned that we are into our summer work season. I do encourage you to attend a work party this season, we really need your help. Last year was difficult financially for us and we will be relying on work parties rather than contractors to get a lot of necessary maintenance done.

We are focusing on the Hut this year, looking to spruce her up inside and out as she has started to look a little tired over recent seasons.

Besides getting work done on these weekends there is also a great social side to them, getting to know other members, new and old that you mightn't have met before. Check the website for work party dates and sign up please.

I know you'll have a good time, and it's a great experience for children seeing a group of people all working cooperatively to achieve results.

If you're looking for some relaxation and outdoor activities we still have more summer events organised, including the RSC Tongariro Crossing weekend on March 13th.

If you haven't done it already this is the year to go without all the crowds, and there's still time to sign up. Check out our Summer Events on the website.

Finally, the recent Covid scare is a reminder how fragile our ability to enjoy a normal life is. We're hoping for a great ski season this year, to help ensure that remember to keep using the app, and if you have symptoms get a test.

Noho ora mai.

**Phill Thomass**  
**RSC President**



RSC Hut and the Sky Waka gondola. Photo: Peter Otway.

## THROUGH THE LODGE WINDOW

The ski and snowboard season at Mt Ruapehu is scheduled to open on June 5th.

RSC bunk bookings open on May 1st so send in your booking requests.

*Crater Lake Te Wai ā-moe heated up again before Christmas and recorded 43°C. The Volcanic Alert Level was raised to level 2.*

*Activity then decreased over the first two weeks of January and the Volcanic Alert Level was lowered to level 1.*

**DOC at Christmas** imposed a temporary 2km no-go zone around Crater Lake Te Wai ā-moe. This was when the lake heated up to 43°C.

It said a 2km area surrounding the lake was closed to the public and concessionaires due to increased risk of eruption.

The 2km exclusion zone was removed on January 11th but DOC recommended people remain at least 700 metres from Te Wai ā-moe, and do not camp within 1.5km of the lake.

*RAL is seeking to raise \$30 million in new equity capital, which would correspond to a 50 percent shareholding.*

*RAL board chairman Murray Gribben said the company is looking for a strategic partner who can help the business develop to the next level and is seeking expressions of interest from wholesale*

*He said that during winter 2020 RAL recorded more than 290,000 visitors, including 43,000 riding the Sky Waka.*

*“Overall, we were pleased with the result for 2020 considering the challenges we had in place.”*

**Visitors are urged to “respect the maunga”** in a summer campaign which was launched in December to help people make the most of Tongariro National Park.

The campaign aims to help visitors stay safe and nurture the special values of the park, Conservation Minister Kiri Allan said.

The measure focuses on key areas of visitor behaviour, including cultural respect, safety and preparedness, and removing all waste.

DOC facilities in the park include

## THE RUAPEHU SKI CLUB

(inc) Founded 1913

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**President:** Phill Thomass  
**Vice-Presidents:** Carl Burling, Liza Fitzsimmons, Nils Johannessen, Marion Quinn, Donald Webster  
**Secretary:** Louise Blair  
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**Turoa Officer:** Donald Webster  
**Heritage Fund Guardians:** Robin Dallas, Richard Nelson, Bernard Smith, Phill Thomass  
**Fund Treasurer:** Mike Wardle  
**Glacier Hut Custodian:** Bernard Smith

175km of tracks, 32 backcountry toilets and eight huts.

***Elliott Cree** won the 50km Tussock of Fire race at Mt Ruapehu in 5h 47.58m.*

***Charlotte Milne** won the women's race in 7h 33.27m.*

*There was also a variety of shorter runs and several walks.*

**The Mountain Safety Council (MSC)** has been filming seven safety videos to be released during winter.

The aim is to help people be better equipped before heading outdoors. Each video will take viewers on a walkthrough, helping them to prepare for the track.

The videos are produced in collaboration with Department of Conservation (DOC), LandSAR, police and other agencies.

*Whoever asked Santa for a **white Christmas in Taranaki** got their wish with the mountain receiving a good dump of snow down to 1400 metres.*

*The snow was the result of a southerly weather system moving up the country. It also snowed in Otago and Southland, while hail blanketed Motueka.*

The deadline for the June Bulletin will be Friday **May 14th**.

All items should be with the Editor in Wellington by that date.

## THE BULLETIN

Founded in 1936 by Jock and Fitzie Graham.

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## RSC BUNK BOOKINGS

### Winter Bookings 2021.

Bookings for the 2021 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 non-members 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.



**Upper:** Carl Burling, armed with a DOC permit, drove up the Rockgarden. He said the track was somewhat rough. **Lower:** Glacier Hut, built in 1923, has been given a new paint job.



Queenstown alpine skier Alice Robinson, aged 19, races to fourth place in the world championship giant slalom at Cortina d'Ampezzo (Italy) in February.



An iced up chairlift at Glencoe ski resort. Scotland's ski areas have had a massive snowfall but no customers due to Covid-19.



## MEMORIES OF MOIRA

Long time RSC member Moira Scott passed away peacefully on December 5th 2020 after losing her battle with Alzheimers. She was 89. The family would like to offer a heartfelt thanks to the staff at Logan Campbell Retirement Village for their kindness and care during her last couple of years there.

Moira learned to ski in Norway in the early 1950s and a diploma awarded for cross-country and slalom that she earned in Miølfliel at Easter in 1954 hangs in pride of place in her son David's office.

