

AAC Falls Creek Inc
ABN 77 885 651 266

Annual Report
For the Year Ended 31st December
2019

Presidents' Report 2019

It feels strange to be writing this report about our 2019 season when our minds are fully focused on the uncertainty in 2020. May I comfort members by saying that we have sufficient funds and tight management control to weather whatever downturn we experience in 2020. Back to 2109 :-

Our Treasurer Michael Szkilnik will confirm in his report that the club enjoyed continued strong financial performance. Accommodation income was up by 17% and we were able to expense considerable maintenance items whilst still maintaining a cash profit of around \$50,000.

Winter accommodation bookings for the year were up on 2018. As Alan Long our Booking Officer notes in his report, the trend of very strong bookings in peak periods continues with a sharp drop off outside the July/August period. The committee continues to offer very attractive rates to attract members, including summer rates for closing weekend. Please consider spring skiing!

Our membership enquiry list remains strong. Tony Ryder and the committee work hard on ensuring we maintain active interest in the club, essential for a vibrant and active club. Our membership movement has remained fairly consistent over recent years with approximately 5 people leaving and 5 new members joining each year. This is consistent with our practice of one in, one out.

Our Lodge Supervisor Justin Checcucci was very busy during 2019. With the spa renovations completed in 2018, Justin was able to move on to new projects including carpeting, bathroom door upgrades, a new laundry, better ventilation in the reading area and many other small projects. These were all completed prior to the start of the ski season with unanimous approval from members visiting the lodge.

Jenny Hughes has been busy not only with her Secretarial role but also behind the scenes with the Booking System and Technology. The booking system is being used more and more by members and now other AAC lodges are using the same system which will make reciprocal bookings much easier.

Communication via our website and newsletters is mainly handled by Jenny Hughes along with her other duties. The committee is keen to recruit a new member to take on this role.

Our committee is also supported by Lynn Cameron looking after Events, John Burnett and Tony Jordan who are newer members assisting in Lodge works and Summer Marketing. Tony is working hard on developing relationships with Mountain Bike and other groups visiting the mountain over the summer period. This is especially important to reduce the accommodation loss caused by bushfires at the start of the year.

Our club races were again managed by our Race Captain John Cameron. This year we had sunny conditions on Father Fosters and some very tight racing. Our young members are now starting to dominate on the podium which augurs well for the clubs future. Our interclub races were held at Perisher but were unfortunately cancelled on the day due to bad weather. I want to encourage all members, especially those with children to join in on race weekend. Racing is fun and you don't have to be an expert skier to compete. Please contact Alan and reserve your spot each year.

I would also like to thank all those who help make this club such a wonderful place to be. Our Lodge Managers Andrew and Myra Rist, the committee members and Jenny Noye at Proacct.

Finally as announced at last year's AGM this will be my last year as President. After over 10 years on the committee as Lodge Supervisor and later President, I am particularly proud of what we have achieved. The lodge has a long lease and is in fantastic condition, our club is the envy of most other

club lodges, we have money in the bank and a vibrant membership list. Thank you for the support you have given me and the various committees to help our club progress to where it is today.

Nigel Cowie

President

From the committee

Nigel has decided to step down as President. He has worked tirelessly over many years on Committee. In particular he oversaw the major renovations in 2011/12, the spa area renovation, the makeover in 2018/19 and the overhaul of the constitution. He has presided over a constructive and cooperative committee which has been a pleasure to serve on. He is leaving the post with the club in a very good position.

Thankyou Nigel.

The president is elected by the committee at the first committee meeting after the AGM. This means that we cannot confidently announce a new president. However, the current committee members support the nomination of Justin Checcucci for the role and he has been shadowing Nigel with this in mind. Justin has been our lodge supervisor for 8 years, responsible for lodge maintenance and overseeing the lodge managers. In that time he has put an extraordinary amount of time, energy and skill into the role to ensure that the lodge runs smoothly and that upgrades deliver the best quality at reasonable prices – all with good humour and consultative leadership. He is eminently suitable for the role of president.

