

# *The Bulletin*

**RUAPEHU SKI CLUB**

Volume 84, No. 2

June 2019



*A tower for the new Sky Waka gondola which is due to open at Whakapapa later this month. Photo: Catherine Gafa.*



## **CONTENTS**

- 2 Nelson's Column
- 3 Ruapehu news
- 5 Ski activities 2019
- 5 Cooks for 2019
- 6 RAL prices
- 7 Office notes
- 8 Instructor for 2019
- 11 Friends and family
- 13 Sky Waka gondola
- 15 Obituaries
- 16 Stefan's artwork
- 17 RSC calendar
- 17 New members
- 19 Zoi wins triple crown
- 20 Nico runs second
- 21 Alice on podium
- 22 Marcel still No 1
- 23 Adam Hall wins gold
- 24 The Staircase
- 26 Longboard revival
- 27 Volcano breakthrough
- 30 World snow news
- 32 RSC info page

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

I am writing, this time, from Middlemore Hospital where I am recovering from hand surgery.

Although I am hoping to be fit for skiing by the time the winter season commences, I could not get into a ski glove at the moment, much less even imagine how to get ski boots on single handed.

In the meantime, I'm hoping Alan, our Editor and Club historian, can fix any medication induced typographical lapses that intervene.

I had the pleasure of attending the annual new member briefing on the evening prior to my admission to hospital. This was excellently organised by Arran Birchenough and was held at the Snowcentre.

It was great to meet some of this year's new members who could attend. Some have already attended work parties and are very enthusiastic about joining RSC.

The theme of how well the Club environment supports family values often arose. It seems to be an important factor in attracting new members.

Snowcentre was again amazing in their support and I would like to offer thanks to Peter and his staff for their technical advice and hospitality.

Snowcentre is probably the best provisioned and equipped snow sports retailer in the country and they offer a 10 percent discount to all RSC members, year-round.

The annual general meeting of Ruapehu Alpine Lifts was held on May 11th at the Happy Valley Bistro. It was attended by around 60 people, most of whom are shareholders.

The topics covered at the AGM included achievements of the previous winter, acknowledgement of some issues and optimism for the future.

Whakapapa had 143 operating days last winter with only seven closed days. This contributed to the biggest season in its 65 year history and was aided by early snowfalls and improvements in snowmaking.

Sadly, chairman Murray Gribben reported on a bus accident that claimed the life of Hannah Francis and injured many others. He offered further condolences and details of the actions subsequently taken to reduce the future risk of a similar tragedy.

Another set-back for Turoa last season was the avalanche that disabled the High Noon Express for the rest of the season.

Construction of the gondola, now officially named the Sky Waka, is well under way and anticipated to be open in time for the coming season.

At the same time, the Knoll Ridge Café is undergoing a massive refit to provide a range of café and restaurant experiences.

A previous chairman, Tom Huppert, was present and made an address to the AGM expressing gratitude to long-standing RSC member, Roger Manthel. Roger served on the RAL board for many years and was chairman at one point. The address was greeted with enthusiastic and appreciative applause.

As we approach our annual general meeting, it appears that there will be some vacancies on our Committee.

The Committee is essential to the effective management of the Club and the democratic representation of our members. Directing further development of the Club and its facilities and offerings is also vitally important.

We have a great team of enthusiastic and contributive people who thrive in a collaborative and supportive environment.

I encourage anyone who would like to join that team to make themselves known to us through the Administration Office.

**Richard Nelson, President**



Lovely snow in Te Heuheu Valley during 2018. Photo: RAL.

## THROUGH THE LODGE WINDOW

**The top tower on the High Noon Express chairlift at Turoa, which was badly damaged by an avalanche last August, has been fully repaired.**

Damage to the haul rope and another tower has also been repaired.

The replacement towers are built to the same specifications as the originals. The repairs were done by Doppelmayr NZ with help from Turoa's summer maintenance crew.

*RSC is pleased that Dave Mazey has accepted an invitation for him to be an Honorary member of the Club.*

*Dave retired from RAL two years ago after 30 years at the helm of the chairlift company, during which he saw the integration of Turoa, plus Happy Valley and a range of services on Ruapehu.*

*Before that Dave was a Park Ranger for the Tongariro National Park. His father **John Mazey** was Chief Ranger at Whakapapa.*

**Winter 2018** saw a 28 percent increase in visitors to Mt Ruapehu and a 26 percent increase in RAL's revenue.

This growth was the outcome of recent investments at Whakapapa, a successful winter with great snow, good weather, an increase to the length of the season and an increase to the operational day, with first tracks and night skiing offered at Whakapapa.

Attendance at Whakapapa was up 40 percent and at Turoa 11 percent despite the High Noon Express suffering avalanche damage.

***Growth in the ski industry** was experienced across the whole country in 2018.*

*A record number of skiers and snowboarders hit New Zealand slopes in 2018, clocking up 1.9 million days. That was a 16 percent increase on 2017, the previous highest year.*

**RAL again this year for a brief period in April was offering life passes for skiing or riding at Whakapapa and Turoa.**

## THE RUAPEHU SKI CLUB

**(inc) Founded 1913**

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**President:** Richard Nelson

**Vice-Presidents:** John Benn, Liza Fitzsimmons, Marion Quinn, Phill Thomass, Donald Webster

**Secretary:** Kate Paul

**Treasurer:** Heather Chao

**Immediate Past President:** Adrian Adriaansen

**Captain:** Catherine Gafa

**Vice-Captain:** Nina Thomas

**Committee:** Arran Birchenough, Carl Burling, Jeff Davies, Vanessa Hills, Richard Horton, Nils Johannessen, Matthew Lamb, John Tetley, Fiona Willison

**Patron:** Peter Brady

**Patroness:** Barbara Scelly

**Auditors:** Hart and Co

**Admin Officer:** Sheryl Brownlee

**Lodge Officer:** Carl Burling

**Hut Officer:** John Benn

**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

These cost \$5195. Also available for \$6750 was "life pass plus" which allowed the holder to transfer the pass to someone else during the next 10 years.