She brought her passion for the sport with her when she emigrated to New Zealand in 1962. She and Allister were married in the same year and set off down country in a Morris Minor called Betsie, staying at the Chateau for their honeymoon.

On their trip down to the mountain they decided to stop on a gravel verge to view the mountain just shy of a one lane bridge on SH47 (National Park to the turn-off to the Chateau). No sooner had they stopped when a truck came hurtling around the corner at considerable speed and clipped the bridge on the way through. It was a very fortuitous scenery stop indeed.

Ross George sponsored Moira and Allister for Club membership in 1963. On their first trip, one night in July, they coaxed Betsie up the Bruce Road in a blizzard and started to make their way up the Rockgarden (with their suitcases) making for the Lodge.

The storm disorientated them, and they lost sight of the Rockgarden chairlift. Meanwhile in the Lodge the resident ski instructor, Heinie Schuler, sensed that someone might be trying to come up through the storm and thought that he would go out to check to make sure. He found Moira and Allister and guided them up to the safety of the Lodge.

Moira never served on the Committee but was always acting in supporting roles for

the club. Many work parties were attended in summer months when her sons, David and Martin were growing up. Whether it was administrating races, organising fancy dress parties or preparing and taking goods and produce up the mountain for weekends and ski weeks Moira was always busy with planning, lists and organising for Club activities.

Moira and Allister were staying at the Lodge during the Veterans Week in 1995. The mountain crater lake had been emitting steam all day and after a lovely day on the slopes they had just returned to the Lodge.

There was an earthquake and Allister told Moira to grab her camera. They ran out the back door of the Lodge where Mum snapped a shot looking up the Waterfalls and the second chair, now being completely dwarfed by the eruption cloud.

Moira always said that contrary to all the news footage that the most amazing thing was that there was no sound. Some members fled the Club but were held up as the Bruce Road closed. Most of the members spent a few exciting, if a little nervous days at the Lodge before being evacuated.

The picture has appeared prominently on a number of publications, notably on the cover of Mount Ruapehu – 100 Years of Skiing book written by Alan Graham.

Moira enjoyed her skiing at Ruapehu and the RSC Club life. She continued skiing in New Zealand and in North America up until her late 70s. Her last engagement with the Club was attending the 100th Anniversary at the Chateau in 2013.

### **David Scott**

Moira's husband Allister Scott was RSC Club Captain in 1978-81 and one of her sons David was on the RSC Committee in 1988-91. David was RSC Club champion a record nine times and also represented New Zealand in speed skiing at the Olympic Winter Games in 1992. We offer the Club's condolences to the Scott family.



**Upper:** Moira Scott in the days of long skis and lace-up boots. Photo from David Scott.  
**Lower:** Moira Scott's classic photo of the 1995 eruption of Mt Ruapehu, taken from the back door of RSC Lodge.





**Upper:** An RSC class and their instructor. Photo: Lauren Bruce. **Lower:** Thick ice on a chairlift at Turoa. Photo: RAL.



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**Upper:** *The Schuss Haus at Whakapapa. Photo: RAL. Lower:* *Skiing inside the crater of Mt Ruapehu.*

## NORTHERN SKI SEASON

Many ski resorts around the world were open at Christmas and New Year, but many were closed, some by government decree.

Some decided the mental and physical health benefits of mountain sports holidays outweighed the danger of spreading the Covid-19 pandemic.

In France, Italy, Germany and Austria, authorities moved to close ski resorts or to limit their activities to locals.

Switzerland opened its ski season in some cantons despite Italy's request not to do so. Verbier, Crans Montana, Andermatt, Davos and Zermatt were all open. Meanwhile, Cervinia (Italy) which is just 9km from Zermatt was closed.

Ski resorts in Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, Spain, China and Japan were open.

In the US and Canada resorts mainly stayed open, but there were increasingly draconian measures including restaurant and hotel closures.

Scotland had its best snow for 10 years but the skifields were closed.

**No spectators were permitted at the FIS alpine and nordic World Ski championships in February at Cortina d'Ampezzo and Oberstdorf, nor at the X-Games in Aspen (Colorado).**

Both organising committees said they were hoping for different outcomes but agreed to go ahead without fans present.

**The Swiss Federal government** said in December that if non-essential shops closed then it would be hard to justify ski resorts remaining open. In January it changed its position and ski resorts were allowed to remain open.

Ski resorts remained closed in January in Italy and France, with skiing for locals-only in Austria.

Due to Covid-19 national regulations in Switzerland, the FIS headquarters in

Oberhofen were closed and FIS Staff were working from home.

**Switzerland's signature ski race the Lauberhorn downhill at Wengen was cancelled after a rise in Covid-19 infections was blamed on tourists from Britain.**

The race on a scenic course that is the longest on the alpine World Cup circuit usually draws 30,000 spectators and a big audience on Swiss television.

Officials instead raced the famous Streif downhill at Kitzbühel (Austria) twice in one weekend. Beat Feuz (Switzerland) won both races.

**Dozens of British skiers face \$16,000 fines after fleeing Verbier in Switzerland to escape a Covid-19 lockdown panic in January.**

Authorities in Switzerland said they have details of 200 British who broke strict isolation rules and returned home, some leaving on private jets in the dead of night.

No FIS test events for the **Olympic Winter Games in Beijing** will be staged during the 2020-21 season. This affects snowboard, freeski, alpine, jumping and cross-country.