Treasurer's Report 2019

Operational results for 2019

The Club reported a Loss of \$2,480 for the year ended 31 December 2019 after a (non cash) depreciation charge of \$53,755 (2018 \$41,270) compared to a profit of \$30,713 in 2018.

Cash Balances at Year End December 2019 totalled \$166,824 compared to 2018 balances of \$210,814 **after capital expenditure during 2019 of \$109,037**. Cash balances at year end Dec 2019 include the impact of prepaid 2020 subscriptions and prepaid 2020 summer accommodation charges which together totalled \$24,450

The most significant contributing factors to the **2019 Financial Result** were:

Increased Accommodation revenue

Increased Depreciation Charges and

Substantial Repairs and Maintenance expenditure

Looking at these in more detail

On Revenue side:

Total Income was up by \$30,645 or 11.4%

- Accommodation Revenues increased by \$30,354 in total .

This was due in part on the back of increased summer patronage at the beginning and end of the year but mainly due to very good winter occupancy and due to winter pricing realignments particularly in regard to weekends.

- Other revenue lines were in total flat on 2018

On the Expense side:

Expenses were up, by \$63,838 but excluding depreciation were up by \$51,353 or \$26%

- Repairs and Maintenance expenditure at \$45,168 incurred as part of the lodge improvements was the major contributor of the increase being up by \$38,759 on 2018 levels
- Booking commissions were up by \$2,971 driven by increased accommodation activity and revenues.
- Insurance costs and Fall Creek Resort Management Service fees together increased by \$3,439 with both costs increasing well above CPI at nearly 10% and 5% respectively and it should be noted that going forward Insurance costs continue to grow significantly as part of the Clubs overall cost base.
- In concluding Accounting adjustments for bad debts contributed \$4,625 to the unfavourable comparison on 2018

Turning now to the **Net Financial Position**

Net Assets and hence Total Equity (Capital) decreased by a modest \$ 3,675 as result of the operating result, and new members, but offset by member departures and debenture payouts.

The net book value of assets after all liabilities as at December 31 2019 stood at \$1,207,749

In conclusion then

The Club, given its strong current cash position is in a sound financial position to weather the 2020 impact of Corid-19. However, the full impact of this pandemic on the Club is still to be known as at the date of writing, and further information will be provided as the situation and government regulations evolve.

Finally in closing I must again thank the team at ProAcct Accounting and especially Jenny Noye for their professionalism support and responsiveness throughout the year and into a difficult 2020.

Michal Szkilnik

Treasurer

Lodge Supervisor's Report 2019

2019 saw the completion of a long list of improvements made to the look and feel of the lodge.

These improvements included

- Rooms 1 - 11 - New ceiling light and down light over room mirrors.
- Rooms 1 – 15 - New door closers to alleviate doors slamming
- Rooms 1 – 12 - New cavity slider doors into the bathroom, creating a cleaner and more spacious en-suite
- New carpet in the upper hallway and rooms 1 – 8
- New carpet in the lower hall way and rooms 9 – 12
- New carpet from outside the managers flat, rooms 13 & 14 and the stairs down to the games room.
- The upper and lower hallways have been painted as has the en-suites in rooms 1 -12 with the hallway trims and doors now in Chalk USA to match the colour scheme.
- The front stairs and drying room have had the marine grade carpet replaced and also freshly painted.
- Wall panelling has been installed along the front entrance stairs to cut down on wall marks and damage.
- Two new ceiling fans have been installed, one in the dining area with the second covering the reading landing to create air flow in both summer and winter.
- Two new electrically opening windows at the top of the roof pitch to also help with creating better airflow for all seasons.
- A New lounge suite on the reading landing.
- The laundry has been moved to the first floor (locker room) and the washers and dryers have been updated creating a bigger, cleaner and safer laundry for all.
- The lockers that were in that room have now been relocated to the back wall of the games room with the existing old rusty lockers being updated and replaced.

