

The Bulletin

RUAPEHU SKI CLUB

Volume 85, No. 3

September 2020



Skiing at Turoa in August 2020. Photo: Mike Anderson.



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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Kia ora koutou, hello everyone.

Wow, so much has happened since our last Bulletin! As a country we've gone from lockdown, to almost normal, and back to Covid-19 crashing into our lives again.

For RSC, after thinking there may be no season followed by a late flurry of work to get our buildings ready, the season has started.

For me, there was the huge honour of taking up the reins as RSC President.

I'd like to take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank Richard Nelson for his stewardship of RSC as President over the last three years through some difficult times.

I'd also like to thank retiring Committee members Fiona Willison, Jeff Davies and Nina Thomas for all their work over their terms on Committee.

For those of you who don't know me, ko Ruapehu te maunga te rū nei taku ngākau – Ruapehu is the mountain that speaks to my heart.

I've been a member of RSC since childhood (a very long time ago now!), and on Committee since 2004.

I've had many roles and a lot of you may remember me from work parties, one of my roles I have most enjoyed as it allowed me the privilege of meeting nearly everyone who joined the Club over that decade.

I love our Club with a passion, and have gained so much from being a member all these years that I will always feel indebted to it.

2020 is proving to be an immensely difficult year for RSC, both financially and in terms of you, our members, being able to enjoy the use of our buildings and Ruapehu.

Even without the impact of Covid-19 it was a slow snowless start to the season, that and the cancellation of many events such as NIPS and interclub racing has affected bookings.

Level 1 restrictions imposed on RAL and us have also had an impact. Then just as the snow started to fall we had the reappearance of Covid and the move to Level 3 for Auckland and Level 2 elsewhere, meaning mass cancellations for our Auckland members.

Committee has worked hard to mitigate the financial impacts, and we have introduced Level 2 protocols in our buildings to protect our members who can still go to the mountain.

To help reduce the financial losses this season we've had to introduce a Covid-19 surcharge for the season of \$10 per night (\$5 for juniors).

We realise this is an imperfect tool and are working on a scheme to compensate those affected by it next season.

One bright light this year has been the repair of our relationship with RAL.

While we still have issues to resolve around foot traffic access to and from Hut Flat, RAL has bent over backwards to help us pre-season and continues to help and work with us.

It is heartening to see the warmth returning to our friendship.

We are also very lucky to have Paula Cooper stepping in as our Administration Officer this season. She brings a great understanding of Club life to the role.

Finally, keep an eye on the website and Facebook for the new dates for Club Week. I hope to see you there.

Noho ora mai, Stay well, look after yourself

Phill Thomass
RSC President



The top of Turoa. Patrons ride the High Noon Express. Photo: RAL.

THROUGH THE LODGE WINDOW

RAL's dates for the 2020 winter season are:

- Happy Valley July 3 to October 26.
- Whakapapa lower July 10 to October 26.
- Whakapapa upper July 25 to October 26.
- Turoa July 11 to October 18.

The ski fields were meant to open in June but the openings were delayed first by the Covid-19 pandemic and secondly by the late arrival of snow.

New observations in July-August continued to indicate low levels of volcanic activity at Mount Ruapehu.

Geonet on August 13th said Crater Lake (Te Wai ā-moe) had cooled from a peak temperature of 42°C in early April and was currently around 22-23°C.

Prominent Maori educator Toni Waho died in June after being swept down a stream near Tangiwai, about 10 kilometres east of Ohakune.

He did postgraduate study in Māori language policy and planning, and went on to hold positions in the kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori movements.

A rāhui was placed on the Tokiāhuru Stream.

A 200ha predator fenced eco-sanctuary set in 2500ha of native bush is planned for Pokaka which is halfway by road between Ohakune and National Park.

The sanctuary is one of the central aims for Uenuku Charitable Trust in its Treaty of Waitangi settlement.

The Pokaka Eco Sanctuary has been planned for more than three years. It will occupy 2500ha of land currently managed by the DOC and situated near the Makatote Viaduct.

The Mokai Gravity Canyon tourist attraction near Mt Ruapehu has gone into liquidation.

It had a 80 metre bungy jump, a giant swing and one of the biggest and fastest (160km/h) flying foxes in the Southern

**THE
RUAPEHU SKI CLUB**

(inc) Founded 1913

P.O.Box 8064, Symonds St.,
Auckland, New Zealand 1150

Telephone: 0-9-377 3856

Email: admin@rsc.org.nz

Website: www.rsc.org.nz

c/o McConnell Properties

Level 2

204 Quay St

Auckland CBD 1010



President: Phill Thomass
Vice-Presidents: Carl Burling,
 Liza Fitzsimmons, Nils Johannesen,
 Marion Quinn, Donald Webster
Secretary: Louise Blair
Treasurer: Heather Chao
Immediate Past President:
 Richard Nelson
Captain: Catherine Gafa
Vice-Captain: Paula Cooper
Committee: Adrian Adriaansen,
 Arran Birchenough, Damon
 Forsyth, Will Geddes, Sam Hood,
 Richard Horton, Simon Hunt, David
 Macmillan, John Payne, Sonia Quinn
Patron: Peter Brady
Patroness: Barbara Scelly
Auditors: Hart and Co
Admin Officer: Paula Cooper
Lodge Officer: Carl Burling
Hut Officer: Simon Hunt
Chalet Officer: Nils Johannesen
Turoa Officer: Donald Webster
Heritage Fund Guardians: Robin
 Dallas, Richard Nelson, Bernard
 Smith, Phill Thomass
Fund Treasurer: Mike Wardle
Glacier Hut Custodian:
 Bernard Smith

Hemisphere, attracting thousands each year.

Its owner Alistair MacDonald described the Rangitikei district as a hidden jewel with its unique landscape, hidden bush walks and outdoor ventures.

“Once you leave Turangi and the mountain, there’s just a big gap. If that gap was filled with a holiday park or lodges, more people would go.”

*RSC has advised members via Facebook that it has plans at **RSC Turoa** to build a garden shed for bikes under the rear fire escape stairs.*

“In the meantime put it in the ski locker room.”

Mellonsfolly Ranch, a replica of an 1860s Wyoming frontier town, situated at Raetihi near Ruapehu, is for sale.

