

# *The Bulletin*

## RUAPEHU SKI CLUB

Volume 84, No. 4



December 2019



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*The Sky Waka gondola as seen from RSC Hut.  
Photo: Mike Lowery.*

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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Throughout the year, we have been working hard to nurture and strengthen our relationship with RAL. This includes the establishment a working group comprising Hamish Bell, Robin Dallas, Bernard Smith and Mike Wardle.

Last year, RSC worked closely with RAL during the resource consent process for the Sky Waka and a number of concessions were offered by RAL as a result.

It's fair to say that this process placed both parties under some stress. The working group has since proactively sought to rebuild the long and very close relationship between us since the founding of RAL.

Commissioning of the Sky Waka is a momentous achievement that will ensure the economic future of RAL. Having said that, the loss of the Waterfall Express and the restrictions of passage placed on the Rangatira Express are without doubt the most significant events for us.

Your Committee is acutely aware of the impact these events have on us and particularly on our elderly members and families.

We and our working group are continually seeking further easing of these restrictions and the resumption of uphill access from Hut Flat, both directly and through RMCA.

So far, we have been able to negotiate carrying of baggage at any time and the opportunity of pedestrian passage towards the end of each day.

Our progress to date is encouraging, even though still not what have previously enjoyed. We shall continue to pursue further concessions for next year and beyond.

You probably know that the CEO of RAL resigned earlier this year. Since then, a new CEO has been appointed. Jono Dean was prior to this, General Manager of Whakapapa.

We have a good relationship with Jono and we believe his style of leadership and knowledge of Whakapapa will promote a better ecosystem for all Ruapehu stakeholders. We continue to engage directly with both Jono and the board of directors, as appropriate, keeping you informed of our progress.

In the meantime, I'm sure you will all be sad to hear that Sheryl has decided to retire from her position as Administration Officer of RSC.

At the most recent committee meeting, Sheryl's resignation was reluctantly accepted. By unanimous resolution, Sheryl was offered Honorary membership of Ruapehu Ski Club in recognition of her loyalty and dedication to the club, and for her enduring patience and enthusiasm.

Sheryl has been with us for over eight years and has participated in many changes in the day to day management of RSC.

On Sheryl's watch, we transitioned from paper-based booking management to computer systems. The allocation of bookings requires the skills of a master Tetris player, even in a computer-based environment.

Sheryl also presided over the moving of our offices from Khyber Pass to our current location at the Viaduct Harbour. Actually, in the first year of her engagement, Sheryl was almost the sole occupant of the entire building.

A month after we signed our sub-leasing contract with Water Safe, they re-located, leaving Sheryl totally alone. I can only imagine how lonely that must have been.

We believe we have found someone to assist with the immediate book-keeping necessities, while we seek another solution for this mission critical, intricate and often demanding role.

Wishing all the very best for the festive season.

**Richard Nelson,  
President**



*Patterns of snow, ice and ski trails on The Pinnacles at Whakapapa. Photo: Peter Otway.*

## THROUGH THE LODGE WINDOW

**The 2019 ski season closed at Whakapapa on November 30th and at Turoa on October 28th after a difficult and frustrating winter.**

There was plenty of snow but too often the lifts were covered in the thickest rime ice seen on Mt Ruapehu for many years, and there were other lift closures due to continued low cloud and high winds.

The Far West T-bar was out for most of the season after a gale derailed the lift and badly damaged the cable.

***The racing season at Ruapehu was hit by the continued poor weather.***

*The Christie Derby was cancelled while the Haensli Cup, Tongariro Juniors and Ngauruhoe Trophy were all raced on very short courses due to limited visibility.*

*NIPS (primary and intermediate schools) raced on only three of six scheduled days.*

*The secondary schools events (NISSC and NISSSB) were contested on only two days out of six.*

**Five people were injured at Turoa and three of them were airlifted to hospital after slabs of ice fell on the group from a toilet block.**

Members of the group received head, leg and pelvis injuries.

Skiers said there were cordon ropes around the area, which looked to be set up to stop people from going under the ledge, but the ice fell outside the ropes.

***The library at RSC Lodge became an exam room for pupils from Westlake Girls High School and Lindisfarne College during the North Island Secondary School Skiing Champs at Whakapapa.***

Jane Pilkington posted: "Fantastic that both schools support the skiers and snow sports and allow them to do both for the week."

**Don Cameron** has been returned as mayor of the Ruapehu District, having beaten his rival by more than three votes to one.

The voting turn-out for the Ruapehu District was high by recent NZ standards at

## THE RUAPEHU SKI CLUB

**(inc) Founded 1913**

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**President:** Richard Nelson

**Vice-Presidents:** Carl Burling,  
Marion Quinn, Phill Thomass,  
Donald Webster, Fiona Willison

**Secretary:** Louise Blair

**Treasurer:** Heather Chao

**Immediate Past President:** Adrian  
Adriaansen

**Captain:** Catherine Gafa

**Vice-Captain:** Paula Cooper

**Committee:** Arran Birchenough, Jeff  
Davies, Damon Forsyth, Sam Hood,  
Richard Horton, Simon Hunt, Nils

Johannessen, Nina Thomas, William  
Geddes

**Patron:** Peter Brady

**Patroness:** Barbara Scelly

**Auditors:** Hart and Co.

**Admin Officer:** Sheryl Brownlee

**Lodge Officer:** Carl Burling

**Hut Officer:** Simon Hunt

**Chalet Officer:** Phill Thomass

**Turoa Officer:** Donald Webster

**Heritage Fund Guardians:** Richard  
Nelson, Adrian Adriaansen, Robin

Dallas, Bernard Smith

**Fund Treasurer:** Mike Wardle

**Glacier Hut Custodian:** Joe Gabriel

48.87 percent of potential voters taking part, and around the district the highest turn-out was in the National Park ward at 52.40 percent.