Ongoing Maintenance

We have continued to upgrade both mattresses and linen if required

Minor repairs

During the year we had a small leak from room 7 that caused minor water damage in room 12 that Andrew was able to repair.

Working Bee

Thank you to all the members who made the trip to help finishing off the last bits from the summer works and prepare the lodge from the 2019 season.

Summer Renovations

No plans or works were carried out over 2019/20 Summer period.

Thank you to Andrew and Myra for another year of hard work and their commitment to making the lodge run smoothly.

Lastly, thank you to my fellow committee members for their time and support throughout the year. Special thanks to John Burnett who has been of immense help as assistant lodge manager.

Justin Checcucci

Lodge Supervisor

Booking Report 2019

Summer Bookings for 2019 were limited as we closed the Lodge from Dec 2/2018 – March 7 2019 for some upgrading works to be completed. Works were completed in time for the 3 Peaks Cycling challenge which was on the March long weekend commencing on the 8th. An almost full Lodge was occupied for the event. A couple of other minor bookings before Easter but Easter was also almost fully booked. Booking patterns for when the Lodge was open were similar to the usual summer requests. Following the Winter season of 2019, there was no bookings through October, Melbourne Cup weekend was full for 3 nights and we finished of the year with a few bookings around Christmas.

Winter Bookings in 2019 were terrific in that we were heavily booked during the Peak period but quiet in Off-Peak.

Following a terrific heavily booked opening weekend, the normal quiet fortnight of virtually no bookings until we get to the School Holidays. We are then off and away and introduced in 2019 was our Waitlisted system for short term and weekend bookings. From the start of Peak season Waitlisted weekend bookings were in demand, light at first but, as the season progressed, more and more spaces were requested in advance. The only problem we experienced with these bookings was that because members had booked the request well in advance, a number of them had their circumstances change and were no longer able to attend. Fortunately due to demand we were able to fill most of the spots that were not taken up so over the course of the season most requests were filled. The Committee have come up with a revised Waitlist program but more on that when talking about 2020.

The first week of the school holidays had a couple of rooms free midweek, 2nd week only had a couple of beds free, and the 3rd week had no space midweek. The weekends of each of the 3 school holiday weeks ended up having some space free. The following midweek continued the heavy booking pattern which led into race week. For a number of years now the midweek of race week has ended up with quite a bit of space. Race weekend as usual had no rooms free.

The remainder of August, week, midweek and weekends were basically full. It was a terrific peak winter booking period. Probably our best ever.

September continued the same way. Initially. The first week was really heavy as were the first few weekends. Midweek dropped right away and the Committee reviewed the Off-Peak rate for the last few weeks of the season and dropped it slightly. The extended week into October was discounted to summer rates. However it did not encourage much interest as only 4 people were in the Lodge for the final weekend.

Our Managers

Andrew and Myra had a massive work load over the Winter season. With a solidly booked July/August and part of September, this means many room changeovers. I thank them for the physical effort. It was huge.

Last Minute Bookings

Fire Regulations mean I need to know who is staying in the Lodge each and every night. If we had a major catastrophe I would need to be able to provide the relevant authorities with who was in the Lodge. I know people can visit members (and Guests) and at the last minute a decision be made to stay and share their room or with discussion with the Managers move into a vacant room. An online booking can be made so it is showing as tentative, or at the very least an email and/or text to me. But I need to know. The Committee have discussed this at previous meetings and we are tossing up whether any penalties will be applied in the future. We do not wish to do this but it is Unacceptable and not fair to everyone else who has booked and confirmed in the normal manner, when I am being let know after the event.