Members are well advised to keep a close eye on RAL's website for offers such as these which usually do not last long.

***RAL's proposed gondola for Turoa, which will replace the Parklane triple chairlift and the Movenpick quad chairlifts, will have a mid-station at the Wintergarden area.***

*This is to ensure that the Wintergarden, which is currently serviced by the Parklane, is easily accessible from the gondola.*

**Tauranga runner** Sam Clark smashed the course record at for the **Ring of Fire** ultramarathon at Mt Ruapehu.

Clark, 28, raced the 72km course in 8 hours, 30 minutes and 25 seconds, beating the previous record by 16 minutes. He was 47 minutes ahead of the runner-up, Andy Palmer of Wellington.

***Australian ultra-runner Lucy Bartholomew, 22, won the women's 72km race in the record time of 10:15:10.***

*A record-breaking 660 athletes entered Ring of Fire, including more than 100 internationals, competing over a range of distances.*

**Te Wai ā-moe (Crater Lake)** heated up to 44 degrees C on April 19th, leading some commentators to wonder if an eruption was due.

But then the lake cooled to 39 degrees at the last report before this Bulletin went to the printer.

***The deadline for the September Bulletin will be Friday August 23rd.***

*All items should be with the Editor by then.*

## THE BULLETIN

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## SKI ACTIVITIES 2019

Although as I write this we don't have any snow yet, with accommodation bookings open in May, many of you will be planning for the season.

Our live in instructor, Loris Keiser, has been booked for RSC lessons for the second week of the school holidays in July (Monday 15th through to Friday 19th) and September/October (Monday Sept 30th to Friday Oct 4th).

To sign up for these please use the sign up form in the member's area of the website, on the right hand side under members menu.

RSC 4.30pm holiday races will be on again, and everyone is encouraged to have a go. They are an opportunity for everyone to participate in running through some race gates in a fun and less formal setting than an interclub race.

There will be a \$5 surcharge per person during the popular holiday week. This covers prizes and refreshments that are provided at prizegivings during the week.

There is still time to sign up for the RAL Academy lessons (this replaces RSC Squads). The details about this are on our website under ski activities.

If you are a racer and are interested in entering the interclub races, please check out the dates on events calendar and contact Chris Blomfield at [chris.blomfield@gmail.com](mailto:chris.blomfield@gmail.com).

We have our race, the Haensli Cup on August 17th this year.

The race is to find the fastest man and women on the mountain; this is open to anyone who wants to enter. We have a great prizegiving with lots of spot prizes from our generous sponsors.

**Catherine Gafa**  
**Club Captain**

## COOKS FOR 2019

We welcome back again this season:

Lodge Donna O'Hanlon who has bravely decided to head up the hill from the Chalet.

Hut Jimmi Bertinshaw who fed us so well last year.

Turoa Mike Anderson. I don't think we can imagine Turoa with him now!

We welcome to the Chalet this season James Wright Sutton.

He is the Dad of a young daughter which may help when the place is full of primary kids. He has experience in both the military and restaurant catering.

**MQ**

## SELECTORS WANTED

Snow Sports NZ is seeking to recruit and appoint suitably qualified and experienced people to its Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games team selection panel for the period 2019 through 2022.

This will involve selecting for the 2020 Winter Youth Olympic Games and the 2022 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games.

It is seeking up to six people, two as lead selectors and four as discipline specific (adaptive, freeski and ski cross, snowboard and snowboard cross, alpine and cross-country).

The role is a voluntary one. For details see the SSNZ website. Applications close on June 30th.

## RAL 2019 PRICES

An adult day pass at Mt Ruapehu this season will cost \$129, up from \$125 last year. A youth (5 to 17 years) day pass costs \$79.

An afternoon pass available after 12.30 costs \$109 (youth \$79).

A two-day pass price is \$239 (youth \$143). Three days is \$319 (youth \$194.40), four days \$369 (youth \$221) and five days \$399 (youth \$239.40).

A beginner day pass offering the use of Happy Valley is offered at \$89 (youth \$69).

“Youth” is aged 5 to 17.

A wide range of season passes is also available, costing less if you buy early in the year or at the end of the 2019 season for 2020.

See RAL’s website [mtruapehu.com](http://mtruapehu.com) for full details.

## CONFUSED? SO AM I

RAL’s old building at the top of the second chairlift at Whakapapa used to be known as the Knoll Ridge Chalet.

That name was written in very large letters on the front of the building.

But after it burned down in 2009 the new replacement building was often and increasingly called the Knoll Ridge Café. It won awards under that name

Now out of the blue the RAL annual report and website both refer only and often to the Knoll Ridge Chalet.

AG

## TRAINING EXERCISE

Ruapehu Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) last month held a

multi-agency training exercise based around a major volcanic eruption on Mt Ruapehu.

The exercise led by Ruapehu District Council (RDC) involved all the usual emergency response agencies of fire, St John ambulance and the police.

They were be joined by the army, DOC, Ruapehu Alpine Lifts (RAL), GNS Science, health services, local iwi and media as well as civil defence personnel from outside the region.

In addition to getting all the partner agencies to work together, the exercise let people whose normal day jobs aren’t in emergency services to get a feel for what a real life civil defence response involves.

With the coming ski season and visitor numbers to Ruapehu expected to surge with the opening of RAL’s new Whakapapa gondola, this exercise is very timely.

## LIZARDS DELAY LIFT

The discovery of a significant lizard population has stopped **Cardrona Alpine Resort’s** plans for the construction of a new chairlift before this winter.

The Central Otago skifield wants to install a quad chairlift to open up 55ha of advanced terrain known as Pringles.

It aimed to be ready for this season but then the lizards were found.

General manager Bridget Legnavsky said Cardrona is working with the Department of Conservation on a plan to preserve the lizard habitat while the new chairlift is built.

It is now hoped to have the chairlift in by the April next year.