The mini wild west town belongs to Rob Bartley who owns an aluminium car parts manufacturer with factories in New Zealand and Canada. He is selling up as he deals with some health issues.

Mellonsfolly Ranch includes 10 period buildings, 13 guest rooms that can accommodate a total of 22 people and a thriving Manuka honey business. The whole town is listed for sale at \$NZ11.6 million.

Two people were rescued after falling down 30-metre cliff at Whakapapa last month.

RAL said a man in his 50s and a woman aged 33 were outside the ski area boundary at the time of the incident, and were on an avalanche awareness course run by another company.

RAL ski patrollers and a groomer attended the incident, along with the Ruapehu Alpine Rescue Organisation (RARO) team. Both injured people were flown to hospital by helicopter.

The deadline for the December Bulletin will be **Friday November 20th.**

All items should be with the Editor by then.

THE BULLETIN

Founded in 1936 by Jock and Fitzie Graham.

Editor: Alan Graham, 63 Messines Rd, Karori,
Wellington 6012.

Telephone: 04-476 4598.

Email: alanjograham@xtra.co.nz

Advertising: RSC Administration
PO Box 8064, Symonds St.

SKI SEASON 2020

The 2020 ski season at Happy Valley opened on July 3rd. The lower mountain (Rockgarden) at Whakapapa opened on July 10th and the upper mountain on July 25th. Turoa opened on July 11th.

The lifts in operation in this season were reduced due to the Covid-19 virus pandemic which saw the NZ border closed to all but essential visitors.

Lifts were:

At Whakapapa:

- Happy Valley carpets
- Rangatira
- Sky Waka
- Knoll T-Bar
- Valley T-Bar

At Turoa:

- Parklane
- Movenpick
- Giant
- High Noon

Lift operations

Due to the time lost through the March lockdown, alongside the inability to bring in overseas expertise, RAL was not able to open every lift this season.

The focus was on offering top to bottom skiing at both ski areas, with beginners at Happy Valley.

Skifield numbers

RAL aimed to limit skifield numbers to 4500 a day at Whakapapa and 3700 at Turoa. However, when NZ moved back to pandemic level 2 on August 12 this was changed to 1800 for Whakapapa and 1000 for Turoa.

Car parking

A new parking booking system was introduced at Turoa and Whakapapa to help ease traffic congestion. Visitors were able to book online and car number plates were scanned on arrival to match to the booking.

Most racing was cancelled as RAL, clubs and other organisations did not run normal events at Whakapapa or Turoa.

Nevertheless RSC aims to run the Club champs in some form.

Ticketing

Ticketing was online. There was a very limited opportunity to purchase on-site but there was no cash on the mountain this year. Any payments were card only in outlets including retail, food and beverage.

First Tracks

First Tracks did not go ahead this season. For those who purchased this upgrade, a credit or refund was offered.

Night skiing

Night skiing was introduced at Whakapapa 15 years ago and whilst the feedback has been positive, the take up has been very low. It was not offered in 2020 and will be reviewed again for 2021.

Transport and shuttles

RAL did not offer customer shuttles this season, apart from lower car park services. Some commercial shuttles were available.

Busy QB weekend

More than 2000 people went to Whakapapa at Queen's Birthday weekend to sightsee and ride the Sky Waka. That was more than double the number who visited on the same weekend in 2019.

Mt Hutt first

Mt Hutt on June 12th was the first NZ skifield to open for the season. More than 2000 people attended.

Queenstown busy

The Queenstown skifields Coronet Peak and The Remarkables reported 10,000 visitors between them on one Friday in the July school holidays. It was the busiest day anyone could remember and it occurred without Australians who normally make up 40 percent of customers.

July at Ruapehu

In spite of grim economic forecasts and uncertain snow conditions, more than 55,000 visitors arrived at the Whakapapa and Turoa skifields over the fortnight of the July school holidays, a 5 percent increase on last year's figures.

RSC CLUB CHAMPS

Previously listed as being on hold, the RSC Club champs will be held on September 26th with a backup day on September 27th.

We will use the best courses that are available. Check the RSC website for details closer to the event.

***** Winter Party (aka Club Week)** in August was postponed after a new round of pandemic restrictions was put in place. Check the RSC Facebook site for updates. The Haensli Cup was cancelled along with all other top races at Mt Ruapehu this winter.

CAR PARK BOOKINGS

RAL introduced its car park booking system covering its 10 busiest weekends of the season at Whakapapa and Turoa from July 25th to September 27th.

Half the spaces could be booked at 10am on the Wednesday prior to a visit and the other half at 6pm on the same day.

The system as originally announced was changed somewhat as a result of public objections, submissions and feedback.

It was changed again on August 12th when NZ moved back to pandemic level 3 and bookings were needed every day.

If skiers plan to arrive at the ski area during peak times they need to follow the standard booking process.

However, at Whakapapa there are 400 overnight spaces which are available on a first-come, first-served basis for those arriving after hours.

At **Whakapapa**, number plates are scanned at Scoria Flat on some days or at Whakapapa Village.

At **Tūroa**, the checkpoint is at the 3km slow vehicle bay.

TUROA GONDOLA

RAL has confirmed its choice of a gondola for Turoa to replace the Movenpick quad chair and the Parklane triple chair.

Some skiers have asked for a six-seater chair to replace the Movenpick.

RAL says the Parklane which has been on Turoa since day one is more than 40 years-old and should be replaced.

The gondola will have a mid-station to allow young children and beginners to get off easily and move to the Wintergarden platter lift.

A gondola would also allow for more operational days in marginal weather. RAL said they have run the Sky Waka in 140km/h winds, although without passengers.

LOCKDOWN SOUGHT

Ohakune-based iwi Ngāti Rangī has called for a regional lockdown around Ruapehu and asking outsiders to stay away.

The call from chairman Whetu Moataane on August 15th followed revelations that a person who later tested positive for Covid-19 had been skiing at Tūroa.

“Ruapehu is not open for travellers,” Mr Moataane said. “Regardless of current alert levels, we all need to be extra cautious and not travel unnecessarily.”

Mr Moataane called for an immediate regional lockdown to protect whānau and the wider community.



Phill Thomass



Paula Cooper

OUR NEW PRESIDENT

Phill Thomass of Rotorua, who has been elected as the 32nd President of the Club, comes from a longtime RSC family.