*Congratulations to RSC member Sarah Hamilton who won the North Island Masters giant slalom both overall and on age-based handicap. Charlotte Fyson was second and Karen Williams third.*

**Local iwi Ngati Rangi** has gifted a Maori name for a new species of alpine cress discovered on the south-western slopes of Mt Ruapehu.

Ngati Rangi has gifted **Cardamine panatohea** as the name of the white flowered cress.

This is derived from the names panapanana, a common name for the type of cress, and titoheia, a description of the land above the bush line on Mt Ruapehu.

*Visit Ruapehu won the Supreme Award at this year's Regional Tourism New Zealand Awards. The award recognises the Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) that achieved the most significant results in the last 12 months.*

*Visit Ruapehu was the clear winner for their collaborative approach to tourism in their region.*

**Double chairs** previously used on chairlifts at Whakapapa have been sold for charity.

Schools from Ohakune, Taupo, National Park and Owhango were given 200 chairs which were sold for \$500 to \$600 each.

There have also been more than 50 requests for 4-seater chairs when they become available later in the summer.

*The deadline for the March Bulletin will be Friday February 14th.*

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

## THE BULLETIN

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## OFFICE NOTES

Work party dates have now been set. See dates in the calendar on Page 17. If you can attend these, please register on the RSC website. It is possible that numbers may be limited for some dates, so please book early.

All new members are expected to attend for two work parties, as part of being accepted as a full member of RSC.

Other members attend extra work parties to ensure, where possible, fast tracking of school holiday accommodation bookings.

Work parties are an ideal way of introducing prospective members to the Club.

Thank you to all the members who took on the role of Building Leaders this season. An extra thank you to those who helped in various situations to ensure the health and safety of all our members.

With remote office access over the summer holidays, mail, emails and telephone calls will be cleared regularly, so do not hesitate to make those summer plans for visiting the Chalet or Turoa in the next few months.

Accommodation can generally be confirmed within 24 hours, as long as there are sufficient funds in your deposit account.

**This will be my last Office Notes to you as I have resigned as the Administration Officer.**

Yes it has been eight years in which time though I have not met many of

our members in person, with many emails and telephone calls I feel as though I have come to know you and your families.

This contact for me has been rather special and something I will really miss. What is next? Not sure, though probably I could try and spend more time with family and improve my lawn bowls.

Wishing you all safe travel and the best wishes for 2020.

**Sheryl**

## HOUSE COMMITTEE

A post season audit at the Chalet has revealed a missing duvet and two pillows including their covers.

If you or anyone you know took them home for laundering or whatever would you please contact the Administration Officer so we know where they are and when we may expect their return? Thank you.

## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

Marnie Spence (Auckland)  
Isla Spence (Auckland)  
Simon Spence (Auckland)  
Perdy Shearer (Auckland)  
Amy Weston (Auckland)  
Samantha Tomkinson (Raglan)  
Tony Irving (Auckland)  
Fletcher Caplen (Auckland)

## **ANTARCTIC BOOK**

Veteran RSC member Peter Otway is offering for sale copies of his revised photo essay book Exploring the Transantarctic Mountains by dog sledge, 1960-62.

It can be purchased direct from him via email, for \$40. Contact Peter on [otway1@xtra.co.nz](mailto:otway1@xtra.co.nz).

Peter Otway has been a strong skier who has been an RSC member since the 1950s and has in recent years attended Winter Party.

As a volcanologist Peter has explored all over Ruapehu. He was awarded the Polar Medal for his time in Antarctica.

## **ARNOLD HEINE**

Arnold Heine, who has died aged 93, was a prominent mountaineer, tramp, conservationist and glaciologist. He lived in the Hutt Valley and was a member of the Hutt Valley Tramping Club.

Arnold played a prominent role in the Federated Mountain Clubs, was on its executive for 24 years and edited its magazine for 14 years.

He edited bushcraft safety manuals, represented FMC on the council of the New Zealand Ski Association and was a member of the Ski Patrol at Whakapapa.

He was awarded the Polar Medal, the QSM and the ONZM.

## **LOAD OF RUBBISH**

Members of the Mt Cheeseman Ski Club in Canterbury had a novel way of disposing of rubbish from their high level lodge in the 1950s.

They rigged up a flying fox from the balcony of the lodge and sent rubbish bags down the line to a buffer at the end that allowed the bags to be neatly tipped

over a bank and into a hole.

Kea hung around the site for days, looking for food scraps.

At times young lads in the club soaked the rubbish bags in diesel and set them alight before sending them down the line to explode on impact.

The practice was discontinued in the 1970s.

Here at Whakapapa, RSC had a somewhat similar rubbish disposal system from the 1930s whereby a wooden structure with a chute was built at the top of Skippers Canyon.

Rubbish from RSC Hut and Lodge and the Wanganui SC was taken down to the site and members climbed up the structure in complete safety before sending their rubbish down the chute and over the precipice.

This system was outlawed by the Park Board from the 1960s.

## **WARNING ON CROSSING**

DOC is to post warnings on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing on bad weather days.

It will say: "STOP: Hiking the Tongariro Alpine Crossing is NOT RECOMMENDED TODAY".

DOC will also have rangers on site telling trampers to turn back.

Each year, about 140,000 people walk the crossing and 30-40 are rescued.

Each day, rangers at Tongariro will make the call on the ground, deploying signs at the start and end of the track, at the Tongariro National Park Visitor Centre, and before the steep Devil's Staircase section.

Electronic signs will also be installed on highways at both road ends.

## SHERYL MOVING ON

Sheryl Brownlee, the RSC Administration Officer for the past eight years, is to retire early next year.

Sheryl said she has greatly enjoyed her time with the Club but it is time for her to retire and to spend more time playing lawn bowls.

RSC thanks Sheryl for all her excellent work for the Club, and the Bulletin thanks her for always sending her Bulletin contributions in on time.