## OFFICE NOTES

It is the month of May and the bookings have started for our winter season. I thought it may be appropriate for our newer members and some of our Senior members to mention a little about the process that happens with your booking application.

No bookings for the season are processed until after May 1st.

Then, in the order they are received, I need to check: are all subscriptions for those on the booking up to date and are there sufficient funds in the deposit account to cover the nights wanted?

That booking is placed on the “grid of the building requested” which is similar to a jigsaw puzzle for each building.

Gradually as more bookings are processed these bookings are moved around to make the best possible use of the bunk space available.

This is why bookings can be confirmed, ensuring that you have a booking and bunks, though bunk authorities giving which building and actual bunks are not sent until two days prior, which take into account cancellations etc.

School holidays follow the same procedure though as the accommodation rules state no more than 7 nights at a time can be booked at the upper mountain buildings.

Where requests outnumber the bunks we have available, those Senior members who have completed extra work parties are given preference, and the remaining bookings can be placed in a ballot.

Often bookings include non-members and the accommodation rules say that these bookings cannot be confirmed until two weeks prior to the date requested.

To enable members to make arrangements to bring friends and family outside the

two weeks time frame, these bookings are placed at the Chalet so that you will actually have bunks for the booked time.

Then two weeks prior, space permitting, these bookings may be moved to the upper level.

It is quite difficult when bookings for school holidays, Club championships, Haensli Cup weekend etc come in late, like a week before the event.

Although you may have completed extra work parties, there may not be room on the upper mountain for the time you have requested. Hence a Chalet booking may be the only option.

Yes, I do enjoy jigsaw puzzles and sometimes “pieces” get dropped, so I will apologise in advance.

Other points for our members-

Children that are 8 years of age as of January 1st each year can apply for Junior membership. Those who turn 8 after January 1st can stay as Members children at those rates for the rest of this year.

Also any member who has been a Senior member of RSC for 25 years or more and is 60 years of age can apply to the Committee for Veteran membership.

Any transfer from your deposit account, ie to pay subscriptions, must have an email authorising us to do so.

There are a number of ski and gear lockers available for rental in the Hut.

Please notify the Office or the building leader if there are any issues that require fixing or basic small repairs during your stay in the buildings.

Saying “that light was like that last year” will not actually fix the problem. We need to know about it.

Looking forward to another exciting winter season

**Sheryl**





*Loris Keiser, our Swiss instructor for 2019.*

## LETTER FROM LORIS

Dear Ruapehu Ski Club members,  
My name is Loris Keiser and I'm 25 years old. I grew up in Verdabbio, a small mountain village in the south of Switzerland, where I began to develop a big passion for mountain biking.

In the winters my parents always brought me to our local ski club, so I learnt to ski at a very young age. Therefore I used to spend most of my free time in my youth on my mountain bike in the summer and on my skis in the winter.

When I was 16 years of age I began to work as a ski instructor in the local ski club and some years later the Swiss Snow School Davos made it possible to turn my hobby and my passion into my profession.

For three seasons now I have passed on my knowledge on skiing to my guests with a lot of motivation. It makes me very happy



to get to know so many people through my job as ski instructor and that I still can learn and improve daily.

Last summer I was travelling through Portugal with my van and there I also started to fall in love with surfing.

Visiting New Zealand has always been one of my biggest childhood dreams, even though I'm a little bit scared that I probably won't want to go back home to Switzerland.

From Sereina and all the other former RSC instructors I heard so many great things about this beautiful country with its amazing nature and the great people.

They all told me I would love it there which convinced myself to spend a season in New Zealand.

I am really grateful for the opportunity to work at the Ruapehu Ski Club in this unique environment and I am very looking forward to exploring your country after the season, biking some nice trails and try to surf some waves. I am sure it will be a fantastic experience.



**Hut Flat in March as RAL built its Sky Waka gondola. Visible is the aerial cableway (flying fox) that carried tons of cement up to the tower sites. The cement was driven by tractor up the Rockgarden and then transferred to the cableway. Photo: Dan Paine.**



**A tower in place for the new Sky Waka gondola. Photo: RAL.**

## FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Our membership base has always relied on the introduction of new members via friends and families of existing members.

In fact RSC used to enjoy a solid waiting list, such were the numbers trying to join the Club. This however is not the current situation, so we appeal to you all to introduce a new member.

Can you introduce a new friend or family to the Club this year?

Do your children have friends who ski or would like to start, from their school or sports teams?

Do you have university or work colleagues who may be interested? Do you have family members or old friends?

RAL's buddy passes means you can get them half price tickets, and most nights (except Saturdays on busy weekends) you could show them just how great RSC can be for them and their families.

Members introducing members has the following benefits:

- We organically grow membership with like-minded members.
- We avoid using precious Club resource in funds and time recruiting new members.
- They have a smoother introduction to the Club through work parties.

On May 15th at The SnowCentre in Auckland the Club ran a new members evening, with six parties of new and potential new members being introduced to the Club, enjoying discounted shopping, and hearing what's new in equipment and at RAL.

For 2020 with your help we would like to see much bigger numbers. So don't delay, pick up the phone, talk to friends, email them our Club website URL, or if you want pamphlets contact Sheryl in the Administration Office.

And if you have new members

initiatives you wish to share, reach out to [arranbirchenough@hotmail.com](mailto:arranbirchenough@hotmail.com) / 021 438 894. He would love to hear from you.

**Arran**

## PRICELESS COLLECTION

From Mountain Scene (Queenstown)

A Queenstown ski shop owner has been given a "priceless" collection of relics chronicling the history of commercial skiing in the Wakatipu Basin.

Kris Vermeir, co-owner of Browns Ski Shop and treasurer of the Wakatipu Ski Club, was left the large box of items by a mystery woman.

Books containing minutes from the ski club's committee meetings as it was starting out in 1939 on a mission to build a hut at Coronet Peak, which became a reality 10 years later.

Vermeir says the books include interesting ideas about how to get the people of Queenstown "behind this new thing called skiing".