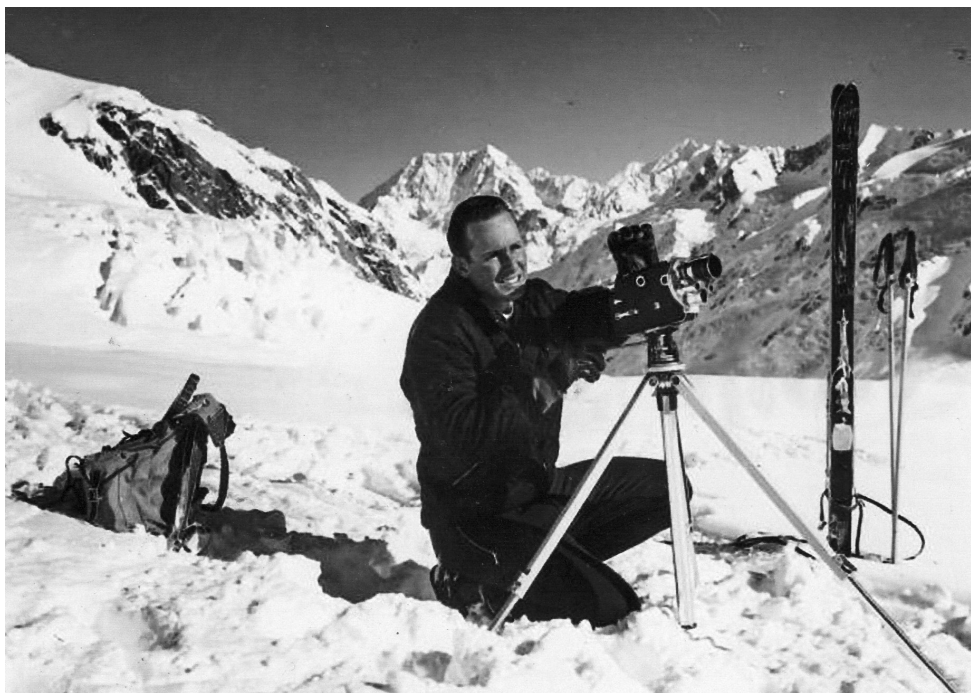
Travel restrictions and quarantine rules are behind the decision to cancel. Some test runs will be held at venues with only Chinese athletes.

**A French ski station in January replaced its closed ski lifts with horses.**

As ski lifts remained closed due to Covid-19, Saint-Léger-les-Mélèzes used horses to enable ski school pupils to continue to their classes on green and blue pistes.

The horses from a nearby equestrian centre were already trained and happy to go up the mountains for "ski-joëring".

The price was the same as on ski lifts in normal years: 10 Euros for two hours plus the cost of the ski school lesson.



*American film producer Dick Barrymore behind the camera to film his second ski film, High Skis, on the Tasman Glacier in 1961.*

## BARRYMORE MOVIES

Dick Barrymore (1933-2008) was an American pioneer in ski film making who spent 30 years shooting 28 ski films around the world, including here in NZ.

He began his career as a ski filmmaker at the 1960 Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley (California) and spent the next three decades shooting ski movies.

He rarely had a script in mind for his films and was a master of improvisation.

Barrymore was an early supporter of freestyle skiing, which was originally called hot dog skiing.

He did most of his own filming with hand-held cameras and was the sole editor. He narrated and selected the music.

Originally his ski films were spin-offs from the Burton Holmes travelogues designed for the armchair traveller, but his process matured and became more popular.

He was so well known that he was invited to ski with the Shah of Iran and his family. He filmed the Shah's wife, the Empress Fara Diba, skiing alongside famous US skiers Suzy Chaffee and Billy Kidd in the Iran hills.

Barrymore wasn't averse to appearing in his own films and once played the part of Avalanche Al who was intent on setting speed records of up to 320 mph while riding an avalanche.

**Footnote:** Dick Barrymore was not related to the actors John Barrymore and Lionel Barrymore.





*Katie Crawford racing in the Youth Olympic Games at Lausanne (Switzerland).*

## **JUNIOR CHAMPION**

We are advised that Katie Crawford who learned her skiing from a Swiss instructor at RSC won the national junior title (Under-21) for slalom for the second year.

This was in races held in the South Island last winter.

Katie's time, representing the Queenstown Alpine Ski Team's Coberger Academy squad, was 1:27.60. Natalie Tatge was second in 1:29.19 and Olive Flight was third in 1:31.25.

Katie also came second to Piera Hudson in the open grade slalom. Piera (Wanaka) won in 1.22.67. Katie was second in 1.27.60 and Eliza Grigg (Mt Hutt) came third in 1.28.87.

Katie was selected to represent New Zealand and compete in giant slalom

and slalom at the Youth Olympic Games which were held in Lausanne (Switzerland).

This event drew athletes from 79 countries who competed in 81 events in eight sports and 16 disciplines. Some 640,000 spectators attended.

Katie finished both her races on difficult icy courses, coming 30th in the giant slalom and 31st in the slalom.

She overcame injury before skiing in the giant slalom. She crashed in training at Les Diablerets two days before competition and required seven stitches in her upper right arm.

\*\*\* Angela Crawford says the family haven't stayed at the Club for a number of years but are still members and always have fond memories of their holidays there when the children were young.