## RAL SUPER SUPER PASSES

**RAL Super Super Passes:** These are available with evidence of prior season pass purchase to skiers of 70+ years.

They are free and entitle the bearer to ride all the lifts for free.

The fine print – which ensnared some of our members this season – is that RAL will only make them available between late October and the beginning of April.

So those of you who are eligible need to act now to procure this pass and dig out your last season pass to back up your credentials.

And endeavour not to lose it between now and your visit to the snow!!

RAL Customer Service 07-892-4000. Best of luck!

**MQ**

RSC member Pam Hansen, aged 83, made the radio and online news when she said RAL would not renew her Super Super pass as she was outside the time for renewals (see above) and quoted \$1100 for a season pass or \$129 for a day pass.

Pam was quoted as saying \$129 for a day pass was a lot for an older person who would not want to ski all day.

RAL later gave her a Super Super pass.

## WEEKDAY LIFT PASS

RAL has moved to encourage weekday skiing and snowboarding at Mt Ruapehu by introducing a midweek season pass which is valid on Monday to Friday.

RAL's Michelle Caldwell said: "Weekends will always be busier on the maunga, especially if it's a beautiful day, so the new midweek pass is a great option to enjoy great skiing without the crowds."

## NEW RAL CEO

Jono Dean was named as the new CEO of RAL as from October 8th. He replaced Ross Copland who has moved to Queenstown.

"Jono has been with the company since June 2018 as the general manager for Whakapapa Ski Area, so he knows the business well," said RAL chair Murray Gribben.

Jono Dean has a degree in Tourism Management from Victoria University of Wellington.

## INTERMEDIATE STATION

Members have suggested to the Bulletin that the Sky Waka gondola should have an intermediate stop at Hut Flat. I have ridden gondolas in Switzerland which have not one but two intermediate stations, so it can be done.

RSC suggested we should have this for our gondola, but RAL opposed this idea, saying it would add too much time and cost to the ride.

Then came the crunch: The stop would have to be sited halfway between RSC Lodge and RSC Hut, making foot traffic between the buildings difficult and in some weather just about impossible.

**AG**

## **ACADEMY REVIEW**

In a season where pretty much every queue on the mountain led to a conversation with some poor soul nearing their wits end, we did discover one true gem this year, the RAL Academies.

Most Clubbies will remember these as running for either five alternative weekends or, for the more hardy, for 10 consecutive weekends.

I've always looked sideways at those doing the later, on the assumption that they were reserved for the true A-typers of the world, the kind who hot box their skis or whose kid's school project never looks like I didn't know what I was doing.

No one was more surprised, therefore, than me, when we signed our 12 year old daughter up for 10 consecutive weekends at the mountain this year.

We were drawn into the Academy through a few conversations with Matt, the affable American who now heads them up.

An ex-racer from Mammoth, he has a clear vision of what the Academies should, and should not, be.

For me, a real point of difference in what he's trying to do is the team aspect of the sport, which provides the bridge from a recreational activity to a legitimate winter sport.

While racing itself may be a very individual experience, the ethos he's pushing is for a pretty tight group of, in his own words 'bad ass skiers' (which sounds much cooler with an American accent).

At this point, I should emphasise that it's not a race school. The aim is to raise the level of ability meaning there's as much time spent on Backstage as in the gates.

To a certain extent, camaraderie within the team is an expected outcome of

spending consecutive weekends together but there are plenty of off mountain activities to reinforce this ranging from dryland training in National Park through to visits to other fields, such as the speed week at Mt Hutt or the day trip to Tukino.

In a lot of ways, the Academies are a good fit with the Club as both are there to cater for the needs of the users.

I should point out that the Academies range in size and shape from the five weekends through to five days a week.

There is quite a lot of flexibility within the Academies with many kids adding drop in or makeup days as and when it suits.

This is really just an extension of Matt's view to grow the Academies and lift the level of skier ability all round the mountain.

So, if you love what the Club has to offer, talk to Matt and see if you can take it to the next level. I'm off to build a hot box.

**Rhys Hegley**

## **SNOW SPORTS AWARDS**

Snowboarder Zoi Sadowski-Synnott claimed the major prize at the Snow Sports New Zealand awards in Wanaka.

**Instructor of the Year:** Will Marcinowski  
**Men's masters ski racing champion:** Jon Wardrop

**Women's masters ski racing champion:** Bonny Teat

**Coach of the year:** Tommy Pyatt

**Breakthrough season:** Jessica Hotter

**Cross-country athlete:** Campbell Wright

**Alpine ski racer athlete:** Alice Robinson

**Adaptive snow sports athlete:** Adam Hall

**Freeride athlete:** Craig Murray

**Snowboarder:** Zoi Sadowski-Synnott

**Freeskier:** Nico Porteous

**Overall athlete of the year:** Zoi Sadowski-Synnott

## SICKNESS IN THE HUT

### A SORRY TALE on SICKNESS – OCTOBER HOLIDAYS

- **Norovirus basics:**

- o The school holiday outbreak in the Hut was almost certainly norovirus which is extremely contagious, and the most common cause of gastro outbreaks. Link to useful doc on managing in institutional settings: [https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/guidelines-management-norovirus\\_0.pdf](https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/guidelines-management-norovirus_0.pdf)

Vomit particles become airborne and infect others, so anyone vomiting must be isolated and leave the building as soon as possible. Infection is also spread via fecal/oral route. Sufferers remain contagious for 48 hours after they finish vomiting, so staying once vomiting has finished is unacceptable.

- o To decontaminate all surfaces must be treated with **bleach**. Antiseptics are ineffective against norovirus. Custodians need to be aware of this.

- **What went wrong in the holidays:**

- o There were at least two cases where people were sick and vomiting and did not leave, leading to widespread contamination and infection.
  - o One child spent the night vomiting and was then left in the Hut recovering while the family went out skiing; he was in the kitchen going through leftovers and would have contaminated anything he touched.

