



Brindabella Ski Club President's Annual Report

28 March 2020

2018/2019 has been another big year for Brindabella Ski Club and a busy year for the committee. We completed major flood remediation on Tiobunga in time to open for the winter season. We enjoyed a bumper winter that saw all lodges very full throughout the season and we had a full season of racing and development.

2019/2020 looks like being a very challenging year. The start of the year saw bushfires on a truly extraordinarily destructive scale that closed access to the Kosciuszko National Park and our lodges. More recently COVID-19 is making the bushfire headlines of just over a month ago seem like a distant memory as it wreaks havoc on people's lives all around the world. We know it will have a huge impact on our ski season.

While operation of our club in the short term future is very uncertain, we can all have confidence that Brindabella Ski Club is strong enough to survive.

I reported on a number of important issues of interest to members in the President's Report in the Summer 2020 issue of Christie. Rather than repeat the same information here I will refer you to that report to read about:

- Tiobunga flood remediation
- Plumbing work in all three lodges to reduce the risk of flood within the lodges
- Consideration of improvements to accommodation in Waragun and Tiobunga
- Drainage work behind Kyilla and other work needed in Kyilla
- Successful completion of booking system and website replacement project
- 2019 winter season and racing

One other item mentioned in that report is the Kyilla driveway. I am pleased to report that this long standing project is now finally complete.

Financial Highlights for 2019

As is reported in the Treasurer's Report, the Club has had a good financial year, with an operating surplus of \$26,192 and a cash flow surplus of \$183,805 on revenue net of refunds of \$707,682. While revenue was up compared to last year, operating and cash flow surpluses were down due to some significant expenses, some of which were capitalised. Tiobunga was due for repainting. Whilst some of the work was paid by insurance due to the flood, the club picked up about \$36k in painting costs. We undertook a number of plumbing updates on all three lodges to reduce risk of future leaks and meet new insurance requirements, at a cost of roughly \$60k in the 2019 financial year and smaller additional costs in the 2020 financial year.

The Club finished 2019 in a very sound financial position. Further details are in the Treasurer's Report and the audited accounts.

Membership

The committee is very aware of some members' concerns about high demand for accommodation in our lodges. We performed an in-depth analysis of bookings demand over the four booking rounds and throughout the season in 2019. Details will be published in an upcoming Christie and I am sure many members will be interested to see them. The summary is as follows:

- Members wanting to get into Guthega in school holidays may have been frustrated: the lodges filled within 2 minutes of round 1 opening
- Members wanting to go to Waragun in school holidays had the option of week 1 open however week 2 filled within 3 minutes of round 1 opening
- Members looking for a peak week in August in round 1:
 - Could go at any time in Kyilla or Tiobunga
 - Could go during 3 of the 4 weeks in Waragun
- Members looking for a second midweek in round 2:
 - Got in if they were quick in Waragun and Tiobunga
 - Had plenty of space in Kyilla
- Members looking for weekends in round 2 got in if they were quick
- Members could still get in to Waragun or Tiobunga during "gap week" after school holidays in round 3
- Over 70% of all bookings were for Full members. Nearly 20% were for Associates, who are often family members of Full members.

With this in mind the committee decided to limit the intake this year to somewhat lower than previous years. The Club has a cap on Full Adult membership of 570 which has not been reached. This year there were 21 applicants for full adult membership. These were assessed according to the normal assessment criteria. Being an immediate family member of an existing member is one of the selection criteria and historically has been rated very highly. This is in recognition of the fact that a member who has a non-member partner finds themselves either needing to book their holiday without their partner or take their chances on room being available once all other members have had their pick. This year we admitted 6 new full adult members, all of whom are immediate family members of existing members and who scored highly on the membership criteria. Full Adult membership numbers now stand at 552 plus 11 Life members.

I welcome Kirsten Barchia, Phoebe Flynn, Rohan Kilham, Maria Stavreas, Allison Sunderland and Jennifer Witheford as new full adult members.

Summer - Bushfires

At the time I wrote the President's report in the Summer 2020 edition of Christie the bushfire season was taking hold and had already wreaked enormous damage to communities in many parts of Australia. Everything I wrote there is still valid. In this report I'll add that our lodges were closed for a significant part of the summer due to the bushfires and we were unable to run any of the normal summer events in the

lodges. None of our lodges were damaged, nor was any infrastructure in Perisher or Thredbo ski resorts.

Delayed AGM

The AGM was scheduled to be held on 28 March 2020. Shutdowns and restrictions due to COVID-19 meant that we were unable to convene the AGM on that date. Advice from Access Canberra, representing the authority responsible for Incorporated Associations in the ACT, is that legislation requires General Meetings of Incorporated Associations to be held in person unless the Rules of the Association explicitly allow for another method. We would need to hold a Special General Meeting to change the Rules, so we are in a classic catch-22 situation.