The box of relics contains old film reels documenting the opening of Coronet Peak's first chairlift, photographs of coaches, members and supporters, and minutes from 1939 until the late 1980s.

Before the first rope ski tow was installed at Coronet in 1947, locals used to ski on the high country farm after trekking up the mountain.

The books contain information about plans to open Coronet, which Vermeir says show key figures behind the skifield were also club members.

"It's quite funny when you read in the minutes about the discussions people had about how to make skiing popular, how the airport might cope and how tourism would affect Queenstown," Vermeir says.

"This discussion was going on 70-80 years ago, so it's very interesting to read people's thoughts of the day."



**Top of the gondola.** The top terminal for the new Sky Waka gondola was completed during April. Also visible is the aerial cableway carrying material from Hut Flat. The Knoll Ridge Chalet is at the left of this scene. Photo: RAL.



**Bottom of the gondola.** The lower terminal and drive station of the Sky Waka gondola were in place by early May. The building in the foreground is the Happy Valley Bistro. At the right are the access elevators. Photo: RAL.

## **“SKY WAKA” GONDOLA**

**As this issue of The Bulletin went to print, RAL was ready to launch its \$25 million “Ski Waka” gondola running from the Top O’ The Bruce to the Knoll Ridge Chalet.**

The gondola has 50 cabins, each taking 10 passengers on a 5 minute ride over 1.8km.

It can carry 2400 passengers per hour and will operate year-round.

Initially the gondola was scheduled to open on June 1st, along with Happy Valley.

On May 7th RAL said this date would not be met and the opening date was more likely to be about June 22nd when the main Whakapapa skifield opens.

### **Gondola prices.**

#### **Winter.**

Single ride (return): Adult \$49. Youth (5-17 years) \$29.

Infants (0-4 years) free.

Season pass or Life pass: Free.

Family package: Two adults and children for Gondola sightseeing: \$135.

#### **Summer sightseeing.**

Single ride (return): Adult \$49. Youth (5-17 years) \$29.

Infants (0-4 years): Free.

Season pass: 50 percent discount.

Life pass: Free.

Family package: Two adults and children for Gondola sightseeing: \$135.

### **Why RAL chose the name Sky Waka?**

RAL states: “When we looked at names for our \$25 million gondola, we wanted something that reflected our connection to our land, our sky and to our people. We wanted a name that was catchy, easy to remember and able to last a long time.

“We wanted a name that would resonate with not only our local community, but also our growing number of international visitors, for whom English is their second language.”

### **Use of aerial ropeway (like a flying fox).**

A feature of the gondola construction was the erection of an aerial ropeway which was used to carry cement to the 14 towers and the top station. This avoided the use of helicopters and some 1100 tons of cement was carried.

The ropeway covered 1.1km from Hut Flat to the top, with a maximum span of 500 metres.

Some older RSC members recalled a home made aerial ropeway which we used to carry materials up the Rockgarden when the RSC Lodge was being built in the early 1950s.

### **No mid-station**

The Bulletin has been asked why the gondola has no mid-station. This was considered by RAL and RSC but was rejected for these reasons:

First, it would greatly add to the cost of the gondola.

Second, it would slow every journey both up and down.

Third, it would be sited between RSC Lodge and RSC Hut with a detrimental impact on Club life.

### **The Knoll Ridge Chalet**

The Knoll Ridge Chalet has been undergoing significant changes that will be ready for winter 2019.

RAL will provide a new food concept downstairs. It will revitalise the express café to ensure the flow and customer experience is optimised, and it will introduce a new premium buffet option.

This option will be positioned along the windows facing the Pinnacles and will be renamed the “Pinnacles Restaurant – Nga Tohu”.

**PS:** The gondola can run at night, taking passengers up to the Knoll Ridge Chalet as late as 10am.



An RSC working party at the RSC Lodge during March 2019. Photos: Dan Paine.

## EDDIE HAGEN

The death has been reported at Napier of Eddie Hagen, aged 83, who was RSC Vice-Captain for a period in the 1960s.

Eddie was a strong skier, as was his brother the late Don Hagen, and he regularly attended RSC events.

On one memorable occasion Eddie wanted to complete his T2 ski test with a 500ft descent through broken terrain.

Late one afternoon the judges took him halfway up the Pinnacles and set a course to the bottom through the rocks.

The whole of Winter Party looked on, and cheered as Eddie completed the course and won his T2 badge.

We offer the Club's condolences to his family.

### THE T2 SKI TEST

To pass the T2 ski test you had to pass the technical aspects of the T3 (easy) and Q2 (moderate) tests, and then do three runs: 1000ft vertical drop in hard snow, 1000ft vertical drop in soft snow and 500ft vertical drop through broken or rocky terrain.

The test regime of the NZ Ski Association ran from 1933 to 1979. All told 41 RSC members passed the T2 test.

## IAN McCORKINDALE

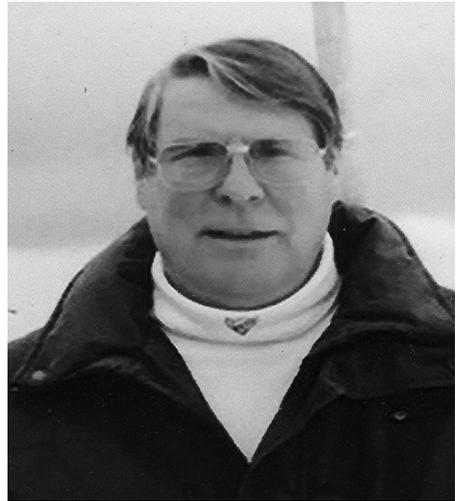
We note the death aged 88 in May of Ian McCorkindale of Auckland who was a prominent member of RSC during the 1960s onwards.

Ian skied regularly at RSC for many years and his daughters were often to the fore in Club races.

One daughter Briar was Club champion in 1981 and 1988, and was a Vice-Captain. Fiona, Briar and Kate were all Club junior champions.

Corky was one of those happy folk who were always good for a laugh around the Lodge.