- o There was a lack of understanding of decontamination requirements, so vomit was not adequately cleaned (ie with bleach); surfaces were cleaned with antiseptic and not bleach.

- **Impact at the Club that week:**

- o We had 14 cases of severe vomiting among the families that were at the Hut, across seven families.
  - o Many of these cases were severe, with two people requiring assistance from ski patrol to get down the mountain.
  - o Eight families had their week cut short either due to infection or the desire to avoid it.

- **Some recommendations:**

- o Custodians and building leaders need to be on the alert for any norovirus outbreaks and ensure anyone with vomiting or diarrhoea vacates the building as soon as possible. If not possible, eg at night, they should be isolated to the best extent possible.
  - o We shall find some fact sheets about norovirus outbreaks for noticeboards and Club leader portal so that there is ready information on how to handle and decontaminate.
  - o We are highlighting to the members what happened and the impact it had, and remind them that they must leave the buildings if they show any signs of a stomach infection or other illness as per the Club booking rules (on the website).

## KATH HARRISON

Kath Harrison, who has died aged 94, was a former Vice-President of RSC and was our Patroness from 2002 to 2018.

Kath joined RSC in 1946 and thus was a Club member for 73 years.

She was a member of the Committee during 1980-83 and was a Vice-President in 1983-89. She was elected a Life member of RSC in 1991.

Along with her husband Jack she did much work in building RSC Lodge and the subsequent Hut and Chalet.

For many years she was the Club's Transport Officer which involved ringing around on the phone on Thursdays and Fridays, jacking up rides for members to and from the mountain.

Kath often assisted with ski races and her four children all enjoyed ski holidays at Ruapehu.

One of her daughters Robin Pawson (nee Harrison) was RSC Club champion five times and represented New Zealand at skiing.

One of her sons Richard was prominent in teenage racing but sadly was killed when he crashed off the Knoll while setting a course for the universities ski race.

Only two RSC members have lost their lives in ski accidents and they occurred a few weeks apart.

Kath served many years on the equivalent of the House Committee, always at the ready to help with furnishings and food supplies. She organised working parties for a while in the 1980s.

The Harrisons also belonged to the



*Kath Harrison*

Boomerang Ski Club which has a lodge in the old loop at the Top O' The Bruce.

She was famed for keeping a lodge full of children warm and safe for three days during a blizzard when the electricity was off. She piled mattresses in front of a roaring fire and kept it going until the power came back on.

She also recounted the day that hot lava flowed down Happy Valley in full view of folk in the Boomerang lodge.

Kath also located a coal yard in Otahuhu where both Boomerang and RSC could obtain cut-price fuel for their skifield stoves.

Kath's brother Roy Wilson was an RSC Club champion before he was killed in World War 2. The Wilson Trophies are named after him.

The Club extends its sympathy to the Harrison family.



NZ skier Alice Robinson (centre) on the podium after her win in an Alpine World Cup giant slalom race in Austria. Left is Mikaela Shiffrin (US) who was second and right is Tessa Worley (France) who was third. Photo: FIS.

## WORLD CUP VICTORY

New Zealand skier Alice Robinson, aged 17, won the first alpine World Cup giant slalom race of the season at Sölden (Austria).

She beat the hot favourite and Olympic champion Mikaela Shiffrin (US) by 0.06 sec with Tessa Worley (France) third.

Robinson is the first skier from her nation to win a World Cup race in 22 years and the youngest from any nation to do so since Shiffrin nearly seven years ago.

"I'm pretty shocked, but super happy and super excited," said Robinson.

"I was a bit nervous for the second run, but I just tried to hold it together. Just keep my nerves at bay and just try and enjoy it. Yeah, that's what I did. I'm happy with it."

Robinson moved to Queenstown from Australia at age four and learned skiing at Coronet Peak.

Local coach Tim Cafe led her through the international youth ranks but the pair went separate ways after Robinson joined Chris Knight's International Ski Racing Academy in the Italian Dolomites, with Val di Fassa and San Pellegrino as main training venues.

After her win Robinson flew back to New Zealand to finish her high school education. She was in year 13 at Wakatipu High School in Queenstown.

Her win was the first in World Cup giant slalom for a skier from New Zealand, and was the first in any discipline since Claudia Riegler won a slalom in Switzerland in 1997.

The race was watched by 14,000 spectators under clear blue skies.

The second run was interrupted for several minutes after Bernadette Schild (Austria) badly crashed, tore her knee and was hospitalized by helicopter.



Scenes from *The Knoll* at Whakapapa. Photos: Peter Otway.



**Martina's wedding:** Serena Michel, Ueli Conrad and his 2 year-old son Gino, Fiona Laird, Flurin Bezzola, Martina Bezzola (Zumstein), Tjebbe Bruin, Florian Emmenegger, Jann Kindshi. Photo from Fiona.

## MARTINA'S WEDDING

We came over to Davos this year to attend Martina Zumstein's wedding.

She was our visiting Swiss instructor at RSC for two seasons 2015 and 2016.

We first met Martina when Ueli Conrad was the RSC instructor in 2009.

He asked us if another Swiss person could come to stay at our place as they had met up and travelled around New Zealand after the season finished.

Martina had just spent her first season in New Zealand down at Cardrona.

She was a delight to have in the house

and when she came over as instructor for RSC she again stayed with us both seasons. We have kept a good friendship going ever since.

We had decided not to go to Europe this year but when we received the invitation to her wedding we agreed we just had to go for a shorter holiday and we've had a great time catching up with lots of previous instructors.

We are fortunate to have great friendships with many of the instructors through being members of RSC.

**Fiona Laird and Tjebbe Bruin.**



**Upper:** RSC members at the top of the Giant triple chairlift at Turoa soon after it was built in 1978. Photo: Alan Graham. **Lower:** The High Noon Express six-seater chairlift in 2019. Photo: RAL.

## TUROA TURNS 40

This winter marked 40 years since Turoa Ski Area officially opened to the public as a commercial skifield, and celebrations were held recently by RAL.