Some notes regrading 2020

Waitlisted Bookings

As mentioned earlier it was very successful in 2019, but time consuming on my part chasing people up who did not follow up at the appropriate time for them to confirm. Finding out that some no longer wanted it due to a change in circumstances is fair enough, that happens but I should have been informed the moment the booking was no longer required. For 2020 the Committee have tweaked the system so that the online system will contact any Waitlisted booking 28 days before the booking is due to take place and ask if it is still required. An answer to me is expected within 24hours so we can begin the process of confirming in the following week or deleting it.

Payment of Bookings

In previous years, the Committee have been very generous in time allowed for payment of Bookings, but we have tightened the process. When a booking is made online it ~~becomes Tentative,~~ **comes to** me to check all details are correct within the Club rules and adjust any pricing should any voucher need applying. **I then make the booking Tentative.** I try to do this within 24hours of receipt of the booking. **When all booking conditions are met** an Invoice is then sent and payment is expected WITHIN 7 DAYS. The booking will be cancelled if payment has not been received within the 7 days. No exceptions

Rates

As well as the normal Peak and Off-Peak tariffs for the Winter season, our Treasurer has introduced a Late Season tariff from September 25. All States and Territories will have some or all of their school holidays during this period.

Our minimum \$300 summer booking fee remains but the Committee constantly look at this for many summer periods and waive it. It is ~~always~~ mentioned in Newsletters when waived.

Bushfires

Jan 1 saw a tremendous booking of approx. 3 weeks for a group of Athletes seeking altitude training. However they only lasted 1 night before being told to evacuate off the mountain due to the Bushfires. The length of time of the fires meant they were unable to return to complete their training. We have refunded them the balance. The fires had subsided/finished enough for The 3 Peaks event to be run and won and we were down on numbers compared to 2019. It was still worthwhile though to offer the full linen service for this event.

Coavid19

At the time of writing the Lodge has been closed till further notice due to the virus. Easter was cancelled and all bookings fully refunded. Work Party has also been cancelled. At this stage all confirmed Winter Bookings remain in the online system and if the season does not open, all will be fully refunded. The remaining tentative bookings I have sought to be fully paid for or cancelled. If the season opens I will contact all the tentative bookings that have been cancelled and see if they wish to re-book. The Committee are obviously monitoring the situation along with everyone else but if Falls Creek opens for business, then we will **certainly be trying to as well** ~~be also~~. This is an Unprecedented situation that is changing constantly. Your Committee will take on all advice from the relevant authorities and act accordingly in the interests of the Members and the Club. But currently, the Lodge is closed and we wait and see what unfolds.

Thankyou's and Committee

I want to thank Jenny Noye at ProAcct for the continued feed of information I need to keep the bookings going. Invaluable.

Andrew and Myra for their hard work.

Also the entire Committee for the continued work they put in for you, the Members.

Happy Skiing (Hopefully)

Alan Long

Booking Officer

Membership Report 2019

Membership Summary

Member Category	2018	2019	Changes
Full	216	220	+4
Provisional (part-paid)	0	0	0
Overseas	3	3	0
Under 25	27	25	-2
Under 17	18	15	-3
Multiple	6	5	-1
Life	7	7	0
Wait to Sell	3	2	-1
Total	280	277	-3

New members welcomed in 2019

- Graeme Efron
- Marcia Wood
- Kim Walker
- Robert Hopkins
- Peter Howlett

Family transfers

- William Barker to Mathew Wall
- Donald Farley to Suzanne Farley
- Helen Davies to Cameron Davies
- Lois Haywood to Jacqueline Haywood
- Rachel Carew to Alexander Carew
- Cathy Riddle to William Riddle

Vale

- George Geroe (multiple member)

Other retired members

- Marjalyn Henson
- Mark Taplin
- Jonathan Rooke
- Marjorie Pitt
- Brett Newbound
- Anthea Rooke
- Kristen Rosenberg - Junior Membership (U25)

Tony Ryder

Membership Officer

Summer Marketing Report 2019

During each ‘Green Season’ from November through to April there are over 30 official events taking place at Falls Creek, ranging from Mountain Bike competitions right through to the annual Easter festival.