*The Bulletin recently confirmed that the flat area in front of The Chateau was a bowling green and not an ice skating rink. Here is proof.*

## WORLD SKI AWARDS

**Val Thorens in France** has been named the World's Best Ski Resort for the seventh time in eight years.

The highest resort in Europe at 3220 metres, it was handed the prize at the 2020 World Ski Awards.

These are voted for by industry experts and members of the public in a range of categories, including best resorts, hotels, chalets and tour operators.

Other big-ticket winners included the five-star W Verbier in Switzerland which was ranked as the World's Best Ski Hotel for the fifth consecutive year.

Chalet Zermatt Peak in Switzerland, where stays start from \$NZ100,000 per week during the winter season, was named

as the World's Best Ski Chalet.

**Ski Dubai** won the world's best indoor ski resort award for the fifth consecutive year. It was nominated amongst eight internationally recognised indoor ski resorts across Egypt, Germany, China, Spain, Scotland, New Zealand and the Netherlands.

**Deer Valley** was again named as America's best ski resort while **Thredbo** took the Australia's best ski resort award.

**NZ awards went to:**

**Best Ski Resort 2020:** Mt Hutt.

**Best Ski Hotel 2020:** The Rees Hotel, Queenstown.

**Best Ski Boutique Hotel 2020:** Matakauri Lodge, Queenstown.

**Best Ski Chalet 2020:** Porters Lodge, Canterbury.

## RSC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 2021	13-14 20-21	Tongariro Alpine Crossing Working parties
April 2021	3-4	Working parties (Easter, Truck Weekend)
May 2021	1 1-2	RSC ski season bookings open Working parties
June 2021	5 TBC 12-13	Ski/snow season opens at Ruapehu RSC AGM at Auckland Working parties
July 2021	3-4 10-25 31	Working parties (Cooks Weekend) School holidays Christie Derby
Aug 2021	TBC 14 28	Club Week Haensli Cup Rangatira Trophy
Sept 2021	4 18 25	Tongariro Juniors Ngauruhoe Trophy RSC Club champs
Oct 2021	2-17	School holidays

## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

Alexander Hall (Hamilton).

Kerry Maloney (Hamilton).

Jordyn Maloney (Hamilton).

## OBITUARIES

### BRUCE MILLAR

Bruce Millar who has died at Auckland aged 84 joined RSC in 1950 and was thus a Club member for 70 years.

Bruce was a regular skier over the years and was still skiing at Winter Party in the 1990s.

Off the snow Bruce managed Millar Paterson Metals which dated back to 1903

and had a foundry near Victoria Park in downtown Auckland.

The company supplied RSC with a variety of metal plaques and trophies over the years including a plaque for the 50th anniversary of the Hut.

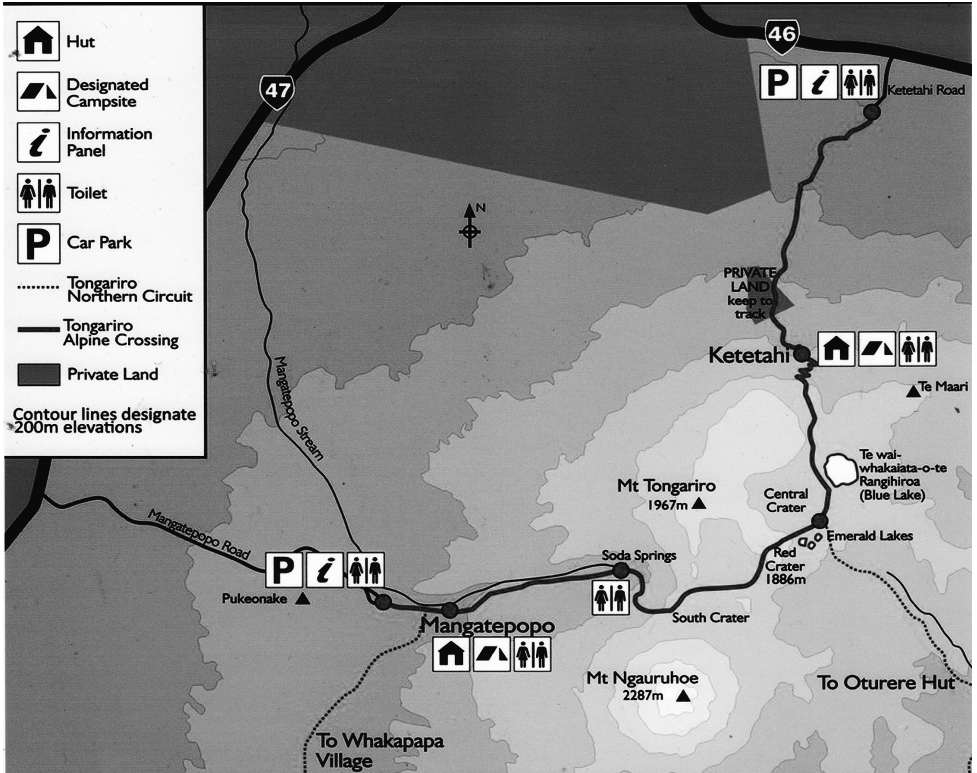
We offer the Club's condolences to his family.

### PETER WAKEMAN

Peter Wakeman who joined RSC in 1981 has died at Auckland.

Peter was the husband of Rosemary Wakeman who was Administration Officer for RSC from 1979 to 1983 when the Club had its office in Remuera.

We offer the Club's condolences to their family.



Map of the Tongariro Alpine Crossing.