Turoa officially opened for the 1979 ski season. Unofficially, the Parklane and Giant triple chairlifts briefly operated for a few days at the end of the 1978 season, and I was one of half a dozen RSC members who had a preview ride at that time.

A feature then was the amazing vacuum toilets at the end of the road. They operated with a mighty whoosh and you needed to hold on firmly to your hats, gloves and everything else.

Prior to the 1960s there was little skiing at Turoa, apart from a group led by Ohakune School headmaster and RSC member Joe Blyth who occasionally skied on the upper slopes which they called Gliding Gladys.

Initially the Ohakune Mountain Road built by local citizens ran only as Massey Flat, and in 1962 skiers hiked up to where local builders Rodney and Peter Winchcombe set up a small rope tow.

In 1964 the pair moved up to the area now known as Broadbent's Flat and ran a 1500m rope tow. The road reached the current car park by 1965 and Robin Reid, a local plumber, built three small rope tows there.

In 1966 my father and I drove up to the current car park and walked up the hill to the main rope tow. We skied on good snow and then schussed back down to our car, but 1966 and 1967 were regarded as poor snow years at Turoa.

The following year was a bumper snow year, in contrast, with the top tow running for 90 days.

The Tongariro National Park Board then consulted Ohakune locals about

a plan to develop Turoa and called for tenders to develop the field. Several applications were received but none was suitable.

Then in 1976 the Auckland based Alex Harvey Industries (AHI) applied for ski area development and a 45-year licence was signed in November 1977.

AHI, led by Tony Wright and later the former All Blacks captain Wilson Whineray, aimed to break even on the skifield and to make its money from an alpine village in Ohakune.

There it sold A-frame houses to the public and larger sections to ski clubs including (eventually) RSC.

Turoa's heyday came in 1980 when a top level international ski meeting featuring slalom and giant slalom races was held. The weather gods turned on fine days for some high class ski racing.

The US turned up with a team full of skiing stars and took over the Graduates lodge in Ohakune as its headquarters.

Turoa was sold in 1986 to NZ Skifields Ltd, a public company listed on the Stock Exchange, but four years later it was privatised and sold to Turoa Holdings Ltd. The second half of the 1990s were unkind to Turoa and the receivers were called in.

In March 2000 came the news that many skiers had anticipated. Turoa Ski Resort was placed in receivership in the wake of the 1995-96 eruptions which covered the ski slopes in ash, and some poor to moderate snow seasons.

The receivers said the skifield, marketed at the time as "Turoa the Giant", would stay open as they believed an open skifield was more likely to attract a buyer.

RAL was the only serious bidder and it took over Turoa, operating Whakapapa and Turoa on one pass.



**Upper:** Dinner is served at RSC Hut. From left: Madeleine Birchenough, Amelia Horton, Isla Bell. Photo: Katrina Horton. **Lower:** Plenty of snow in October 2019 around RSC's mountain museum Glacier Hut. Photo: Dan Paine.



Blyth Flat at Turoa. Photo: RAL.

## RSC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Dec 2019		DOC summer programme
Jan 2020		
Feb 2020	8-9 22-23	Working parties Working parties
Mar 2020	14-15	Working parties
Apr 2020	11-12	Working parties (Easter) Truck weekend
May 2020	1 9-10 30	RSC ski season bookings open Working parties Happy Valley opens
June 2020		RSC AGM at Auckland
	13 27 27 27-28	Whakapapa lower mountain opens Whakapapa upper mountain opens Turoa opens Working parties
July 2020	4-19	School holidays
Aug 2020		
Sept 2020	26-Oct 11	School holidays
Oct 2020	18 26	Turoa closes Whakapapa closes



Sub-Junior boys winners at the RSC Club champs. From left: Tom Pilkington, George Pilkington (champion), Louis Burling. Photo: Jane Pilkington.



Senior women winners at the RSC Club champs. From left: Abby Hunt, Claudia Burling (Club champion), Nina Thomas. At left is RSC President Richard Nelson. Photo: Jenn Moffat.



*Scenes at the RSC Club champs held on the Staircase. Photos: Jane Pilkington.*

# THE RACING SEASON CAPTAIN'S REPORT

## Club Champs Saturday September 28th 2019

We woke to a clear day, with high winds on the upper mountain. Our course was to be in the Valley, but the Gondola was on hold due to high winds, preventing anyone getting there.

The course setting had been arranged with RAL, as the logistics of getting our poles to the upper mountain with the queues on the Gondola would have been problematic.

As it was, the upper mountain didn't open until midday and a call was made about 11am to Ray at events, who informed us three courses had been set on the Staircase slopes.

We sent Loris off by foot to claim a course. We were a bit late and ended up with the middle course, with Ngauruhoe on one side and Tauranga on the other.

The weather was mild and pleasant with the sun peeking through, and racing started about 1pm. It took a while for the racers to arrive, after riding up on the Gondola and then skiing down to the course.

The course itself was a bit daunting for those that hadn't raced before as it just looked like a sea of poles with the three courses side by side. Loris ran through the course to set the track to follow, and we proceeded with the slalom race first.

The Tauranga course was reset for the GS. Racing was finished by 3pm and we all headed back down hill to the Hut Flat buildings. We had 28 skiers and three snowboarders race.

Our prizegiving started around 5pm. Congratulations to all the placegetters and thank you to all those involved with the timing, set-up of the course, and prizegiving.

I would like to especially thank the Campbell family for their continued support of Club champs.

**Catherine Gafa, Club Captain.**

# RSC CLUB CHAMPS

Guy Pilkington and Claudia Burling, both for the first time, are the RSC Club champions for 2019.

Madeline Moffat for the second year and George Pilkington are the junior champions.

**SENIOR MEN.** Slalom: Guy Pilkington 15.24, Remi Campbell 16.38, Dan Thomas 17.30. GS: Remi Campbell 13.27, Guy Pilkington 13.57, Dan Thomas 15.10. Combined: Guy Pilkington, Remy Campbell, Dan Thomas.