We offer the Club's condolences to his family.



Roger Kiddle

## ROGER KIDDLE

The death has occurred at Wellington of Roger Kiddle who was the RSC Hut Officer for 10 years from 1972 until 1982.

This was a time when the Hut Officer handed bookings for the building, as well as being in charge of maintenance and working parties.

If that was not enough Roger was also the transport officer from Wellington and fielded phone calls from members wanting a ride to or from the capital.

His work in 1975 included enlarging the Hut kitchen and storeroom, the installation of small lockers upstairs and the addition of more ski lockers in the basement.

Roger was also on the Club Committee during 1973-1977.

Sadly he broke his leg one day near the top of the second chairlift. I know this because I was skiing right behind him.

In later years Roger and his wife Marion were regular attendees at Winter Party, staying (of course) in the Hut. They also enjoyed croquet at the Kelburn club lawns.

We offer the Club's condolences to Marion and her family.



*Snow on the Staircase. Photo: RAL.*

## STEFAN'S ARTWORK

A new book commemorates the artistic work of RSC member, painter and mountain guide Stefan Spörli.

After Stefan's tragic passing in 2015, his partner Judith Spancken and his family created an exhibition of Stefan's art as a tribute to him.

It was Judith, led by her deep commitment to his legacy, who would devote her energy to assembling the paintings, drawings and sketches.

This culminated in a very moving memorial exhibition of Stefan's work, held at Argentière in the Chamonix Valley in France.

With this book Stefan remains alive in our memories as an artist and as a very lovable human being.

This is a custom product, not intended as a predetermined printing run for the market.

It will be produced individually for those who choose to order it and the price of 181 Euros, although it may appear a bit high, simply represents the production plus shipping costs.

Title: Stefan Spörli A Collection of Paintings and Drawings.

Track it down via Google or look at <http://www.blurb.de/bookstore/invited/8034180/e4d149dee01764f3743ccfcfd66ae5718f800ddd>

## BOBSLEIGH FOR SULLIVAN

Olympic rowing gold medallist and America's Cup winner Joe Sullivan has turned to bobsleigh and is looking toward the 2022 Olympic Winter Games in Tokyo.

Sullivan has joined pilot Andy Williams in New Zealand's two man bobsleigh in the North American Cup.

Williams, who has been contesting bob since 2015, has employed several partners with a best placing of 10th at Lake Placid (New York).

Sullivan teamed with Nathan Cohen to win the Olympic double sculls gold at London in 2012.

In 2014 he switched to Team New Zealand as a grinder and was in the winning America's Cup crew.

## RSC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 2019	1	Happy Valley opens.
	12	RSC AGM at the Royal NZ Yacht Squadron
	22	Whakapapa opens
	22	Whakapapa gondola opens (possible date)
	29	Turoa opens
July 2019	6-21	School holidays
	20	Academy 1
	27	Academy 2
Aug 2019	3	Christiania Derby
	3	Academy 1
	10	Academy 2
	12-16	Winter Party
	17	Haensli Cup
	17	Academy 1
	24	Academy 2
	26-29	NIPS week one at Whakapapa
	31	Rangatira Alpine Trophy
31	Academy 1	
Sept 2019	2-5	NIPS week two at Whakapapa
	7	Tongariro Juniors
	7	Academy 2
	14	Ngauruhoe Trophy
	14	Academy 1
	21	Academy 2
	28	RSC Club champs
	28-Oct 13	School holidays
Oct 2019	28	Ski season closes

## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

Ilsa Brady (Auckland)

Connor Brady (Auckland)

Nicki Brady (Auckland)

Melanie Brandes (Auckland)

Angelene Burn (Auckland)

Nicola Clayton (Auckland)

Henry Cawford (Auckland)

Annette Culpán (Auckland)

Gaile Fornusek (Warkworth)

Sam Gray (Auckland)

Zdenek Kudrna (Wellington)

Elisa Kudrnova (Wellington)

Slavka Kudrnova (Wellington)

Jack Laycock (Auckland)

Noah Maoden (Auckland)

Kira Mazany (Auckland)

Caleb McKerrow (Auckland)

Ashley McKerrow (Auckland)

Jake McKerrow (Auckland)

Paul Montague (Auckland)

Kathryn Nemek (Auckland)

Johnan O'Neill (Auckland)

Adam Perkins (Auckland)

Charlotte Rea (Auckland)

Jim Rea (Auckland)

Carla Tonks (Whanganui)

Satori Van Staden (Raglan)

David Van Staden (Raglan)

Campbell Williams (Auckland)



**Upper:** Tim Sharp, Martina Zumstein and Carl Burling at the top of Mt Ngauruhoe. Photo from Carl. **Lower:** Claudia Burling, EJ Moffat, Abby Hunt and Maddie Moffat jump for joy after making it to the crater for the first time. Photo: Carl Burling.



*Zoi Sadowski-Synnott from Wanaka who is the new Queen of the Snows after winning the world's three major snowboard slopestyle gold medals.*

## ZOI WINS US OPEN

New Zealand snowboarder **Zoi Sadowski-Synnott** concluded a top level triple crown with a slopestyle victory in the US Open at Vail (Colorado).

This was her third big event win of the season after she won gold medals in both the X Games and the World Championships.

Sadowski-Synnott, aged 17, from Wanaka, came into the US Open final as the top qualifier and had an emphatic opening run to earn a score of 82.55 which sent her top of the leaderboard.

Falling snow and strong winds made for challenging second runs for all the competitors.

Zoi's winning run included a strong performance on the rails followed by an array of her best jumps.

Julia Marino (US) was second and Miyabi Onitsuka (Japan) was third.

**## Australian snowboarder Scotty James**, aged 24, equalled Zoi's triple crown by winning three events in the men's halfpipe category.

**## US snowboarder Chloe Kim**, aged 18, the Olympic champion, was also headed for the record books until she came second in the women's halfpipe. She made her last run with an ankle broken earlier in the day.



