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The renovations stage II

The second stage of the renovations have started and we expect completion by easter. A new roof, new ceiling upstairs, new upstairs windows, new floor coverings upstairs, new balconies as per the plans displayed at the 2012 AGM and renovations to the downstairs entry. Builder is **Bob Van Heek**.

The lodge will be a construction site for most of the summer and access to members closed. If members specifically seek access to the lockers they need to contact **Stuart Watson** who will arrange access.

Left over from the kitchen installation....during the season the ovens were recalibrated and are now working properly.

Work parties will start from Easter.

The year in review

I know we can never compete with Tahoe or Red, Val D'Isere, Chamonix, St Anton or Zermatt but for 2012 just about every week of the season, within five hours from Melbourne there was fresh, thoroughly enjoyable snow. It had to be one of the best seasons ever. Meg Casey even skied fresh snow on the last day of the season. Some of us travel the globe chasing the damn stuff but this year it landed close to home. There was excellent skiing to be found from student's week until president's week and beyond.

Students' ski week

The lodge was home again to 41 Ormond College students. Your editor played a low key mother and while there were some very late nights the skiing during the day was very very good with interchanging groups of enthusiastic capable skiers and boarders to all parts of the mountain. A leadership crew of three exceptionally talented young women, Lauren Flint, Alex Harper and Hannah Erikson and one good young bloke, Hugh Whelan called the shots with exquisite precision and maintained order. The hut was cleaned within an inch of its life before the weekend guests came in on Friday. It was a very successful week and we have students week back on the calendar in a format that works.



Students week 2012 . 1970's style. Rob Southwell, recognize the blue ski pants far right? From Left: Will Logan, Sami Sloss, Katherine Holyoake, Lachlan Carter, Gracie Morrison.

Champagne in the fast lane

The lane is not so fast these days but the vintage is improving each year. Indeed the pace was hard all morning and until lunch time and then you'd have to say it had the habit of flattening out on the couch or at the bar. Peter Zirknitzer came for dinner during the week and what a wonderful evening it was. Mention was made of rear entry ski boots that led to serious technical discussions about their merits, fashion and warm toes..."What's more important: miss a few turns or warm toes?" And on James Tait's 215 cm still unused skis bought from Peter the year before parabolic skis hit the slopes:"You are very tall. You will never wear them out." Prophetic.

President's week

For an Olympic themed dinner guests came dressed representing a country beginning with the letter of their names.

Dinner, not altogether unexpectedly, was indeed a high class affair – salmon, eye fillet (and god it was good), pavlova, mixed cheeses and topped off a day of good skiing and racing. Winners: Andrea Watson, women's snow board, Virginia Spring women's downhill, Cam Baker, Men's snow board, Tom Nairn, Mens' downhill. The president, Meg Casey acknowledged the contributions of those present to the club during the year – on work parties or as committee members.

Work party discounts

At the AGM in 2011 Andrews Robson and Troedel moved that the committee investigate revoking or changing the club's practice of discounting lodge fees against days worked on work parties. The club's analysis found that the work party discounts cost the club a relatively small amount (~\$6000). It further found that the good will lost from reducing the benefit was out of proportion to the small benefit gained given the substantial contributions that some members have made over the years. The president responded at the 2012 AGM but we thought others might like to know as well.



Rick Dungey, Peter Zirky, Michael McKellar, Warwick McLelland, Pam Fortey, Peter Martin (background)



Graham (Germany), Paton, Doug (Denmark) Goding, Meg (Mexico) McDonald, Tim (Turkey) Chalke and Kathrine (Kenya) Seal.

Diamond pattern chains a MUST

The MHRMB (Mt Hotham Resorts Management Board) has determined to prohibit any vehicle that does not carry diamond pattern wheel chains suitable to be fitted to that vehicle within the resort boundaries for the duration of the 2013 winter season.

The MHRMB cites the 2012 accident rate on the great Alpine Road and within the resort.

From Geoff Markley (Membership Officer):

At the recent Committee meeting approval was given for 2013 subs to be a marginal increase over 2012 subs generally in line with CPI. For example Graduate subs will rise from \$300 to \$310.00 for 2013 with other membership categories having a similar rise.

2013 subs notices will be sent out in early December and are due on 28th February 2013. All members will receive a paper subscription notice with email reminders for those with emails. Early payment of your subscriptions greatly helps the running of the Club, preparations for the 2013 season AND REDUCES HOW MUCH WE NEED TO BORROW.