His father Lew Thomass is one of 11 people listed on a plaque inside RSC Lodge for their outstanding efforts in constructing our flagship building in the 1950s without the use of power tools, chairlifts or helicopters.

Phill has been on the Committee for 16 years and has played a major role in heading RSC working parties and maintaining our buildings.

He is also a dab hand at computers and has shown me a few tricks on how to edit photos for the Bulletin.

Outside of RSC, Phill is a local body politician and last year was re-elected for a second term as chairman of the Rotorua Lakes Community Board.

ADMIN OFFICER

Club Vice-Captain Paula Cooper has been appointed as the RSC Administration Officer for this year.

She replaces Sheryl Brownlee who has retired after eight years in the post.

Email Paula at admin@rsc.org.nz.

COOKS FOR 2020

Jimmi Bertinshaw is back at the Lodge, Donna O’Hanlon is back at the Chalet and Mike Anderson who took our cover photo is back at Turoa.

We have no cook at the Hut this year.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic our Swiss instructor was unable to gain entry to NZ.

We hope to resume the value of a Swiss visitor next season, continuing many years of The Swiss Connection.

OBITUARIES

KENWYN CAMPBELL

We are sad to advise the sudden death of Kenwyn Campbell, aged 78, wife of ex-RSC President the late Ross Campbell.

Kenny skied around the world as she and Ross, an accountant, lived in Canada, Australia, Auckland and Wellington, after attending university in the South Island where Kenwyn graduated as a physiotherapist.

She was a strong skier – Ross always said she was better than him – and she had considerable success in Masters ski racing in NZ, the US and Canada.

Kenwyn attended Winter Party (aka Club Week) in recent years and was often on hand as a judge of RSC's test programme Snow Safe.

We extend the Club's condolences to her daughters Nicole and Rachel and their families.

MICHAEL WILLISON

We regret to advise the death aged 89 of prominent Auckland photographer and long-time RSC member Mike Willison.

A highlight of Mike's career was photographing the wedding of Charles and Diana at St Paul's Cathedral in 1981.

"Harrowing! There was a lot of pressure, but when you look back it was fun too. We sold nearly 300,000 copies."

In 1983 he shot the baby Prince William playing with a Buzzy Bee on a rug. "It was bedlam. There were about 40 photographers and we had to lie on the grass to get the photo."

Mike was chief photographer for the New Zealand Woman's Weekly for 34 years until his retirement in 1996.

We extend our condolences to his wife Alice and all members of the Willison family.

GRAEME CAMPBELL

We regret to advise the death of long time RSC member Dr Graeme Campbell.

He was a regular skier at Whakapapa after earlier visiting Coronet Peak during his Otago University days, where he won several varsity slalom and downhill ski races.

Graeme was the son of Archie Campbell who was RSC President in 1937-1948 and Patron in 1953-1983.

Three of Graeme's grandchildren, Alexandrine, Dominic and Remy, have been RSC Club champions.

We offer the Club's condolences to Valerie and all members of her family.

ELIZABETH MAZEY

Elizabeth Mazey, who has died at Taupo aged 94, was the wife of the late John Mazey who was the Tongariro National Park's chief ranger from 1961-75.

John headed the ski patrol and did much to promote safety at Whakapapa. One of their sons Dave Mazey was the manager of RAL for 30 years.

The house where the Mazey family lived at Whakapapa has been incorporated in the park HQ near The Chateau.

HOUSE COMMITTEE PANDEMIC PROTOCOLS

We have implemented our Level 2 protocols in our three buildings that are open.

They have undergone a thorough clean and remain available for bookings.

Our maximum occupancy levels in each building have been reduced so that we can maintain good social distancing.

If, however, the Ruapehu District's alert level is raised to 3 the buildings will be closed.

For members living in any area that is at Alert Level 2 or lower on the dates you are booked in for, we look forward to seeing you, but there will be a few extra things you need to do when booking.

You can find our Level 2 Protocols on the RSC website in the members' area. Please read them so you know what to expect at the mountain.

When you go to the mountain you need to take:

- Some hand sanitiser (for when you're out on the skifield).
- A duvet cover for the duvet on your bunk, or if you don't have one, an extra (3rd) sheet to put over the top of the duvet.
- We strongly recommend that you take some face masks.
- We also ask that you download and use the NZ Covid Tracker app while at the mountain. We have QR codes at all our buildings, as will RAL around the skifields.

While staying at the mountain the protocols require:

- We are only booking to 50 percent occupancy to maintain social distancing. This means only half a bunkroom will be booked unless it is a family of more than that number.

- We ask that to protect yourselves, you spray your bunk environs with sanitiser before making your bed. Sanitiser is available for all the bunkrooms.

- Bathroom – again, please maintain your distance, sanitise all surfaces you use. Showers may require an agreed slot so many are not queued up waiting.

- Lounge/dining – every second chair is to be left vacant unless you are a family.

- Duties that don't allow for distance eg dishes – please wear your masks.

- Hand sanitiser dispensers are all around the buildings. Please get into the habit of using them every time you enter different areas. Don't forget the drying room as well.

- Our custodians are sanitising stair rails, door handles etc and that is also written into this year's duty rosters.

- Please be vigilant about these duties. Just one person not doing their part will compromise all of us.

The sanitising protocols will likely be permanent to reduce the chance of norovirus etc.

We are very happy to have Jimmi (Lodge), Donna (Chalet) and Mike (Turoa) with us again this year.

Please support them as they try to keep you safe along with feeding you.

Above all, get to the mountain and enjoy it. This year more than most we need the escape.



Upper: The RSC Committee for 2020-21. **Lower:** Incoming President Phill Thomass with the President's ice axe. Photos: Deane Tetley.

RSC AGM REPORT

The 107th AGM of RSC was held on July 1st, a couple of weeks later than usual, owing to this year's Covid-19 uncertainties.

Outgoing President Richard Nelson welcomed the attendees, and as is our convention we had a moment's silence to honour RSC members who passed away.

Heather Chao, our Treasurer, summarised the 2019 accounts. In a year of much change and uncertainty in respect of RAL, your Committee has been focused on a period of cost minimisation leading to a \$77K profit.

Heather noted that this cannot continue as there has been deferred maintenance that needs addressing. We did maintain our bunk night numbers, but only because Turoa hosted Wairarapa Ski Club members after their fire.