Each year the Committee seeks to investigate new ways to attract more mountain bikers, more athletes and other new summer visitors to our lodge, in addition to the more traditional bush walking groups.

Peaks Challenge is a one-day road cycling event held in March 2019 covering the loop from Falls Creek to Hotham. After poor bookings in 2018, the Club’s membership of the Falls Creek Chamber Of Commerce saw bookings from Falls Creek Central Reservations improve in 2019.

An enquiry was made to Blue Dirt (a key MTB business) in October 2019 to be listed on their website as a preferred accommodation partner for the 2019 MTB Ignition Festival, however we were advised that all positions were taken up and a new prospectus would be sent to us in April/May of 2020.

Ride High Country is the brand used by Tourism North East to promote cycling in the region, for mountain biking, road cycling and general family fun. In 2019 the Club renewed its accreditation as a Ride High Country Preferred business. Many cyclists are looking for relaxed, self-catered accommodation and our Club with its secure, undercover bike storage (the ski room), a balcony barbecue and proximity to a bar/bistro (Frying Pan) are all very attractive features to cyclists of all types.

Also new for 2019 was AAC Falls Creek’s listing in the Tourism North East Ride High Country Guide, which is a booklet that contains various types of accredited businesses. With 50,000 copies produced and distributed throughout North Eastern Victoria, this added another level of exposure for the Club to attract Summer visitors.

The summer version of the website continued to be updated during 2019 with stories highlighting the events taking place at Falls Creek and encouraging both members and non-members to stay at The Club. The website continues to reference AAC Falls Creek as an ideal base for cycling and carries the Ride High Country Preferred branding.

A continued focus on social media continued in 2019, however this type of communication is limited to the number of members who are following the AAC Falls Creek Facebook and Instagram accounts. To ensure you don’t miss out on all the latest news (and the good humoured banter!), please join in the conversations by following us on [facebook.com/fallshuette](https://www.facebook.com/fallshuette) and [#aacfalls](https://www.instagram.com/aacfalls) at Instagram.

Tony Jordan

Summer Marketing

Events Report 2019

Opening Weekend

The Season of 2019 started with a terrific amount of snow for Queens Birthday Weekend, with Towers, Drovers, Wombats & the Home Trail open for skiing.

FCAA (Falls Creek Alpine Association) held the annual Mountain Muster at Bogong Ski Club. The previous year it was held at AAC. This event is gaining more interest annually & 2020 it will be held at Schuss Lodge. But numbers will be limited for future gatherings.

School Holidays

By the time Schools Holidays arrived, the snow had deteriorated, leaving basic skiing on Towers, Drovers & Wombats only. After snow, rain, snow, then blizzard, Falls Creek road resembled a river. Eventually the torrential rain changed back to snow & we had good skiing for the rest of the Season.

Committee

2 new Members joined the Committee, John Burnett (Assistant Lodge Supervisor), & Tony Jordan (Summer Marketing). Thank you to Garry Hayes & Bronwyn Sigmund for their assistance over the past years on the Committee.

Christmas In July

Christmas in July was celebrated again in the Lodge with an evening filled with lots of laughter, Santa Hats, Glühwein & Christmas Carols.

Race Week

Race Week 2019 culminated with a glorious Race Day on Saturday 3rd August 2019. It was such a contrast to the previous 2 years. The evening was topped off with a theme of White/Lunar to coincide with 50 years of Man on the Moon. There were fabulous costumes with plenty of Astronauts making an appearance too.

Race Results as follows –

SAM BARKER MEMORIAL

1st Spencer Davies
2nd Mitchell Davies
3rd Jonathan Gerstner Stevens

WOMENS

1st Melissa Cameron
2nd Jacinta Poon
3rd Natasha Poon

MENS

1st James Cowie
2nd William Cowie
3rd Harrison Cowie

MUMMY MASTERS

1st Heidi Fry
2nd Lynn Cameron
3rd Bronwyn Wruck

MENS OVER 50 (NEW CLASS & NAME TBA)

1st Ross Barker
2nd Gerard Gerstner Stevens
3rd John Cameron

Falls Creek club races for 2020 are scheduled for 8th August.