Due to the planned renovations happening over summer, there will be changes to the traditional work party days so if you need to do work parties to qualify for membership or to attain the next level of work party discount, please check the website and newsletters for work party dates.

Ski patrol donations

The club received a letter from the Mt Hotham Volunteer Ski Patrol for support. The committee is unsure of the politics in relation to ski patrol. The MHRMB is currently responsible for ski patrol. It levies the lodges on the mountain and visitors to the resort for a range of services, including this one so it seems a strange request that this essential service is underfunded. The ski company could legitimately support the patrol but there-in lies a conflict between opening runs and safety. The club is checking with the Hotham Ski Association.



Solving the technical issue of the rear entry boot. Rick Dungey and Peter Zirknitzer



On the way home, at Little Baldy, tracks by Pres Meg Casey, Ex Pres Tom Nairn and Cam Baker.

Leases and services

The committee is going over the new lease we have been offered. This one will see us out for 35 years. It should see your editor out and maybe skiable snow in this country. Advice has been sought from relevant members with appropriate knowledge and they have provided helpful feedback. As is often the case the lease heavily favours the MHRMB and leaves minimum wriggle room. This lease agreement calculates site rental charges differently (lower) than the old one and while this would at first glance appear an advantage the MHRMB needs a defined amount of money to run the resort so our service fees will go up instead.

Lodge leadering iii

The booking officer, who also appoints the lodge leader, has a policy of usually not appointing committee members as lodge leaders. It's part of a plan to get more people skilled in running the lodge and understanding how it works. Committee members are always happy to help out but this policy is a good way of getting lodge leader depth in the club.

This year, mostly, the lodge ran like clockwork. It helps when there's good snow and people are in a good mood. Some members enjoy bringing guests back for dinner during their week on the hill. It can usually be accommodated but courtesy dictates that the lodge leader be asked in the event that several people have done the same thing – just to make sure we have enough food.

Lodge leaders have the power to say yes – or no. And it's incumbent on members to get their guests out of the Chill bar and to the lodge in time for dinner. ..and to turn up if you're on dishes.

Vale: George Stirling
20.12.1927 - 1.12.2012

We were saddened to hear that George Stirling, an exceptional club member, died recently after a short illness. George was a distinguished and pioneering thoracic surgeon who did the first heart transplant in Victoria at the Alfred and, such was his modesty at least in terms of his club persona, kept that pretty much to himself. For many of us he distinguished himself as an enthusiastic skier, raconteur, dinner companion, lovable rogue, a wicked sense of humour, smoker of pipes, endure of multiple heart attacks, wearer of the blue ski suit and the occasional black eye, father –in –law of the lost Stuart...there are a thousand stories and we loved him for each of them.

In particular Meg Casey recalls George and Len (Allen) arriving one weekend and Len coming to her in despair that they were nowhere to be found on the bed list. This was true ... and deliberate. They were in fact booked for the next weekend which they discovered when Len collected the paperwork from the car. While Meg was trying to wrangle with the full bed list to ensure that they weren't sleeping on the floor, George piped up that they could sleep in the rec room as they didn't actually need to sleep and could instead sit up and drink Whisky all night.

And coming out to breakfast to be greeted by George to "Partake of the "Pritikin " breaky...eggs bacon and fried bread!!"

When the club first bought a CD player, George was given the task to buy classical CD's. Someone else was given the same amount of money to buy popular ones. George was tickled that he got many many more CD's than the other person. A far better deal he thought.

George and Shirley started skiing relatively late in life. Sally Dean recalled that originally George would spend much of his mountain visits cross country skiing, and Shirley once said "I wish he'd go downhill more often as I like that better." Some years later that is just what he did, but it was too late for Shirley after a skiing accident and broken leg warned Shirley off the hill.

George often made the trip alone. He loved the mountain, and the skiing; he loved the ambience in the lodge and he loved the company of the younger members of the club. He was a superb elder statesman for our club.

He was pivotal in voting with the "younger" block in the great spa war of 1998 and largely as a result of his intervention that building renovation was passed. He was a joy to be with. We have such fond memories. He will be missed.

Feedback welcomed: [click to email](#)
Ph: 5255 5614
Newsletter layout: Hugh Gardner