A New Zealander on the alpine World Cup skiing podium for the first time in 16 years. From left: Alice Robinson (NZ), Mikaela Shiffrin (US), Petra Vlhová (Slovakia).

## NICO COMES SECOND

New Zealand freeskiier Nico Porteous finished second in the freeski halfpipe World Cup tour rankings based on halfpipe events in US (two), Canada and China.

Porteous was in the lead after three events but could not land his tricks in the fourth and final event held at Mammoth Mountain (California).

Simon d'Artois (Canada) came second at Mammoth and won the overall World Cup while the double Olympic champion David Wise (US) was third.

**Nico's brother Miguel Porteous** finished eighth overall despite contesting only two of the four events.

Nico's second place finish is the best result for an NZ male in the FIS freestyle rankings.

**Jossi Wells** finished fourth overall in freeski slopestyle in 2014 and **Janina Kuzma** achieved a second place in the ladies halfpipe in 2014.

## JESS WINS FREERIDE

Ohakune skier **Jess Hotter** has won a Freeride qualifying series which gives her entry to the main World Freeride Tour next winter.

Freeride involves skiers picking their best line down a steep and usually rocky slope.

Judges in a qualifying event at Nendaz (Switzerland) in March gave her 80 points and first place. It was her third win in the qualifying series.

Jess was part of ski racing teams at Ohakune Primary School and then Ruapehu College, and was a member of race programmes at Turoa.

She has recently has been a ski patroller in Whakapapa, a guide in Queenstown in summer and a ski patroller in Wanaka.

**Blake Marshall (NZ)** finished second in the men's skiing qualifying tour.

**Maria Kuzma (NZ)** finished fifth in the women's snowboard division of the main tour, which was won by **Marion Haerty (France)**.



Alice Robinson from Queenstown, the world junior champion in alpine giant slalom skiing.

## ALICE WINS SILVER

NZ alpine ski racer Alice Robinson scored one of her country's finest ski results when she came second in the final giant slalom of the World Cup season.

In the race in Andorra she lost to the overall World Cup champion **Mikaela Shiffrin (US)** by just 0.3 of a second and beat another upcoming star of ski racing **Petra Vlhová (Slovakia)** by 0.41s.

This was the first appearance by a Kiwi skier on an alpine World Cup podium since 2003, and the first ever in a giant slalom.

Claudia Riegler had eight podiums (four wins) in slalom between 1996 and 2003.

Annelise Coberger also had eight podiums (one win) in slalom between 1992 and 1993.

After her international successes Alice headed back to Wakatipu High School in Queenstown where she favours science and social sciences.

### **Andorra** is a tiny nation in the Pyrenees jammed in between France and Spain.

## WORLD JUNIOR GOLD

Queenstown alpine ski racer Alice Robinson gained New Zealand's first junior world title in alpine skiing when she won the giant slalom race at Val di Fassa (Italy).

Alice, aged 17, finished second in her first run before skiing the fastest second run. **Camille Rast (Switzerland)** won the silver medal and **Kaja Norbye (Norway)** won the bronze.

The win earned Robinson a start in the final World Cup giant slalom of the season which was raced in Andorra. There she again had a marvellous performance for second place.

Alice was born in Sydney and her family moved to New Zealand when she was four. She is coached by former NZ ski racer Tim Cafe.

### Alice followed this with a second placing in a Europa Cup (second tier) super-g with almost no training in this discipline where racers go faster than in giant slalom.



*Marcel Hirscher (Austria), eight times overall alpine World Cup skiing champion*

## MARCEL WINS AGAIN

**Marcel Hirscher of Austria** won the alpine skiing overall World Cup for a record eighth time, making him clearly one of the best ever alpine skiers.

The cup is decided on points scored all alpine disciplines over the season.

Hirscher, now aged 30, has also won three Olympic medals (two gold), 11 world championship medals (seven gold) and 68 World Cup races with 137 podiums.

Marcel has hinted that he might retire soon to spend more time with his young family but has declined to make any definite announcement.

**Alpine World Cup 2018-19:** Marcel Hirscher (Austria) 1546, Alexis Pintauault (France) 1145, Henrik Kristoffersen (Norway) 1047.

**Mikaela Shiffrin (US)** won the women's overall World Cup for the third successive year. She was prominent as usual in slalom and giant slalom and this season added three wins in super-g.

Thus she became the first person to claim 17 World Cup wins in a single season, passing the old record of 14 set by Vreni Schneider (Switzerland).

Shiffrin, aged 23, has scored 60 World Cup race wins in total and is heading toward the record of 82 wins set by the recently retired Lindsey Vonn (US).

**Alpine World Cup 2018-19:** Mikaela Shiffrin (US) 2204, Petra Vlhova (Slovakia) 1355, Wendy Holdener (Switzerland) 1079.



New Zealand's Para Athlete of the Year Adam Hall.



Adam Hall with his Halberg Award

## HONOUR FOR HALL

**Para skier Adam Hall** won the Para Athlete of the Year at the 2019 Halberg Awards honouring the best in New Zealand sport.

Hall, now 31, won a gold medal and a silver at the 2018 Winter Paralympics held at Pyeongchang (South Korea) last year.

His teammate Corey Peters was one of three other finalists in Hall's category at the Halbergs. Another was prominent swimmer Sophie Pascoe.

**##** Diagnosed at birth with spina bifida, Adam says he's lucky because he is mobile and able to walk. Adam began skiing at age six and switched to snowboarding at age nine.

He admits to being a snowboarder at heart, but switched back to skiing in order to compete in the Paralympics.



**Left:** RSC member and NZ skiing champion Noel Kerr shows a lad how to ride the Staircase rope tow. **Right:** The T-bar towers are in position but the rope tow is still running through them.



**Left:** The Staircase T-bar operating in 1963. **Right:** The Staircase in recent years



*The Staircase T-bar in 1956. The n-shaped towers were replaced after 10 years by adjustable upright poles to avert this sort of digging. Photo: RSC collection.*

## THE STAIRCASE

The Staircase slope that we see so clearly from RSC Lodge and Hut is so named because in summer part of it resembles the grand staircase of a stately home.