**SENIOR WOMEN.** Slalom: Claudia Burling 14.55, Abby Hunt 15.36, Greta Pilkington 16.42. GS: Claudia Burling 13.99, Abby Hunt 15.06, Nina Thomas 15.52. Combined: Claudia Burling, Abby Hunt, Nina Thomas.

**JUNIOR BOYS.** Slalom: George Pilkington 14.21, Louis Burling 15.07, Johnny McElwee 15.50. GS: George Pilkington 12.87, Louis Burling 13.56, Johnny McElwee 13.90. Combined: George Pilkington, Louis Burling, Johnny McElwee.

**JUNIOR GIRLS.** Slalom: Madeline Moffat 15.01, EJ Moffat 15.90, Grace McQuoid. GS: Madeline Moffat 13.25, EJ Moffat 14.43, Tasmin Thomas 14.44. Combined: Madeline Moffat, EJ Moffat, Grace McQuoid.

**MASTERS** (on age based handicap). Men: Guy Pilkington, Dan Thomas, Ian Campbell. Women: Nina Thomas, Catherine Gafa, Mandy Burling.

**SNOWBOARD.** Men: Brent Moffat 19.60, Toby Davies 19.88, Matt Thomson 24.44. Women: Mischa Thomas 21.51.

**INTERMEDIATE.** Men: Drew Blair 35.85, Angus Burling, Sam Gray. Women: Paula Cooper 43.04, Louise Blair 43.77, Nicola Crouch.

**ROY WILSON MEMORIAL.** Men: Johnny McElwee 13.90, Drew Blair 17.34, Alata Culpan 19.52. Women: EJ Moffat 14.43, Tasmin Thomas 14.44, Claudia Pilkington 14.92.

**SUB-JUNIOR.** Boys: George Pilkington 27.08, Louis Burling 28.63, Tom Pilkington 30.41. Girls: EJ Moffat 30.33.

**UNDER-10:** Connor Brady.

**VETERANS** (on handicap): Ian Campbell.



Senior winners at the RSC Club champs. From left: Remy Campbell, Guy Pilkington (Club champion), Dan Thomas. At the left is RSC President Richard Nelson. Photo: Jenn Moffat.

## WINTER GAMES NZ

The 2019 Winter Games NZ were held in September at Coronet Peak, Cardrona, The Remarkables, Naseby, Snow Farm and Queenstown.

Events were alpine skiing, snowboarding, freeski, freeride, cross-country skiing, curling and ice hockey.

A highlight was a night parallel slalom for alpine skiers which drew a large crowd and a purse of \$24,000.

The winners after four rounds of racing were Maryna Gasienica-Daniel (Poland) and Luke Winters (US). The top NZ ski racer Alice Robinson was beaten in the semifinals.

Robinson won two super-g races which ran the full length of Coronet Peak, featuring the famed jump at The Hurdle.

### Selected results:

**Snowboard World Cup big air women:**  
Enni Rakajarvi (Finland) 86.00, Katie Ormerod (GB) 83.75, Silje Norendal (Norway) 81.80. Best NZ: Zoi Sadowski-Synnott fifth.

**Snowboard World Cup big air men:**  
Chris Corning (US) 176.25, Redmond Gerrard (US) 161.25, Kalle Jarvilehto (Finland) 160.25. Best NZ: Mitchell Davern 16th.

**Freeski World Cup halfpipe women:**  
Kexin Zhang (China) 91.00, Eileen Gu (China) 89.00. Valeriya Demidova (Russia) 97.80. Best NZ: Anja Barugh 20th.

**Freeski World Cup halfpipe men:**  
Birk Irving (US) 95.60, Noah Bowman (Canada) 93.40, Aaron Blunck (US) 92.80. Best NZ: Miguel Porteous 10th.

**Alpine skiing SG race one:** Armand Marchant (Belgium) 1.04.56. Adam Zampa (Slovakia) 1.04.65, Marcus Monsen (Norway) 1.04.83. Best NZ: Willis Feasey sixth.

**Alpine skiing SG race two:** Maarten Meiner (Netherlands) 1.03.41, Olle Sundin (Sweden) 1.03.65, Tobias Hedstroem (Sweden) 1.03.90. Best NZ: Willis Feasey 10th.

**Alpine skiing SG race one:** Alice Robinson (NZ) 1.06.41, Oliva Foster (GB) 1.08.23, Carole Bissig (Switzerland) 1.08.69.

**Alpine skiing SG race two:** Alice Robinson (NZ) 1.05.46, Alex Tiley (GB) 1.06.49, Barbara Kantonova (Slovakia) 1.06.49.

**Freeride ski women:** Jess Hotter (NZ) 78, Eva Battolla (Switzerland) 76, Sybille Blanjean (Switzerland) 72.

**Curling mixed doubles.** Final: Korea 7 Australia 4. Bronze medal: Sweden 9 US 8.



Jess Hotter (NZ) won the freeride event at the Winter Games NZ and qualified for the World Tour 2020.

## RANGATIRA ALPINE

RSC came third in the Rangatira Alpine Trophy interclub ski race which is awarded to the club with the best overall record on the day in open, junior and masters racing.

The host club Rangatira won with 224.97. Taupo came second on 248.16 and RSC had 255.80.

The RSC squad was Oceane Anfosso, Claudia Burling, Madeline Moffat, EJ Moffat and Joe Feltham.

RSC had the top junior team: Claudia Burling, Madeline Moffat, EJ Moffat and Abby Hunt.

Oceane Anfosso, who was in another RSC team, had the best time of the day for female juniors and Claudia Burling was second best.

Liza Fitzsimmons (RSC) had the best time for female Masters skiers.

Monique Oosterbaan (Rangatira) in 40.92 was the fastest lady on the day and John Knowles (Auckland University) was fastest overall in 40.21.