We thanked Sheryl Brownlee for her years of service to the Club with a gorgeous bouquet of flowers. Since Sheryl's retirement, Catherine Gafa, Club Captain, has been covering much of the administration for our members. We thanked her with a bouquet as well.

Our Patron and Patroness, Peter Brady and Barbara Scelly, were confirmed as continuing in these roles, which they acknowledged as an honour and privilege to hold.

With a change in President this year the Guardians of the Heritage Fund were confirmed as Bernard Smith, Robin Dallas, Richard Nelson and Phill Thomass, and the Mike Wardle continues as Treasurer.

We thanked retiring Committee members Fiona Willison, Nina Thomas and Jeff Davies.

Peter Brady officiated the ceremony of passing the ceremonial ice axe to the new President. Peter said our Club has seen two World Wars, eruptions and other setbacks, and now Covid-19, but given the history of RSC he is certain we will successfully

see our way through these new challenges.

Incoming President Phill Thomass introduced the Committee, including new members David Macmillan and Sonia Quinn.

General business included Mike Lowery sharing the success of the Ski for Life programme. Of note is that all the 2020 prefects at St Paul's are SFL graduates. Although there's no SFL in 2020, he's looking forwards to 2021.

The improving relationship with RAL was discussed in light of Jono Dean becoming CEO. The best RSC support to RAL is to GO SKING!

Phill Thomas spoke to developing a 10 year plan that would be brought to the membership in the next year. Heather Chao noted that we are about 500 members short. To help your Club, bring your friends along and introduce them to membership.

Brent Moffat questioned the Covid bunk night surcharge, noting that he felt it was counterproductive to increasing bunk nights. Other questions from members were around whether we needed the cooks.

Phill Thomass, Heather Chao and John Payne responded that the Covid sub-committee had worked through multiple scenarios and although the decision was hard it had not been taken lightly. The cooks were required to meet our obligations under Level 1 and 2.

It was noted that if the Club has high bunk nights and all additional costs are covered, we would look at how to refund the surcharge. The best option for members is to GO SKIING!

Colin Upchurch thanked the Covid sub-committee for their hard work behind the scenes.

Josie Adriaansen reminded us that our buildings are there in summer and we can all use them more.

The meeting concluded at 9:15pm and members stayed for tea, coffee and donuts.

Louise Blair



Catherine Gafa



Louise Blair



Peter Brady



Sheryl Brownlee and Richard Nelson



Eight Presidents of RSC: Sandy Mill, Bill Speight, Robin Dallas, Bernard Smith, John Payne, Adrian Adriaansen, Richard Nelson, Phill Thomass. Photo: Deane Tetley.



Richard Nelson retires from office after three years as President of RSC. Photo: Deane Tetley.

NEW MEMBERS

We offer a warm welcome to the following new members:

JUNIOR

Sophia Miller (Tokoroa).
 Ethan Mason (Tauranga).
 Nate Hegley (Auckland).
 Aubrey Sima (Auckland).
 Clara Sima (Auckland).
 Evie Newman (Auckland).
 Evie Patricia White (Auckland).
 Gus White (Auckland).
 LouLou Guittenit (Hawkes Bay).
 Poppy Guittenit (Hawkes Bay).
 Thierry Gibbons (Cambridge).
 Elliott Gibbons (Cambridge).
 Amelia Anderson (Whakatane).
 Cooper Gordon (Auckland).
 Ava Revtiem (Auckland).
 Harriett Macmillan (Auckland).
 Oscar Van Pelt (Auckland).
 Manon Van Pelt (Auckland).
 Oliver Durbin (Auckland).
 Leo Durbin (Auckland).
 Charlie Durbin (Auckland).
 Rianon Thomas (Auckland).
 Jack Widdicombe (Auckland).
 Archie Widdicombe (Auckland).
 Charlotte O'Neill (Auckland).
 Mikayla Ballantyne (Hamilton).
 Ethan Ivatt (Auckland).
 Milla Ivatt (Auckland).
 Indy Ivatt (Auckland).

TARRAS AIRPORT

International tourists could fly into a fifth New Zealand destination by 2030 with plans afoot to build an airport near the South Island ski heartland

Tarras, a tiny farming community best known until now as the home of Shrek, the runaway merino sheep who escaped the clipping shears for six years, has been identified as the site for a new international airport.