## X-C SKIING BOOMS

Cross-country skiing is booming this year when getting outdoors, exercising and social distancing has never seemed so desirable.

In many places in the US and Canada, has been hard to find new equipment or even good used gear.

Many alpine skiers are turning to cross-country rather than wait two hours for a gondola ride up the mountain.

Experts said you don't have to be superbly fit to cross-country ski.

All the while you are building up cardiovascular fitness and cross-country skiing uses more muscle groups than any other sport except perhaps long-distance swimming.

A typical Nordic ski jaunt is two or three hours at a leisurely pace, maybe skiing 10km.

Just one lesson from an instructor is enough

to teach most people how to glide.

Cross-country skiing comes in two types: classical and freestyle.

Classical has skiers pointing straight ahead and gliding with the use of poles that are longer than alpine ski poles. Freestyle allows the skier to use skating steps.

Both types feature in World Cup races and in the Olympic Winter Games. Sometimes events allow just the one technique while others have a mixture of the two.

\*\*\* New Zealand has a cross-country skifield named Snow Farm which is situated at Cardrona in Central Otago and has 55km of groomed cross-country trails. Gear hire, lessons, snowshoeing, hotel accommodation and back country huts are available. Winter biathlon and ski orienteering are both contested here. And you can take your dog along with you.





*Jim Mutch has sent us this photo entitled: Wildlife encounter en route to Ruapehu, on state highway 4 near Raurimu. Thanks Jim, but did you enrol him/her to be an RSC member?*

## **SKIING E-SPORTS**

The inaugural Esports alpine World Ski Championship is currently running with the approval of the FIS (International Ski Federation).

Esports (electronic sports) have become popular in many disciplines since real events were cancelled due to Covid-19.

The ski version has been running since December and is free from the App Store or Google Play. Events are held in downhill, super-g, giant slalom and slalom.

The show is called The Road to Cortina. The winners and runners-up in qualifying events will take part in the finals which will be based on ski runs at Cortina d'Ampezzo in Italy.

## **EVEREST HIGHER**

China and Nepal have jointly announced a new official height for Mt Everest, ending a discrepancy between the two nations.

The new height of the world's highest peak is 8848.86 metres, slightly more than Nepal's previous measurement and about 4m higher than China's.

The height was agreed on after surveyors from Nepal scaled the peak in 2019 and a Chinese team did the same in 2020.

## **US DAY PASSES**

The most expensive day passes in the US (in US dollars) are:

1. Vail & Beaver Creek, CO: \$209
2. Breckenridge, CO: \$189
3. Deer Valley, UT: \$180
4. Aspen, CO; Mammoth Mountain, CA; Park City, UT and Steamboat, CO: \$179
8. Copper Mountain, CO: \$178
9. Keystone Resort, CO; Squaw Valley, CA and Winter Park, CO: \$169



## ERUPTION CHARGES

WorkSafe has filed charges against 10 firms and three people over the Whakaari White Island eruption in December 2019 that claimed 22 lives.

Ten parties have been charged under the Health and Safety at Work Act for failing to ensure the health and safety of workers and others.

GNS Science, NEMA (Civil Defence) and tour operators Volcanic Air, Kahu Helicopters and White Island Tours all confirmed they are facing charges.

Three individuals are charged under law which requires directors or individuals to exercise due diligence that the company meets its health and safety obligations.

The trio are members of the Buttler family who own the island and grant leases to the tour operators.

None of the enforcement action relates to rescue and recovery operations when local helicopter operators evacuated survivors and victims. Those actions may be the subject of other proceedings.

There were 47 people were on the island 52 kilometres offshore from Whakatane when the crater exploded. Most were tourists and four were local tour guides.

They were showered with rocks, clouds of ash and toxic gases. All suffered substantial burns and 22 people died.

\*\*\* The announcement of charges was met with substantial opposition by groups who said the decision by WorkSafe to prosecute some of the parties was over the top and in excess of its mandate. Petitions were started and fund raising for some defendants was begun.

\*\*\* The alert level for Whakaari was lowered on December 6th from alert level 2 to alert level 1. This followed observations that ash was no longer being emitted from the island and the levels of gas emission had also decreased.

\*\*\* The Government has ordered an independent review of WorkSafe's oversight of Whakaari White Island tours. This is the first stage of a targeted review of adventure activity regulations identifying serious gaps in WorkSafe's enforcement regime.

## VOLCANOES ACTIVE

**January was world volcano month as mountains around the world – excluding New Zealand – erupted spectacularly.**

**In Hawaii** the Kilauea volcano erupted when a new lava flow interacted with a pool of water inside the crater. All the water evaporated out of the lake and a steam cloud shot up 10km in the atmosphere.

**In Italy** explosions from Mt Etna, which is Europe's largest active volcano, sent rocks into the air and lava streams flowed from three craters.

Dramatic video was seen around the world.

**In Papua New Guinea** the Kadovar volcano erupted with an ash plume that rose up to 1.5km.

**In Russia** the Klyuchevskoy (Kamchatka) volcano had a series of blasts that sent an ash plume up 6km.

Other notable eruptions were reported in the Kuril Islands (Russia), three places in Indonesia, Mexico, Ecuador, Peru and two places in Guatemala.



*This is the “avalauncher” machine used by the ski patrol at Turoa to bomb avalanche prone slopes after a heavy snowfall. The cannon uses compressed nitrogen gas to fire missiles up to 1.4km where they explode on impact with the surface of the snow. Photos: RAL.*



Ski racing at Whakapapa. Photos: NIPS.