## TONGARIRO JUNIORS

RSC won the annual Tongariro Juniors ski race and its members won three of the age-group titles.

**Teams overall:** RSC Hot Shots 54.52, Tongariro Turtles 55.95, Tongariro Tigers 60.14.

The winning RSC team was EJ Moffat, George Pilkington, Grace Hegley and Tom Pilkington.

**Age-group winners:** EJ Moffat (Girls U-13), Tasmin Thomas (Girls U-12) and George Pilkington (Boys U-14).

## NGAURUHOE TROPHY

RSC won the junior division of the Ngauruhoe Trophy ski race, the final interclub event of the season at Whakapapa.

The winning team was the RSC Hot Shots: EJ Moffat, Abby Hunt, George Pilkington and Oceane Anfosso.

Nick Moss (Taupo) had the fastest time of 17.30 on a course that was shortened due to poor weather. Monique Oosterbaan (Rangatira) was fourth overall and was the fastest lady on 17.71.

Madeline Moffat (RSC Bomb Squad) was the fastest RSC racer with 18.24 for sixth place overall, a fine effort. Her mum Jenn Moffat was second best among the lady Masters.

#### **Ngauruhoe Trophy:**

Junior: RSC Hot Shots 80.72, Tongariro 86.12, Rangatira Rockets 88.66.

Open: Rangatira 78.75, Taupo 80.40, Auckland Uni 85.03.

Masters: Ngauruhoe 91.11, RSC Raging Aged 91.29, Rangatira 97.10.

## **NIPS RACING**

The North Island Primary and Intermediate skiing champs (known as NIPS) were held at Whakapapa.

**Intermediate:** St Kentigern 79 points, Diocesan 78 points, Ponsonby Intermediate 78 points, St Kents B 77 points, King's School 76 points, Remuera Intermediate 73 points.

RSC members Grace Hegley (Dio) and Louis Burling (Ponsonby) were in the placed teams.

RSC member EJ Moffat (St Mary's) had the second fastest time. She and the winner Zoe Parr (Highlands, New Plymouth) beat all the boys.

**Primary:** Racing was held in giant slalom and dual slalom events, for skiers in years 1-6.

Ponsonby Arctic Flyers 109 points, Victoria Avenue Reds 105 points, Ponsonby Gate Busters 105 points, Milford Gold 98 points, Bayfield Ballistics 97 points, King's School 96 points.

## **NISSSC SLOPESTYLE**

Adverse weather at Whakapapa limited the North Island Secondary Schools skiing champs to just one event, the slopestyle.

**Team placings:** Palmerston North Boys High 137.34 points, St Kentigern College 121.67 points, Napier Girls High 113.00 points, St Matthews Collegiate (Masterton) 106.00 points, Sacred Heart College (Auckland) 93.34 points, Woodford House (Havelock North) 91.66 points.

## **NISSSB RESULTS**

Team results from the secondary school section of the North Island Primary and Secondary Schools snowboard competition which was held at Turoa were:

**Secondary girls:** Raglan Area School 41 points, Ruapehu College 40 points, Elim Christian School 32 points, Kristin School 31 points, Paraparaumu College 31 points.

**Secondary boys:** Western Springs College 76 points, Westlake Boys 73 points. Mt Albert Grammar 69 points, Elim Christian College 67 points, Kristin School 66 points.



*Madeline Moffat retained the RSC Junior championship. Second was EJ Moffat.*



**Upper:** Three generations of Johannessens outside RSC Hut. From left: Nils, Svein, Finn. The grandfather Svein aged 80 is a former Norwegian ski instructor. **Lower:** Midfield at Turoa. Photo: RAL.



**Upper:** Westmere's three teams enjoyed staying at the RSC Hut during NIPS, and "Jimmy was awesome". Photo: Miranda Charlesworth. **Lower:** What do you have at RSC Lodge on a no-ski day? Answer: Yoga and muffins. Photo: Donna O'Hanlon.



Racing in the North Island Intermediate ski champs at Whakapapa. Photos: NIPS.



*The scene at the NIPS start at Whakapapa. Photos: NIPS.*



*Amelie Reymond (Switzerland) has a record 115 wins in World Cup skiing.*

## **WORLD CUP WINS**

**Swiss telemark skier Amelie Reymond has won more World Cup events than any other skier or snowboarder in competitions run by the FIS. She has 115 wins.**

Others are:

Conny Kisling (Switzerland) freestyle 106 wins.

Ingemar Stenmark (Sweden) alpine 86 wins.

Marit Bjørgen (Norway) cross-country 84 wins.

Lindsey Vonn (US) alpine 82 wins.

Karine Ruby (Italy) snowboard 67 wins.

Marcel Hirscher (Austria) alpine 67 wins.

Annemarie Moser-Proll (Austria) alpine 62 wins.

Mikaela Shiffrin (US) alpine 61 wins.

Jan Bucher (US) freestyle 57 wins.

Jan Nemec (Czech) grass ski 57 wins.

Vreni Schneider (Switzerland) alpine 55 wins.

Sara Takanashi (Japan) jumping 55 wins.

Hermann Maier (Austria) alpine 54 wins.



*Amelie Reymond.*

Gregor Schlierenzauer (Austria) jumping 53 wins.

Mikael Kingsbury (Canada) freestyle 53 wins.

Alberto Tomba (Italy) alpine 50 wins.

Hannu Manninen (Finland) nordic combined 48 wins.

Phillipe Lau (France) telemark 48 wins.



**Upper:** The Ski Waka gondola passes between RSC Lodge and RSC Hut. Photo: Dan Paine. **Lower:** RSC Lodge in 2019. Photo: Mike Lowery.

## ACROSS THE SKIING WORLD

**Austrian ski racer Marcel Hirscher**, who has won the Alpine skiing World Cup for the past eight years, has retired from the sport.

Hirscher, aged 30, spent 12 years on the famous White Circus.