Our Rules and the legislation require us to hold the AGM within 5 months of the end of our financial year, so by the end of March. Legislation also provides a deadline for us to report to Access Canberra. Access Canberra has advised us that there are many Incorporated Associations in the same position as us, and they expect to extend the deadlines to at least the end of 2020. We will hold an AGM when we are able.

In accordance with the Rules, all committee members will continue to hold their positions until the AGM unless any resign or their office is vacated by some other means specified in the Rules. The Rules allow the committee to appoint a full or life member to any position that is vacant, and to appoint up to two full or life members to additional committee positions with full committee privileges, to hold those positions until the next AGM. The committee intends to appoint Greg Wicks and Ben Coutts to additional committee positions.

Winter 2020 and bookings opening

Members will be very aware that we have closed the lodges and put bookings on hold due to COVID-19. Both Perisher and Thredbo have stated publicly that they continue to prepare the resorts to be open for the 2020 winter season. Both have cancelled some events and some facilities in the resorts are currently closed. Both resorts have delayed charging the final installment of season pass holders and both have mentioned enhancements to cancellation and refund policies for pre-booked passes, lessons, accommodation, etc.

We are keenly watching developments and hope to be able to open for the season. There will be additional plans in place, including an illness policy. We may need to run the lodges with reduced occupancy.

Looking Forward

While we hope to be able to run the lodges this winter so that members may enjoy their traditional snow holidays, we have to recognise the possibility that we will be unable to open at all this winter. In addition to being disappointing to members, this will have a significant impact on the club's finances.

The club's annual accommodation revenue net of refunds has been a little over \$400k. Membership revenue is around \$260k. As noted above, our 2019 net cash flow surplus was \$184k and it was nearly \$210k the prior year. Much of that cash flow surplus has been applied to paying down debt: over the past two years we have paid down almost \$368k.

Much of the club's cost is fixed cost that would not reduce if we had to close for winter. Insurance is a fixed cost that we expect to increase significantly this year. In a worst case scenario, the cash flow could reduce by around \$400k for the year, leaving a cash flow deficit of around \$200k excluding loan repayments. We currently have minimum loan capital repayments a little over \$60k and any redraw would increase our interest bill, so we could imagine a deficit of \$380k. The club has around \$110k cash in the bank and a redraw facility on our loan of \$410k so we could survive a closed winter, although it would have a strongly adverse impact on our financial position. Surviving a second closed season would be much more difficult. The committee is continuing with the strategic planning discussed in the President's report in the Summer 2020 issue of Christie. Some of the focus may change due to the changed environment.

Thanks

I'd like to extend a big thank you, both on behalf of the Club and personally, to all who have served the Club over the past 12 months.

Mark Green took on the role of Admin Manager last year and has fitted into the role well.

Our Lodge Managers Kellie Meehan and Jenny Hartican have continued to do a great job, ensuring the lodges are maintained in great shape and welcoming members and guests during their stays.

Michael Wentworth-Perry continues to do a great job as Christie Editor, producing a terrific looking club magazine with some very interesting articles.

Denna Connell did a sterling job as Provisioning Officer for Guthega making multiple trips to the mountains to ensure that the pantries are well stocked in each lodge. Denna finished with this role at the end of winter and we thank her for several years of contribution. Maria Stavreas, a new member this year, has taken over as provisioning officer for Guthega.

Mark Phillips has offered sage advice as Legal Officer.

Richard Blavins has been doing a fantastic job as Archives Officer and has been given great assistance from the others on the Historical Subcommittee, Wal Costanzo, Richard Blavins and Margaret Simpson. They have been working together since 2012 and have made a major Marie Kondo effort on the club lock up, creating almost enough space for cat swinging. They have digitised and filed vast numbers of records including some old film archives. They have also promoted the history of the club, with Wal giving a wonderful and well received presentation at the Perisher Historical Society annual dinner using material put together about the early years of the club by Harry Black.

The three lodge VPs have had assistants helping them through the year. Nick Forster assisted at Waragun, Tony Hill at Kyilla and Garry Buffinton at Tiobunga.

Darrell Porter and Margaret Simpson provided able assistance to Margaret Smythe on the Membership Subcommittee.

The committee members have worked tirelessly, ensuring that the important things got done. Thank you Rob Griffin, Bryan Collis, Darren Hughes, Rob McGregor, Richard Radajewski, Bruce Hartican, Margaret Smythe, David Banham, David Pember and

Warwick Forster. Thanks also to Minutes Secretary Greg Wicks. You have all put in many more hours than we'd care to admit. You've been a pleasure to work with, making my job of chairing our meetings easy. Each of you have made significant contributions to the Club in a very big year.