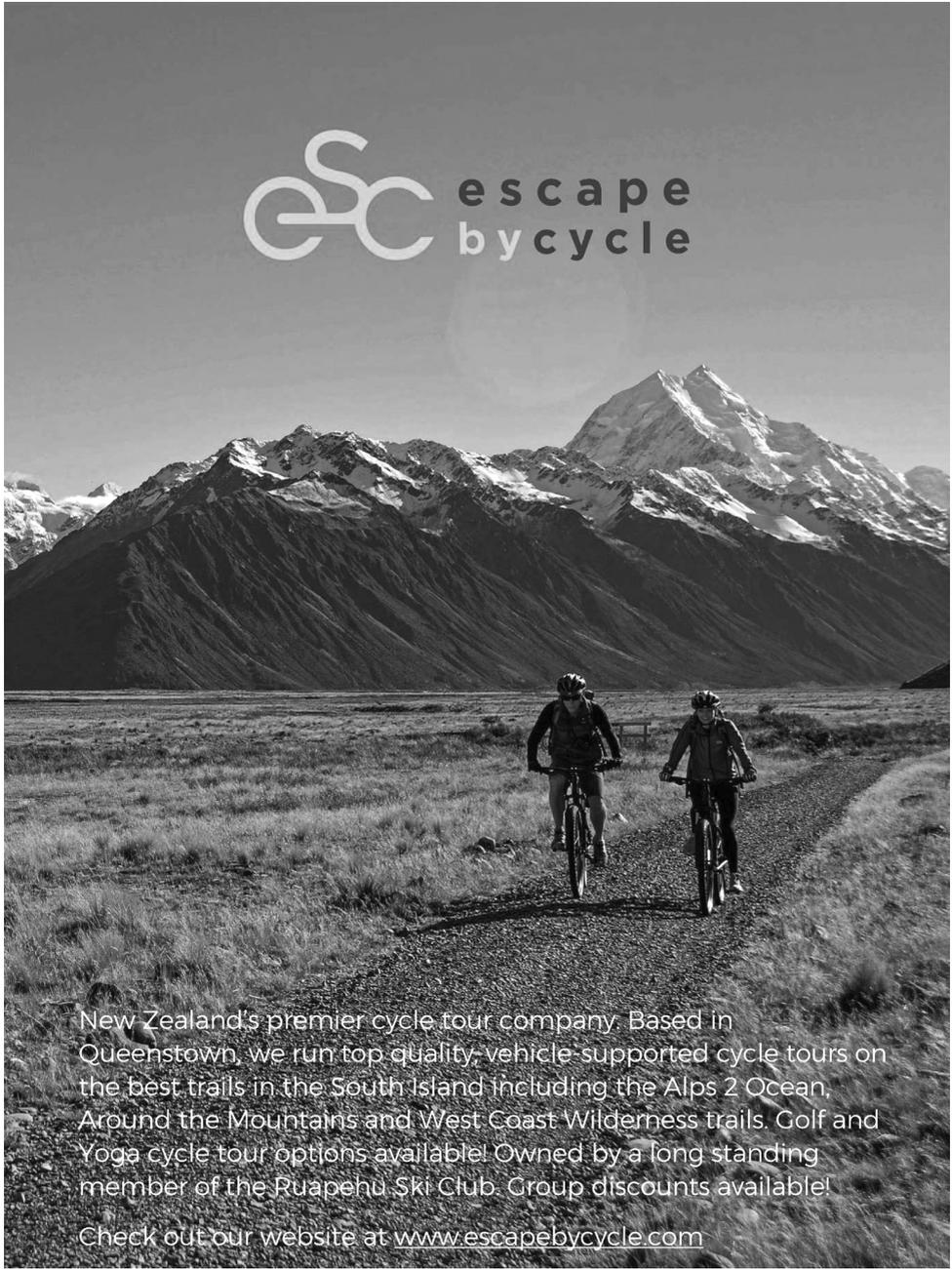
SENIOR

Taylor Wyatt (New Plymouth).
 Lauren Bruce (Hamilton).
 David Miller (Tokoroa).
 Kathryn Miller (Tokoroa).
 Morgan Payne (Auckland).
 Valeria Bykova (Auckland).
 Brent Mason (Tauranga).
 Rebecca Cooper-Bullock (Auckland).
 Adrian Bullock (Auckland).
 Jessy Ren (Auckland).
 Herbert Sima (Auckland).
 Heather Craggs (Auckland).
 Dan Dixon (Auckland).
 Kristian Roberts (Auckland).
 Cordelia Caplen (Auckland).
 Steven White (Auckland).
 Sarah Lee Guittenit (Hawkes Bay).
 Francois Guittenit (Hawkes Bay).
 Stephen Gibbons (Cambridge).
 Veronique Gibbons (Auckland).
 Michelle Anderson (Whakatane).
 Brent Anderson (Whakatane).
 Jayne Rixon (Auckland).
 Bjorn Revteim (Auckland).
 Niels Van Pelt (Auckland).
 Diane Adamson (Auckland).
 Kent Durbin (Auckland).
 Charles Widdicombe (Auckland).
 Fiona Widdicombe (Auckland).
 James Ballantyne (Hamilton).
 Omine Ivatt (Auckland).
 Natalie Ivatt (Auckland).

The owners of Christchurch airport have already spent \$45 million on land acquisition and initial work on a site less than half an hour's drive from Wanaka.

They said Queenstown airport is reaching its capacity and Tarras could pick up the slack. The runway of 2200m could take jet aircraft.

New Zealand has four major international airports accessible from Australia: Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Queenstown.



New Zealand's premier cycle tour company. Based in Queenstown, we run top quality, vehicle-supported cycle tours on the best trails in the South Island including the Alps 2 Ocean, Around the Mountains and West Coast Wilderness trails. Golf and Yoga cycle tour options available! Owned by a long standing member of the Ruapehu Ski Club. Group discounts available!

Check out our website at www.escapebycycle.com



Upper: In 1989 an advisor to the Government said alcohol should be banned at skifields. Wellington based cartoonist Eric Heath saw humour in the idea. **Lower:** Fred Rea. Photo: Jim Rea.

RSC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Aug 2020	29	Rangatira Alpine. CANCELLED.
	31	NIPS Week Two. CANCELLED.
Sept 2020	5	Tongariro Juniors. CANCELLED.
	12	Ngauruhoe Trophy. CANCELLED.
	19	Masters champs CANCELLED.
	26	RSC Club champs
26-Oct 11		School holidays
Oct 2020	18	Turoa closes
	26	Whakapapa closes
Nov 2020		
Dec 2020		DOC summer activities

SKILIFT DRONE

Seattle-based mail-order business Amazon has patented a drone which could replace the ski lift by dragging skiers up a mountain using a tow handle.

A person's location would be sent to the drone from their phone, and a rope would be lowered for the skier wishing to travel top of the slope

A tow handle would be attached to the end of the rope so that the skier can hold on while the drone flies slowly.

Once the skier arrives at the top of the ski slope, the rope retracts and the drone flies away to be used another time.

Amazon wrote in the patent filing that an extreme skier may use this system to 'reach a remote area or to customise their experience'.

The document also suggests that the drone tow handle could also be used for water-skiing or skateboarding.

The decision to patent a drone tow handle system doesn't guarantee that Amazon will produce it, and it is not the first company to investigate this option.

In 2016, Samsung sponsored a video

where Casey Neistat used a drone to snowboard up a mountain.

SKILIFT HISTORY

- The world's first three ski chairlifts were created for the ski resort in Sun Valley, Idaho, in 1936 and 1937.

- These lifts were created by engineer James Curran.

- The first chairlift was installed on Proctor Mountain, three miles away from the resorts famous Bald Mountain.

- This was a single-chair ski lift designed to take skiers between Proctor and Dollar Mountain.

- Before the ski lift, people wanting to access the top of the mountain would either have to walk or use pulls and hoists.

- The first double chairlift, with two seats side-by-side, opened in 1946.

- Triple and quadruple models were not commonplace until the early 1960s.

- The first chairlift in Europe was built in 1940 in Czechoslovakia in the Moravian-Silesian Beskids mountain range.