Snowboard racing at Turoa. Photo: School snowboard champs.



*Nico Porteous (NZ) with his gold medal won in the ski halfpipe event at the 2021 Aspen X-Games in January.*



*Zoi Sadowski-Synnott (NZ) flies through the air at the 2021 Aspen X-games. She won a silver medal in slopestyle and a bronze medal in big air.*



## WINTER X-GAMES

### GOLD FOR NICO PORTEOUS TWO MEDALS FOR ZOI

Three New Zealanders received invitations to take part in the 2021 Winter X Games in Aspen-Buttermilk (Colorado). They were Nico Porteous, Zoi Sadowski-Synnott and Jossi Wells.

There were no fans nor any music and each athlete was allowed only one coach or support person, whereas some would normally have several support folk.

**Nico Porteous (NZ)** won a gold medal in the men's freeski superpipe.

**Zoi Sadowski-Synnott (NZ)** won a silver medal in the women's snowboard slopestyle and a bronze medal in big air.

Porteous, 19, jumped into the gold medal position on his third of four runs, scoring back-to-back 1620s. Aaron Blunck (US) was second and Birk Irving (US) was third.

Nico was up against a powerhouse field. Olympic gold medallist David Wise (US) was fifth and Alex Ferreira (US) going for his third X Games superpipe gold medal in a row was seventh.

It was the third ever NZ win at Aspen. Previous winners were Jossi Wells and Zoi Sadowski-Synnott.

Sadowski-Synnott was beaten in slopestyle by the double Olympic champion Jamie Anderson (US) while Laurie Blouin (Canada) was third.

Anderson aged 30 then won the big air event for her 19th X-Games medal. Miyabi Onitsuka (Japan) and Zoi Sadowski-Synnott tied for second with Miyabi taking the silver medal on a countback. It was Zoi's fifth X-Games medal.

**Jossi Wells (NZ)** came fifth in the ski knuckle huck event won by Henrik Harlaut (Sweden).

## ALICE COMES FOURTH

Four New Zealanders raced in the World alpine skiing championships at Cortina d'Ampezzo (Italy) in February.

**Alice Robinson (NZ)** was fourth in the giant slalom, finishing just 0.73 seconds behind the winner in a race lasting 2.5 minutes.

The race was won by Lara Gut-Behrami (Swiss) with Mikaela Shiffrin (US) second and Katharina Liensberger (Austria) third. Piera Hudson (NZ) did not finish.

**Piera Hudson (NZ)** skied the best race of her life to come 12th in the parallel GS. There were 62 starters and she beat a host of the best ranked skiers in the world. She did not finish the slalom.

**Willis Feasey (NZ)** came 26th in the giant slalom and 28th in the super-g, two of the best alpine skiing results for NZ men in recent years. He was 30th in the parallel GS and did not finish in the combined.

**Jack Adams (NZ)** was eliminated in the qualifying race for the giant slalom. He did not finish the second run in the slalom.

Race winners were:

Men's downhill: Vincent Kriechmayr (Austria). Men's super-g: Vincent Kriechmayr (Austria).

Men's combined: Marco Schwarz (Austria). Men's parallel GS: Mathieu Faivre (France).

Men's GS: Mathieu Faivre (France). Men's slalom: Sebastian Foss-Solevaag (Norway).

Women's downhill: Corinne Suter (Swiss). Women's super-g: Lara Gut-Behrami (Swiss).

Women's combined: Mikaela Shiffrin (US). Women's parallel GS: Marta Bassino (Italy) and Katharina Liensberger (Austria) tied for first).

Women's GS: Lara Gut-Behrami (Swiss). Women's slalom: Katharina Liensberger (Austria).

## GOLD MEDAL FOR ZOI

**Zoi Sadowski-Synnott (NZ)** won a snowboard World Cup title for the first time when she won a big air event at Kreischberg (Austria) in January.

The 19-year-old from Wanaka brushed off a crash on her opening attempt.

Sadowski-Synnott's two final runs scored her 81.60 and 80.80 and propelled her to the top of the podium on 162.40.

Kokomo Murase (Japan) was second on 161.80 and Olympic gold medallist Anna Gasser (Austria) was third with 161.40.

Sadowski-Synnott was a bronze medallist at the last Winter Olympics, in 2018 in Pyeongchang, where at age 16 years 353 days she briefly became New Zealand's youngest ever Olympic medallist, before Nico Porteous broke the record later the same day.

\*\*\* Cool Wakushima (NZ) placed 17th in Zoi's event at Kreischberg. Cool began snowboarding in Japan when she was six. Her family moved to New Zealand when she was nine.

\*\*\* Tiarn Collins (NZ) came 18th in the men's snowboard event at Kreischberg while Mitchell Davern (NZ) was 36th.

\*\*\* There was also a big air event for skiers. Margaux Hackett was 12th among the women while Ben Barclay was 38th and Luca Harrington 48th among the men.

## ZOI WINS SILVER

**Zoi Sadowski-Synnott (NZ)** came second in the opening women's World Cup snowboard slopestyle event of the season at Laax (Switzerland).

Jamie Anderson (US), aged 30, who has won the gold medal in slopestyle at the last two Olympic Winter Games, won the event with 84.35 points.

Zoi was second with 82.96 and Tess Coady (Australia) was third with 74.18.