The slope had a nutcracker rope tow from 1949 to 1955. This was replaced in 1955 by a T-bar that ran until 1991 when RAL removed it.

On one bad weather day in 2008 our Swiss instructor Sāmi Balsiger declared that what Whakapapa needed for such days was a T-bar on the Staircase. He was surprised to learn that we had one for 36 years.

The first rope tow on the Staircase had a small motor shed at the bottom but this was replaced after one year by a motor

house on the horizon, some 150 metres above the Nosedive.

With decent snow and a bit of courage, riders could go through the Nosedive to the top, though it took strength to hang on.

The motor house at the top was still there until the 1970s when a snowcat ran into the building, tipping over a fire which burnt down both the building and the cat.

The T-bar was the first T-bar installed anywhere in New Zealand. It ran up to the bottom of the Nosedive and was always very popular, though it was not easy to ride its first few years because of an almighty jerk soon after take off.

It was famed for the antics of “T-bar Tony”, a liftie who called a spade a spade.



## LONGBOARD REVIVAL

A group of keen skiers in California are doing their best to revive the use of 4 metre “longboard” skis and among other things they stage a world championship.

The setting is a 300 metre wide open ski slope at the Johnsville Historic Ski Bowl.

Club members claim the first ski races in North America took place at this site involving miners and their families in the mid-1800s.

To build the longboards, enthusiasts take a 20cm by 2 metres by 5 metres foot plank of Douglas fir and shape it into skis.

Classes are held to help learners and a local lumber company donates materials.

Competitors also cook their own wax from secret formulas made up of ingredients you’d find in an 1870 mining camp’s general store.

This list, though closely guarded, includes lye soap, pine pitch, turpentine and paraffin.

The skiers use one pole and the race course is a straight run with no turns.

As occurred with skiing in New Zealand, the first US skiers were Norwegian miners who arrived during the Gold Rush and spread the concept of skiing as transportation.

Gold Rush towns with colourful names like Poker Flat, Whiskey Diggings, Rich Bar, Johnsville and La Porte all sponsored longboard ski teams that would compete with each other for cash prizes paid in silver dollars or bags of gold dust.

By 1860, Sierra racing clubs were formed with elected officers and codified rules and regulations. In 1867, La Porte’s snow-shoe club announced three days of racing for purses ranging from \$25 to \$75.

The contest drew 42 competitors along with 300 spectators, most of which arrived on their own cross-country skis. This 1867 longboard tournament was heralded as the world’s first downhill ski championship.

Robert Oliver, known locally as “Cornish Bob,” was proclaimed World Champion after he streaked down the track in 14 seconds flat with a maximum speed calculated at 88.8 mph.

## **VOLCANO BREAKTHROUGH BY NZ SCIENTISTS**

New Zealand scientists have made a breakthrough discovery, carrying out large-scale experiments to work out why deadly currents of hot rocks and gases generated in volcanic eruptions race along the ground so fast.

Pyroclastic currents have been produced by many past eruptions from Taranaki, according to GNS Science. Researchers have warned currents from Taranaki could spread up to 25km.

They say the clue is an air-rich layer which develops at the base of the so-called pyroclastic density currents.

That air layer reduces friction and minimises the deceleration of the current on gentle slopes.

The currents carry boulders, rocks and particles and can travel at speeds of up to 900km/h, and cause total destruction of the area they cover.

They are usually at least several hundred degrees Celsius and can be up to 1000C, and they can be preceded by lethal pressure waves.

An article on the new research on the speed and extent of the currents was published in the journal Nature Geoscience.

“Pyroclastic density currents are highly dangerous ground-hugging currents from volcanoes that cause more than 50 percent of volcanic fatalities globally,” the article said.

“These hot mixtures of volcanic particles and gas exhibit remarkable fluidity, which allows them to transport thousands to millions of tonnes of volcanic material across the Earth’s surface over tens to hundreds of kilometres, bypassing tortuous flow paths and ignoring rough substrates and flat and upsloping terrain.”

**The authors, from Massey, Auckland, Otago and Oregon universities, said their large-scale experiments and modelling showed the currents formed their own air lubrication that formed a near-frictionless bottom layer.**

As a result of the finding, a re-evaluation was needed of hazard models that aimed to predict the velocity, runout and spreading of the currents.

The large-scale experiments carried out for the study involved releasing up to 1.3 tonnes of hot volcanic material down a large-scale flume 12 metres long and 0.5m wide.

The study was carried out using Massey University’s pyroclastic flow eruption large-scale experiment eruption simulator facility - Pele for short.

One of the researchers, Massey Associate Professor Gert Lube, said the eruption simulations, involving several tonnes of pumice and gas in motion, had uncovered an enigma that had been baffling researchers for decades.

“Discovery of this air-lubrication mechanism opens a new path towards reliable predictions of pyroclastic flow motion and the extreme runout potential of these lethal currents, thereby reducing future casualties,” Lube said.

“It will be used by hazard scientists, as well as decision makers, and is envisaged to lead to major revisions of volcanic hazard forecasts.”

Commentary in Nature Geoscience on the study described the findings as a breakthrough.

“Pyroclastic density currents can travel at great speeds down valleys, and overcome topographic obstacles,” the commentary said.

“This mobility is astonishing, but hard to study because direct observations are virtually impossible.”



**Upper:** Daniel Thomas (left) and Simon Hunt near the crater. Photo: Richard Horton.  
**Lower:** Louis Burling wins the junior boys Club champs, closely followed by his mates George Pilkington and Brooke Thomas. Photo: Carl Burling.



**Upper:** A school holiday mission to the crater. The Burling and Moffat families with Paula Cooper, Megan Norcross, Abby Hunt. Photo: Carl Burling. **Lower:** Happy RSC children. Photo: Stephen Payne.