He won 67 World Cup races in all to sit third on the all-time list behind Lindsey Vonn (82) and Ingemar Stenmark (86).

Hirscher won seven world championship titles in various disciplines and clinched two gold medals at the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang 2018 to add to a silver from Sochi four years earlier.

He said that in addition to spending more quality time with his young son, he wants to ski deep powder as for many years he has skied mainly on hard packed race courses.

*Former national freestyle ski champion Philippa Greig, 37, from Queenstown, has died in Mexico after contracting dengue fever.*

*Greig, known as Pip, was house sitting for a friend in a little village called Yelapa when she was bitten by a mosquito.*

*She won a skier cross national title in 2004. Her Aspen-based sister Mitch is a former Winter Olympics skier.*

**The American-based Ikon Pass** is expanding into Europe and has signed up the Swiss resort of Zermatt as its 41st destination.

The Ikon was launched in 2018 by a conglomerate of North American ski resorts, coming together as the Alterra Mountain Company.

Originally covering 23 resorts across nine US states and three Canadian provinces, its coverage has quickly expanded to include resorts in Japan, Australia, New Zealand and Chile.

The cost of an Ikon Pass for winter 2019-20 is \$US1049 which gives unlimited access with no blackout dates in 14 of

Ikon's destinations, and up to seven days on the slopes of the remaining 27.

**Japanese biomaterial company Spiber has announced the world's first ski parka made with artificial spider silk.**

*Instead of spiders producing the silk, precision-engineered microbes make it.*

*Known as Moon Parka, the jacket is waterproof and breathable, and it uses a high-performance filler that makes it very warm.*

*To make the silk, Spiber uses synthetic biology, a scientific field that leverages DNA editing techniques to program microorganisms.*

**The Mt Cheeseman Ski Club of Canterbury has celebrated its 90th birthday.**

The club was founded in 1929 as the Canterbury Winter Sports Club, the name reflecting the fact that it enjoyed ice skating as much as skiing, and some tobogganing.

It was later changed to Mt Cheeseman Ski Club when little skating was done.

The club at one stage inherited one of the four Pomalifts previously employed at Whakapapa. Today it has two T-bars.

The skifield is open to the public. While it is located on Mt Cockayne, it is named after Mt Cheeseman which is slightly further along the range.

**Polish daredevil Andrzej Bargiel abandoned his bid to ski down Mt Everest, saying an overhanging chunk of ice (or serac) was in his way.**

*Bargiel, aged 31, last year skied down K2, the world's second tallest mountain. This year he wanted to climb Mt Everest and then ski down without supplemental oxygen.*

*He has previously also skied off Nepal's Manaslu, Broad Peak in Pakistan and Shishapangma in Tibet.*

**A woman in Scotland has achieved 120 consecutive months of skiing.**

Helen Rennie, aged 65, said she has managed to find enough snow to ski on

every single month for the past 10 years. In summer months she has walked for miles to find a large enough snow patch.

She recorded her 120th consecutive month on October 2nd just below the summit of Cairn Gorm skifield following a fresh snowfall.

The previous month she had to walk six miles (9km) to find a patch of snow at Aonach Beag in Lochaber.

*Plans to build the largest ski resort in Ukraine are being hotly opposed by environmental activists who say the project risks destroying a unique ecosystem.*

*The plans for the Svydovets ski resort include 60 hotels and 400 cottages to host 22,000 tourists a day, with 230km of ski runs.*

*Opponents say the cutting of several hundred hectares of forests will endanger species unique to the region, including the Eurasian lynx, the Eurasian eagle-owl, the Carpathian newt and 40 plants.*

**A guidebook featuring Aoraki/Mt Cook mountaineering** has been named the best in the world at the Banff Mountain Book awards.

Aoraki Tai Poutini was a collaborative project written by Rob Frost and published with the New Zealand Alpine Club (NZAC).

The book includes 1100 routes in Aoraki/Mt Cook National Park and Westland Tai Poutini National Park, including major passes and previously overlooked valleys.

It is illustrated with hundreds of photographs and examines how the mountains are being affected by climate change.

**Two people had a miraculous escape** after their plane crashed into a skifield chairlift in Italy.

*The light aircraft ended up tangled in the wires above the ground at the Prato Valentino ski resort.*

*The 62-year-old pilot was thrown from the plane and needed hospital treatment while his 55-year-old passenger had to be*

*rescued from the cockpit by a mountain rescue team.*

*The chairlift was not running at the time of the crash. Helicopters were used to retrieve the aircraft.*

Staff who have been assigned to work at the **2022 Olympic Winter Games in Beijing** have used Mt Ruapehu for a training run.

A group of 35 Chinese visitors spent two weeks going through training drills and honing their skills.

The training taught the group how to ski patrol and drive a ski groomer in harsh conditions.

Ski patroller Haozhe Wang said: “We met many great people, both at Whakapapa and in Ohakune, and we truly hope that we have the chance to return the hospitality in the future.”

**Christchurch skier Mike Unger** clocked up more than 1 million vertical metres at Mt Hutt this year.

*Unger as of October 15th had skied 1,012,092 metres in 2243 runs over 100 skiing days this season.*

“I enjoyed every minute of it,” the 67 year-old said. “I enjoy hanging out with happy people. I didn’t have a miserable day.”

*He got 11 powder days and put chains on his tyres on the access road 15 times. Mike Unger used to own Victoria Ski Sport in Christchurch. He retired in 2014.*

**CopenHill ski slope** with plastic snow, built on the roof of a revolutionary power plant which burns waste instead of fossil fuel, has been opened in the centre of Copenhagen.

For \$33 an hour, skiers and snowboarders can whiz down the 450 metre slope. Hiking and running trails are accessible to the public during opening hours at no cost.

Denmark has flat topography with several months of snow but no mountains and Copenhageners have to travel several hours by car to reach ski slopes in Sweden.



## 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
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	\$28
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.**