It was Anderson's 10th World Cup victory, eight of those coming in slopestyle.



Zoi Sadowski-Synnott

Sadowski-Synnott earlier won the opening big air event of the season. Big air and slopestyle are similar but slopestyle is more technical.

\*\*\* **Tiarn Collins (NZ)** came 25th in the men's snowboard slopestyle.

## ALPINE SKIING

**Alice Robinson (NZ)**, who won two alpine World Cup giant slalom skiing races last season, has found it tougher this winter.

So far she has finished 12th, 14th, 9th and 9th while failing to finish in two other races. A seventh race was abandoned when hurricane winds wrecked the timing facilities.

**Piera Hudson (NZ)** has failed to finish several World Cup slalom and giant slalom races. Her best finish was 51st in a slalom.

**Alice Robinson (NZ)** finished 21st in a World Cup super-g race at Val d'Isère (France). It was her best finish in her backup discipline.

**Willis Feasey (NZ)** did not finish a men's alpine World Cup giant slalom at Adelboden (Switzerland).

**The number of participants will be reduced at the (FIS) alpine junior world ski championships at Bansko (Bulgaria) on March 1-10.**

There will be three individual races per gender instead of five and there will be a separation of the flows between men's and women's teams.

No spectators will be allowed and there will be no opening or closing ceremonies.

You don't have to be a top seeded ace to win an alpine World Cup high speed downhill ski race.

**Martin Cater (Slovenia)** with bib 41 surprised everyone including himself to win the downhill at Val d'Isère (France).

**Otmar Striedinger (Austria)** was starting to get a taste of his first World Cup victory when Cater rushed through the finish line

Prominent alpine skiers **Marco Schwarz (Austria) plus Loïc Meillard, Justin Murisier and Marco Odermatt (all Swiss)** all tested positive for Covid-19.

Schwartz was the 2019 World bronze medallist in both slalom and combined while Meillard and Odermatt each notched his first World Cup win last season.

**Alpine skiing World Cup director Markus Waldner** tested positive for Covid-19 while overseeing slalom races in Flachau (Austria) in January.

## COURSE SETTER

New Zealand was chosen to set the course for an alpine World Cup giant slalom ski race for the first time, due to Alice Robinson's outstanding results over the past year.

Robinson's coach **Chris Knight (Christchurch)** set the course for the first run at Courchevel.

Robinson said: "It's a first for me. The sets are very biased to the larger teams so it's normally the likes of the Austrians,

Swiss, Italians or Norwegians who get the course sets."

## FREESTYLE EVENT

**Ski Knuckle Huck** is the name of a new freestyle skiing event which is contested at the Winter X Games in Colorado.

The event has competitors take off the knuckle of a big air jump and huck their most unique trick.

Since the athletes do not gain much height, the tricks must rely on technicality and creativity throughout the jam session format.

Instead of scoring singular runs, the knuckle tricks are judged in a 20 minute overall impression format for each rider, with strong emphasis on creativity and technique.

The world ski cross and snowboard cross championships are no longer being held in China, due to Covid-19.

Originally planned for Zhangjiakou, the site of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, the events in will now be held in at Idre Fjäll in Sweden.

## REINDEER TROPHY

Winners of alpine World Cup ski races at **Levi (Finland)** receive an unusual prize, a live young reindeer.

US slalom star Michaela Shiffrin has won four *races* in *Levi* in recent years which means she has *four reindeer which she named* Rudolph, Sven, Mr Gru and Ingemar.

She failed to win her fifth reindeer this year when she came second in her comeback race after a back injury.

Petra Vlhova (Slovakia) was the winner and named her reindeer after her father Igor. The ladies do not take their reindeer home. They live in an animal farm in Lapland.



*Skiing at Tukino on Mt Ruapehu. Photos: Tukino skifield.*





**Upper:** Lovely ski slopes out West at Whakapapa. **Lower:** Hut Flat as seen from the gondola. Photo: Joe Corbett.

## ACROSS THE SKIING WORLD

**Veteran US actor Robert Redford** has sold the Sundance Mountain Resort ski area to Broadreach Capital Partners and Cedar Capital Partners.

Additionally, the Redford family has entered into a partnership with Utah Open Lands to put more than 300 acres of wild lands into permanent protection.

Redford founded the resort in 1969 which he named after the film character that made him a fan favourite in Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.

The deal does not include Redford's other assets and projects such as the Sundance Institute and the Sundance Film Festival.

*Nic Cavanagh has been appointed as CEO of Snow Sports New Zealand.*

*Nic has worked at Snow Sports NZ since 2012 and is currently the High Performance Director, a role which he will continue to hold alongside the position of CEO.*

**A Norwegian skiing hero has been sentenced to seven months in jail and banned from driving for life for speeding while on cocaine.**

Two-time Olympic cross-country gold medallist **Petter Northug**, aged 34, was clocked at 168 km/h in his Jaguar on a road with a 110km/h speed limit.

A previous conviction for drunk driving in 2014 was taken into account for the sentencing.

*New Zealand freeskiier Byron Wells has announced his retirement from the NZ national freeski team and competitive skiing.*

*Byron has competed internationally in both slopestyle and halfpipe for over a decade and was member of the 2014 and 2018 New Zealand Olympic Winter Games teams.*

**Skeetawk** is the name of a new ski area which has recently opened in Alaska. It has a 30-chair triple lift capable of carrying 500 people per hour and is operating at weekends and during school holidays.