## ACROSS THE SKIING WORLD

**The greatest enigma in world skiing, Finnish ski jumper Matti Nykanen, has died aged 55.**

Nykanen was an icon of sport in Finland. He was 18 when he won his first big event, and with his boyish looks he seemed even younger.

He won four Olympic gold medals and seven World Championship gold medals but his life had problems with alcohol.

He twice went to prison for violent behaviour including a stabbing incident in 2004 and an aggravated assault on his wife in 2009.

*Police in northern Italy intercepted a 92 year-old man spotted driving his car up a ski slope. He told them he was trying to get to a ski lodge for lunch.*

*Skiers were startled to see a Jeep driving up the slopes of Col Rodella, taking a shortcut to the restaurant at the top of the slope, which most people access by lift.*

*His scenic drive was interrupted by carabinieri (police) on a snowmobile, who escorted him safely off the slope. The man was fined 30 Euros.*

**Norway's Supreme Court has** refused to hear an appeal from a 19-year-old skier who crashed into a young girl on an alpine slope and injured her for life.

He was sentenced to 18 days in jail and ordered to pay 75,000 krone after what was called a reckless skiing incident at Telemark skifield.

The victim was a 10-year-old girl from Denmark who skiing slowly on a beginners' slope marked by a blue trail when the skier careened over an embankment and crashed into her at high speed.

*Felix Neureuther (Germany), regarded as one of the most friendly and respected*

*people on the alpine World Cup skiing tour, has retired from ski racing.*

*Neureuther scored 47 World Cup podiums (13) wins, and three World Championship medals (one gold).*

*He is married to twice world team champion biathlon skier Miriam Neureuther (nee Goessner) of Germany.*

**Olympic freeskiing silver medallist Devin Logan (US)** was suspended for three months for taking a drug that had misleading information on its packaging.

Logan, 26, used for pain control a cannabis based product that contained higher than allowed levels of the banned substance THC.

Her problem was that information on the ingredients label listed her drug as having only trace amounts of THC, which is allowed.

Logan's six-month ban was reduced to three months because she took educational courses.

*A Lithuanian man flying to Italy got a surprise when he boarded a plane for a two hour flight. He was the only passenger on the Boeing 737.*

*The man, flying from the capital Vilnius to the northern Italian city of Bergamo for a skiing holiday, had the whole plane to himself apart from two pilots and five crew members.*

*A travel agency said it chartered the plane to fly a skiing group home from Italy and to avoid flying empty, one-way tickets were sold. Only one person bought one.*

**The sport of skijoring** in which skiers or snowboarders are pulled across the snow by horses is growing in popularity in the United States.

The sport's origin can be traced back to the 1850s in Scandinavia where people used it as a form of transportation.

Teams typically consist of a rider, a horse and a skier or snowboarder. The horse

and rider take one track while the skier or boarder in tow takes a parallel track through gates and over jumps.

The national finals have been held in Montana since 1980. This year the races drew 147 teams. Three years ago, the finals had 95 teams.

*Cabin No 15 of 12 minute gondola ride at **Obergurgl ski area in Austria** has been fitted out for special comfort.*

*For \$150 four people can enjoy champagne, smoked salmon, caviar, salami, and alpine platters of local delicacies.*

*You can stay in for as long as you like, though after a few circuits you might feel like a bit of skiing.*

**The Stratford Mountain Club** is replacing its Pisten Bully 60 snow groomer with a Husky Prinoth, which is double the engine size, for use at the Manganui Ski Area on Mt Taranaki.

It is a second-hand groomer which previously operated from at the Snowplanet indoor skifield at Auckland.

The machine cost \$20,000, excluding the cost of transport and an overhaul, but was still cheaper than buying a new one which was set to cost \$204,000.

***Plans to build a multi-billion-dollar ski resort on the west coast of Canada have moved one step closer to being approved.***

*Developers in British Columbia propose to build a new resort, called Garibaldi and located near the town of Squamish, at a cost of \$3.5 billion. The projected opening date is 2025.*

*There will be 130 pistes and 21 lifts with a total capacity of 15,250 skiers or snowboarders at one time, plus multi-use trails for walking and mountain biking in the summer.*

A new chairlift at **The Remarkables skifield** at Queenstown has been delayed by a year with planning approval for the

new \$16 million lift coming through in April too late for this winter.

The lift will add 2.5km of new trails. The delay means 60 containers of equipment will have to sit in storage until November.

However, a new 158 metre covered conveyor lift has expanded the learner terrain by a third.

NZSki also has bold plans to almost double the size of the Remarkables by expanding the ski area into the adjacent Doolans Basin over the coming years.

*Queenstown will have the country's "premier training facility" for **the new Olympic sport of indoor climbing** when a centre opens this winter.*

*Basecamp Adventures Queenstown has been planning its Remarkables Park centre for 18 months.*

*It will feature walls for lead and speed climbing, and bouldering walls. All three disciplines make their Olympic debut at Tokyo in 2020.*

**US scientists have developed a new device that can generate electricity from falling snow.**

Called a snow-based triboelectric nanogenerator, or snow TENG, it is small, thin and flexible.

The device produces energy from an exchange of electrons, taking advantage of the fact that snow is positively charged and silicone is negatively charged.

When the falling snow comes into contact with the silicone, a charge is produced that can be used for electricity.

***Two-time Olympic gold medallist David Wise (US)*** has set a new world record for the highest ski air quarterpipe jump.

*He hit a height of 11.7 metres, almost an entire metre more than the previous record set by Simon Dumont (US) in 2008.*

*Wise was skiing at the 2019 Audi Nines event in Sölden (Austria).*



## 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

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## PHONE NUMBERS

RSC Office 09-377-3856

RSC Fax 09-377-3859

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 June 1st 2019)

Members Senior	18 years and over	\$52
Members Teen	14-17 years	\$45
Members Junior	13 years and under	\$34
Members' children	7 years and under	\$28
Non-members	14 years and over	\$100
Non-members	13 years and under	\$67
School group children		\$65
School group parents		\$87

### 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.**