- The first chairlift in New Zealand was built by RAL at Whakapapa in 1954.



The National Poma in 1984. The West Ridge chairlift is located on this site. Photo: Alan Graham.

WHO WAS POMAGALSKI?

Jean Pomagalski (1905 to 1969), was a mechanical engineer who was a pioneer in the development of ski lifts. He was born in Poland and became a nationalised Frenchman.

In 1936 with two friends he built his first lift at Alpe d'Huez. After several failed attempts he managed in 1944 to design a hanger pole that could be detached from the main cable.

Thus was born the Pomalift which found sales worldwide including at Whakapapa where RAL installed four of them.

They were on the Rockgarden (later transferred to where the Delta chair is now), Te Heuheu Valley, Knoll Ridge and West Ridge.

All four were eventually replaced by T-bars which would carry two people rather than one.

All four were sold to South Island

skifields Mt Lyford (two Pomalifts), Mt Cheeseman and Hanmer Springs. Of these only the Poma at Hanmer remains.

In 1958, Jean Pomagalski embarked on the chairlift market and sold two, three and four-seater chairlifts. These included a double at Coronet Peak in 1964 and later several more chairlifts all over the South Island.

Not content with that he launched from 1965 the egg-shaped gondola that is used worldwide today in both skifield and non-snow applications. Queenstown's gondola in 1966 was one of his first.

Poma has installed 7800 devices for 750 customers worldwide and since 2000 has joined with Leitner to form Leitner-Poma as a joint venture.

Poma has also sold platter lifts (one-person fixed grip lifts for beginners), aerial tramways (cable cars) and funicular railways.



BOLLÉ NEW ARRIVALS

The Bollé Mute Helmet

RRP \$149.99

Assorted colours/sizes available



The Mute helmet offers some great features for a helmet that retails @ \$149.99

Features include:

- Integrated ventilation
- Air extractor
- Click to fit system
- Removable and washable lining
- Removable ear pads

Bollé Backline Premium Visor Helmet

RRP \$349.99

Assorted colours/sizes available



The Backline premium visor helmet has an integrated visor which offers extreme comfort.

Features include:

- Felt interior lining
- Adjustable ventilation
- Injected Abs 'high capacity shock absorption
- Click to fit system
- Removable ear pads
- Integrated visor with two lenses

Juliet Womens Visor

Womens version available

19 Mahuru Street | Newmarket
Auckland | 09 520 6699



SNOWcentre

www.snowcentre.co.nz

THE RSC BOXES

Back in the old days of the 1936 RSC Tin Hut, the forerunners of today's lockers were wooden boxes which some members kept in the Hut.

When the Hut was demolished in 1960 to make way for today's Hut on the same site, the remaining boxes were transferred to Glacier Hut for storage.

After giving members ample time to claim their boxes and the contents, some of us cleaned out Glacier Hut and the boxes at a working party.

Anything of value, including some exhibits now on display in Glacier Hut, was put aside. Then we had a magnificent bonfire, and the boxes were no more.

AG

THE OLYMPIC ROPE

At the 1932 Olympic Winter Games at Lake Placid (New York) the ski jump run in was so icy and dangerous that the judges decided jumpers should start 10 metres down the in-run.

Problem: How to get the jumpers from the top down to the new start.

Answer: The jumpers started from the top and after 10 metres came to a halt by grabbing a rope. To begin their jump, they let go of the rope.

Fortunately none of them came to any mishap and they managed to complete the jumping event.

Not so the German bobsleigh team. They suffered two broken spines, a fractured skull and a broken arm.

GLACIER ICE LOST

A single glacier in the Southern Alps lost roughly enough ice over three years to supply drinking water to all New Zealanders over the same period, Niwa

scientists have calculated.

Two marine heatwaves in a row and record-hot air temperatures saw Brewster Glacier in Mt Aspiring National Park lose an estimated 13 million cubic metres of ice from March 2016 to March 2019.

PEACE MOUNTAIN

Peace Mountain is a 15 minute documentary film now showing around NZ.

Starring champion NZ freeskiier Janina Kuzma and produced by Evelina Nilsson, it covers a ski trip that no one had previously attempted to ski Mount Hermon, situated on the border between Israel, Lebanon and Syria.

With the countries still officially at war, the Syrian capital only 40 km away and Lebanon a snowball throw away, Janina and Evelina cross borders to attempt to ski the mountain.

They are confronted with military soldiers on patrol as they brave the threat of soaring missiles in hope to ski in peace.

ST BERNARD RESCUE

St Bernards are known for helping to rescue distressed travellers in the mountains, but the tables were turned in northern England.

Sixteen volunteers from the Wasdale mountain rescue team took turns carrying Daisy, a 55kg St Bernard, from England's highest peak, Scafell Pike.

The mountain rescue team spent five hours rescuing Daisy, who had collapsed while descending the mountain with her owners.

Daisy recovered well after treatment.

ELEVATE DEFERRED

RSC veteran member Jim Mutch advises that due to Covid-19 the development of the Roam Robotics product Elevate which he reviewed in the previous Bulletin has been paused.

Elevate consists of a small backpack containing a computer, sensors, batteries and a pneumatic compressor, connected to lightweight, carbon fibre leg braces. They act like sophisticated shock absorbers.

Roam said: “This pandemic has very real consequences and unfortunately, within the uncertain context of Covid-19, we have had to make the very hard decision to temporarily pause our investment in the Elevate ski product.

“Regretfully, this decision means that we will not be producing the devices that were pre-ordered, nor will Elevate be available for rent this coming 2020-21 winter season

“The future of Elevate? As stated, we are pausing our efforts on our Elevate ski product and not cancelling them. Our engineering team will use the next months to further refine our technology platform with the singular goal of making all future Roam products better.”

NEW VOLCANO ALERT

A new volcano warning system, which would have alerted people to the fatal Whakaari/White Island eruption 16 hours before it happened, is ready to be made operational.

The warning system, developed by a team of scientists at Auckland University, is thought to be the first of its kind anywhere in the world.

The scientists are now looking to see whether the warning system will work for other high-risk volcanoes, such as Ruapehu, or Tongariro.

At Whakaari/White Island, over the past 10 years, there have been five eruptions

and the warning system would have picked up four.

Senior lecturer Dr David Dempsey said his team has developed an algorithm which can pick up patterns in the seismic activity before the eruption happens.