“This ski area is very rugged, very Alaskan, and people will definitely have to come up here with quite a bit of self-sufficiency in mind,” general manager Scott Patridge said.

“It’s cold. There’s not a warming hut, there’s not a day lodge and you’re driving up into the mountains in rural Alaska.”

*Aleksander Bolshunov (Russia), the world’s top-ranked cross-country skier, was disqualified after whipping at a Finnish opponent with a ski pole on the finishing straight, then tackling the skier after they crossed the finish line of a World Cup relay.*

*Joni Mäki (Finland) collided with Bolshunov but was not disqualified or relegated.*

*Bolshunov reacted by whipping his right ski pole at Mäki, then doing it again with more force as the Finn skied away. After the finish he collided with Mäki, who fell to the snow.*

A skier was rescued at **Mt Hood skifield** in Oregon (US) after she fell 5 metres into a fumarole that was covered by snow.

The woman, 32, was skiing with her husband at 3500 metres elevation on the active volcano.

A climber in the area saw her plight and lowered a rope which she used to escape from the hole. She suffered an injured shoulder and thanked her ski helmet for avoiding worse injury.

*Philippe Gueisbuhler has been named as FIS Director, replacing the former Secretary General Sarah Lewis.*

*Gueisbuhler comes to FIS after serving the last four years as the Director of the Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF).*

*A native of Switzerland who holds dual Austrian citizenship, he is fluent in French, German, English and Russian.*

A bear was spotted chasing a skier on a slope in the popular mountain resort of **Predeal (Romania)**.

People sitting on a chairlift above saw the bear and warned the skier of the danger.

The young man escaped safely after he threw his backpack onto the snow to distract the bear.

Nine News had great video, taken from the chairlift, of the man skiing down the hill with the bear in hot pursuit.

*Former Swiss downhill ski racer **Doris De Agostini** has died aged 62.*

*She competed in the World Cup between 1976 and 1983 and won eight races; with 19 World Cup podiums.*

*In 1978 De Agostini won the bronze medal in the downhill at the world championships in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.*

**Crown Princess Mette-Marit of Norway** broke her coccyx (tailbone) in a skiing accident.

Mette-Marit (47) was accompanied by her daughter Princess Ingrid Alexandra (16) when she fell while getting off a chairlift. She spent one night at a local hospital.

The accident happened during a visit to the royal cabin at Uvdal Alpine, a family-friendly ski resort located between Oslo and Bergen.

***Claudia Riegler** is still winning international races at the age of 47. No, not the NZ three-time Olympian skier. The Austrian snowboarder of the same name.*

*Riegler and Andreas Prommegger combined at Bad Gastein (Austria) to win an FIS parallel giant slalom pairs event.*

**A Colorado Court of Appeals** has ruled that waivers can protect resorts from lawsuits filed by injured skiers.

It said waivers on the back of lift tickets that release resorts from “any and all liability” take precedence over the state’s Ski Safety Act.

In this case a woman who was injured getting off a chairlift at Loveland had signed a waiver promising to “assume all risks” in skiing at the resort.

***The city of Lahti in Finland** has introduced what it proclaims to be the world’s first urban cross-country ski sharing programme.*

*City Skis works the same as city bikes. The skis can be borrowed from a ski point, where they should be returned to after use. Residents can run errands or get some exercise.*

**Elan has released Voyager, a folding all mountain ski.**

The engineering feat is achieved by a series of hinges and locking mechanisms and Elan says it doesn’t lose any of the structural rigidity of a conventional ski.

It has sizes from 160cm to 172cm and costs \$NZ2500 for which you get skis, bindings, poles and a ski bag.

***A snow sports instructor in Manchester (UK)** has set a world record attempt for the greatest vertical distance skied up and downhill indoors in 24 hours.*

*Callum Mackenzie, 22, climbed up the 180m indoor slope at the Chill Factore skifield and skied down 200 times, for a vertical height of 12km.*

**A dust plume from the Sahara Desert** swept across ski resorts in the Alps in February, turning the snow to yellow and orange.

Skiers happily took to the slopes despite the freak weather incident and assorted Covid-19 restrictions,

The orange tint was the result of strong winds in Africa causing the sand to sweep across to Europe before it hit the mountain ranges and settled onto the snow.





## CLUB ITEMS & SERVICES FOR SALE

RSC Administration Office, P.O. Box 8064, Symonds Street, Auckland 1150

Website: [www.rsc.org.nz](http://www.rsc.org.nz)

email: [admin@rsc.org.nz](mailto:admin@rsc.org.nz)

### Lockers

Lockers are available for hire in the Hut at Turoa and occasionally in the Lodge.

email - [admin@rsc.org.nz](mailto:admin@rsc.org.nz) to find out what is available.

**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 \$260.00 incl GST (\$233.91 plus GST)

Annual junior subs \$98 incl GST (\$85.22 plus GST)

## ACCOMMODATION FEES (Effective May 1st 2021)

Members Senior	18 years and over	\$55
Members Teen	14-17 years	\$48
Members Junior	13 years and under	\$37
Members' children	7 years and under	\$29
Non-members	14 years and over	\$101
Non-members	13 years and under	\$68
Life Members		\$0
School group children		\$68
School group parents		\$90

### Off season rates (Chalet and Turoa) 2020/2021 summer

Members Senior and Junior \$28

Non-members Senior and Junior \$33