Interclub Races

AAC 2019 Interclubs were held at Perisher. Unfortunately, the conditions were so appalling the race was cancelled.

2020 is Niseko's turn to host the Interclub races. Perisher is the chosen Australian location, scheduled on 5th September 2020.

Closing Weekend

A fun weekend of glorious weather was had by all who ventured up to Falls Creek, with basic skiing, McKayos Mountain Bike Race & Octoberfest in the Village Bowl.

Summer

With the bushfires & evacuations over Summer, the Victorian High-country areas were severely impacted. February 2nd 2020, saw a gathering of producers & small businesses, who came to the "Timberyard" in Port Melbourne to showcase & sell their wares. This event was a huge success, with a gold coin donation as entry, going towards the CFA.

In 2020, AAC celebrates 70 years since the Ski Tourers Association was formed, which was the for-runner of the AAC as we currently know it. Neck buffs are being considered as a commemoration.

Communications Report 2019

News on the website

News is now published on the website. From there it is “pushed” to members via email newsletters and Facebook posts. It remains on the website if members need to look up old information.

The blog has been retired. It is no longer being updated, although it is still accessible from the website if members are looking for old information.

Newsletters

4 newsletters were sent during 2019.

The newsletter remains our most effective way of reaching members.

Social Media

Facebook and Instagram are preferred by some members. They are also great for promoting the lodge to a broader summer audience. The Summer Marketing report provides a good description of how different communication channels are being used to reach mountain bikers and other potential green season visitors.

Follow us at facebook.com/fallshuette and #aacfalls at Instagram.

Communications role

The role of Communications Officer has been difficult to fill. Unfortunately this has meant that newsletters and social media posts have been less frequent than the committee would wish.

The communications role needs a member who

- Loves Falls Creek and AAC Falls Creek and is keen to share that enthusiasm
- Enjoys writing informative articles
- Enjoys sharing interesting and amusing photos and information
- Is familiar with Facebook and Instagram or willing to learn and to use them to share photos and information
- Is happy to learn easy web-based applications for creating and sharing content
- Has time and energy to be a committee member

If you can help the club in this way, please talk to Jenny Hughes or other committee members about the role and the committee. You don't need to be an IT guru. It's more important to be enthusiastic about communicating with members and reasonably comfortable with using technology. There is support for anything complicated.

Thanks to Bronwyn Sigmund, Lynn Cameron and Tony Jordan for their contributions to the communications officer role during the year

Information Technology Report 2019

Booking System

Alan Long has covered this in the Booking Officer's report. There were a few tweaks to improve how we use the system but no major changes.

The system was upgraded to make it easier for AAC members to book into each other's lodges. In 2019 we saw a number of other AAC members use this to book into Falls Creek. The other lodges were a bit slower to turn on this facility. I understand that Anton and Dinner Plain will have that in place for 2020, and hopefully Perisher too.

Lodge Internet

The lodge internet system performed well over the 2019 season. Some older wifi access points were replaced prior to the season. The weekly allocation is now 7.5GB which seems to meet the needs of most members and guests.

Some mobile devices may still have problems at times. Sometimes a device can try too hard to stay connected to a far-off wifi access point instead of moving to one nearby. Turning wifi on your device off and then on again should "encourage" it to connect to the nearest access point. If you still have problems, report them to sec.aacfc@gmail.com and we'll see if there are further improvements that can be made.

Website

The printed AAC National booking information sheet is now primarily provided in online format, available through any of the AAC websites, with Falls Creek specifics directly viewable of our website.

Thanks to all the committee members, Andrew & Myra Rist, Jennifer Noye at ProAcct and Nik Dow at CBDWEB for their help and support throughout the year.

Jenny Hughes

Secretary & IT