“In particular, there is a four-hour burst of seismic energy that seems to occur hours or days before an eruption.” he said.

REVISED SAFETY POSTERS

A revised set of hazard posters has been drawn up for Mt Ruapehu.

The key message remains the same: Ruapehu is an active volcano, and if you see an eruption, or hear the siren warning system, move out of valleys immediately to higher ground.

Revised hazard posters for Whakapapa and Tūroa will communicate to visitors which volcanic hazards are possible, particularly near the summit Crater Lake (Te Wai ā-moe).

The volcanic hazard posters have been prepared by Department of Conservation, GNS Science and Ruapehu Alpine Lifts, in partnership with the University of Canterbury and University of Auckland, and are displayed at key points around the ski areas and are available online.

The posters show the potential hazard zones for a moderate, explosive eruption from Crater Lake (Te Wai ā-moe), including lahars (volcanic mudflows), flying rocks and ballistics, and fast-moving currents of steam and hot ash.

The summit hazard zone is depicted by a 3km zone from Crater Lake (Te Wai ā-moe), which has been extended from previous maps and is now consistent across the Tongariro National Park.

USE OF SNOW SOCKS

Snow socks are an alternative to chains, having some advantages and some disadvantages.

Scandinavians for many years have pulled woollen socks over their street shoes to avoid slipping on ice-covered surfaces, so the concept of using textiles to increase traction is fairly old.

There is a story that claims Henry Ford used a carpet to get his car moving during the difficult winter months.

In 1996, a Norwegian tyre specialist recalled this story and started thinking about a solution that could continuously apply an equivalent traction on the wheels of a vehicle. His socks have been sold since 2005.

Instead of placing the textile on the road, he came up with the idea of a textile that wraps around the tyre itself. From there, the conceptual idea of the snow sock was born.

The woven fabric of the socks covers the tread while elastic keeps the snow sock in place. Snow socks are sold in pairs and usually come in several sizes.

Are they legal? Most ski areas including Whakapapa and Turoa allow the use of snow socks when chains are required, but some areas overseas allow the use only of some models while banning others.

Currently only one brand, AutoSock, is accepted on all skifield roads in North America.

Socks are usually cheaper to purchase than chains but they are prone to damage on surfaces such as dry roads or gravel. Once damaged they can become unusable.

However, chains can also be damaged and can cause trouble if they come loose and start flapping about, while some modern cars with a narrow wheel housings are not suited to chains.

Manufacturers of snow socks say they are quick and easy to fit and can be fitted

in under two minutes.

They cause no damage to vehicle, tyres or suspension. They do not rust, are easy to store and transport, and are reusable and washable.

They are NZTA approved as a temporary gripping device for NZ roads, equivalent to metal snow chains, and can be fitted to most vehicles.

They are compatible with all active vehicle safety systems including traction control, stability control and ABS braking. The fabric is 100 percent high strength polyester with no metal parts.

Snow socks should be fitted to the driving wheels for two-wheel drive vehicles. For all wheel or four-wheel drive vehicles, they should be fitted to the front tyres.

Other terms use include textile snow chains, car socks, tyre socks, auto socks and tyre grips.

**** In NZ testing took place on the Bruce Road in 2015 and snow socks have been sold at Ruapehu since then, with sales going national in 2019.**

The socks are available this year at the Whakapapa Holiday Park (near The Chateau) for \$219.

See also ISSECHAINS.CO.NZ.



VERY WIDE SKIS

Why wide skis aren't good for your knees.

By Jackson Hogen September 2019
(condensed)

In his introduction to an overview on current research on the effects of wide skis <https://realskiers.com/realskiers-tv/the-evidence-on-wide-skis-influence-on-potential-knee-injury/> Prof. John Seifert of Montana State University explains two fundamental ways that wide skis expose the knees to injury.

The **first Fundamental** is that wide skis force skiers to adopt a more upright stance.

Less bend at the knee means the muscles that support the joint are no longer in their optimal position to exert force.

This means the knee is more vulnerable just when the **second Fundamental**, ground reaction force, is at its peak in the apex of a turn.

Citing a study of knee kinematics by Slovenian colleagues, Prof. Seifert shows data that strongly suggests that skiers on wider skis adopt a more upright stance in order to alleviate strain, and in doing so lose muscular strength just when it's needed the most.

Furthermore, from this posture the femur doesn't internally rotate to the same degree as the tibia, contributing directly to knee strain.

It's the inability of the tibia and femur to rotate in concert that can cause soreness in the joint to develop in less than a day of skiing.

I hope that many of you will view Prof.

Seifert's lecture, but for those of you who don't, here's the distillate:

- Physics don't lie. All the supporting numbers from various research projects may not be a complete match, but they come very close.

- The best protection against injury is good ski technique.

- Knee injuries are positional in nature. The tall stance induced by wide skis takes the muscles supporting the knee out of their ideal length-tension angle.

- The strain required to overcome ground reaction force on hard snow causes skiers instinctively to drift instead of edge, thereby losing a measure of control.

- If you don't already possess strong technical skills, a wider ski will hinder your skills development.

- To mitigate the risk associated with their use, wide skis need to be in powder around a foot deep. Even if you find fresh snow this deep, how long does it last? Once powder turns into crud, GRF raises its intensity.

How wide is too wide?

In the absence of standard definitions, Prof. Seifert settles on 90mm and up underfoot as Wide, 80-90mm as Mid-Width and 80mm and below as Narrow.

With all the other variables that can contribute to a change in outcomes – snow surface conditions, skier age, gender, mass and ability, to name a few – this is perhaps as precise a definition as we need.

Jim Mutch



Skier cross at Whakapapa in 2019. Photos: NIPS.



Secondary school snowboarding at Turoa in 2019.



Upper: Tjebbe Bruin amuses the RSC Committee. Photo: Deane Tetley. **Lower:** The Happy Valley beginner area at Whakapapa. Photo: RAL.



Upper: The High Noon six-seater chairlift slopes at Turoa. **Lower:** The Turoa midfield in July 2020. Photos: RAL.



Two photos of the crater rim at Mt Ruapehu, from Peter Otway.



Upper: RSC folk relaxing in front of the Lodge fire. Photo: Samantha Tomlinson.
Lower: Skiers at the Charlotte Pass (NSW) ski resort in July were treated to spectacular images of the Milky Way galaxy.

ACROSS THE SKIING WORLD

A downhill ski race that would be the longest in the World Cup is being planned to join the men's circuit on a course connecting Switzerland and Italy near the Matterhorn.

Officials in Zermatt said the 5-kilometre race could be ready to start in November 2022.

Racers would start at around 3900 metres altitude on the Swiss side of the border and drop 1100 metres into Italy.

Project leader Franz Julensaid it would not conflict with Switzerland's men's downhill run at Wengen in January. That race covering 4.4 kilometres in 2 ½ minutes is currently by far the longest World Cup race.

The Remarkables skifield at Queenstown has opened its new \$17 million 1.05km-long six-seater Sugar Bowl chairlift.

It replaces the 32-year-old four-person Sugar Bowl chairlift and opens up 5km of new trails.

Swiss chairlift technician Hannes Koller was granted a specialist visa to visit NZ to install the lift.

Swiss-Ski wants to establish Lenzerheide as a "biathlon hot-spot" after putting the resort forward for the 2025 World Championships.

Switzerland has never hosted the flagship International Biathlon Union event before and the country is not part of the World Cup circuit.

Swiss-Ski hopes to add the Biathlon Arena Lenzerheide to the World Cup calendar from 2022 to 2026.

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

Victorian skifields Mt Hotham and Falls Creek were closed for the season

in mid-July, due to Covid-19, followed soon after by Mount Buller and Mount Stirling. NSW skifields remained open, with restrictions.

Olympic ski champion Anna Veith of Austria has retired from racing, aged 30, after blowing out her knee for the third time.

Veith (nee Fenninger) won 15 World Cup races from 2011 to 2017 and was twice the overall World Cup champion.

At the Olympic Winter Games she won a gold medal in super-g and a silver medal in giant slalom in 2014, plus a silver medal in super-g in 2018.

She won five medals at the world Alpine ski championships including three gold medals.

Willi Huber, an Austrian-born ski instructor who has been called the founding father of the Mt Hutt skifield, has died at Geraldine in Canterbury aged 97.

A mountain guide in his native country, Huber came to New Zealand in the 1950s and married. He worked in mountain sports retail in Christchurch and climbed Aoraki Mt Cook many times.

To help decide if Mt Hutt was a viable skifield, he lived there alone for a season, taking weather and snow notes.

Snow Australia is set to launch a new formal recognition of athletic achievement in winter sports, the Snow Australia Medal.

Snow sports athletes who won a medal at World Championships or World Cup level, or who represented Australia at the Winter Olympics or Paralympic Games will be eligible to receive the medal.

Snow Australia CEO Michael Kennedy said: "This is an opportunity to look back into our past and connect Australia's ski and snowboarding elite into the present

by recognising unique alumni who forged the success of our sport.”

Aspen Skiing's top official has advised customers to temper their expectations but not curb their enthusiasm for the 2020-21 ski season.

Mike Kaplan said wrote that skiers and snowboarders will likely have to readjust their sights for the season because of the pandemic.

“Loading and riding lifts and gondolas will have guidelines that limit contact between unrelated individuals.

“Social-distancing measures and facial-covering requirements will be in place in all restaurants, ticket offices, ski school facilities and other indoor or congested areas. We are looking at expanding outdoor seating.”

The US ski industry lost at least \$US2 billion last winter because of the economic collapse from Covid-19.

The National Ski Areas Association said visits fell by 14 percent in the 2019-20 season compared to 2018-19.

Most resorts were forced to close in mid-March when the pandemic hit and states issued health closure orders.

NSAA said skier/boarder visits fell in all six of its geographic regions. The average resort was open for only 99 days, down from 121 days in the 2018-19 season.

A request by the Italian organizers of next year's Alpine skiing world championships to postpone the event by one year was rejected by the International Ski Federation. FIS ruled that the event will go ahead on February 9-21 at Cortina d'Ampezzo.

The Veneto region of northern Italy was hit hard by Covid-19 and the season-ending World Cup races in Cortina in mid-March were cancelled.

Cortina, which hosted the 1956 Winter Olympics, will host the ski events at the 2026 Winter Games.

Now you can turn your shoes into mini skis with a new product called Snowfeet which is a combination of skis and skates.

Snowfeet aims to bring inline skating to snow by attaching them to your winter shoes or snowboard boots. They were created and are manufactured in the Czech Republic by two college friends, Michael Podesva and Zbynek Suba.

Snowfeet are extremely light and small so you can fit them in any bag and carry them around. The size is universal meaning that one pair fits all. Metal ski edges enable easy stopping and heel brakes let you slow down.

A Colorado (US) man who stole skis worth more than \$US50,000 was jailed for 30 days.

During a search of his home, authorities located 74 pairs of skis and 42 pairs of ski poles that had been stolen from multiple ski resorts.

In addition to the 30-day jail sentence, the 40 year-old man was given three years probation and must attend cognitive behavioural therapy.

Former Olympic snowboarder and world champion **Alex “Chumpy” Pullin** aged 32 of Australia has drowned on the Gold Coast (Queensland).

The experienced free diver was found unresponsive on the ocean floor, while spear fishing.

Pullin was a two-time boardercross world champion and three-time Olympian. He was the Australian flag-bearer for the 2014 Olympic Winter Games in Sochi.



CLUB ITEMS & SERVICES FOR SALE

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

Website: www.rsc.org.nz

email: admin@rsc.org.nz

Lockers

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

email - admin@rsc.org.nz to find out what is available.

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

Ski- \$57.50

Gear \$28.75

Club Items

(Add \$3 for each order to be posted)

Name Badge (free to new members) \$12

PHONE NUMBERS

RSC Office 09-377-3856

Lodge 07-892-3824

Hut 07-892-3822

Chalet 07-892-3823

Turoa 06-385-8767

NEW MEMBERS COSTS

Two working parties.

Senior joining fee \$199

Junior joining fee \$99

Annual senior subs \$258.75 incl GST (\$225 plus GST)

Annual junior subs \$95 incl GST (\$82.61 plus GST)

ACCOMMODATION FEES (Effective May 1st 2020)

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

Off season rates (Chalet and Turoa)

Members Senior and Junior \$27

Non-members Senior and Junior \$32

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