

WARRUGANG NEWS



March 2008
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AGM IN MAY

We aim to have the AGM on Friday 16 May.

Included is a director nomination form - it needs to be returned 45 days before the AGM.

BOARD CHANGES

John Kniha has resigned as a director and the Board has filled the casual vacancy by inviting Peter Funnell to join the Board.

LATE PERISHER BLUE NEWS

Perisher Blue has announced—

- * Lift prices up from last year—
 - * day pass \$98.
 - * 3 day pass \$196.
 - * 5 day pass \$431.
 - * 6 day pass \$516.
 - * 7 day pass \$603.
- * Early Bird season passes at \$1039 with savings on some food and retail purchases for pass-holders.
- * A \$9.75 m expansion of snowmaking from Mid Station to the quad chair this year; Happy Valley & Towers runs next year, and then the Mt P lift lines.

CRUNCH! LEASES & BEDS

Warrugang has a lease over the land on which our Lodge stands that runs until 2025. Other Perisher Valley lodges have leases for the same term.

National Parks & Wildlife Service has recently sought a commitment to 50 year leases from all commercial and club lodges and expressions of interest in additional beds as part of the expansion of Perisher Valley into a village with an 800 bed major development and 520 additional lodge beds.

The first round of bed numbers & lease offers was rejected by over 95% of SLOPES Lodges, and National Parks agreed to redraft the lease conditions and revise the additional bed allocation process, although the Department is going ahead with the lease offers made by 4 tenderers.

SLOPES negotiated with National Parks and eventually a second offer was made, which SLOPES concluded was acceptable, making the following points—

- * While the lease is far too long and convoluted, some extra conditions could be expected.

- * There is a mechanism for resolution of the problem of physical beds vs. head count.
- * The new leases handle the potential climate change threat quite well, with 10 year options available and a complete relook at prevailing conditions when assessing lease rentals at these breaks.
- * The prices of the lease extensions are high.
- * New bed pricing is fairly reasonable compared to the current bed valuations, particularly for Lodges who do not have to add to their premises (*ed* — those who have recently rebuilt have another factor to consider).
- * For Clubs who do not need new beds, the lease extensions are a difficult issue.
- * Most Clubs would probably prefer the subject to be deferred until say 2022 when conditions will be more certain - e.g. Guthega does not have a ski lift operator past 2013. (*ed* — Perisher Blue and NPWS are currently discussing all the ski lifting leases including Guthega. Perisher Blue has stated that they want to retain Guthega lift leases)

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**We need your e-mail address —
editor@warrugang.com**

At the SLOPES AGM the key message was that if a club does not enter into a new lease, it takes its chances on expiry of the current lease – SLOPES support in 2025 is an unknown.

It was reported that National Parks stated at the meeting that on current lease expiry National Parks would then look to offering the site to a new lessee and that the club with an expiring lease would have no priority over any other party who may be interested. There is no right of first refusal for the existing lodge in the National Parks leases.

For Warrugang, as for many lodges, the concept of facing a decision on renewal of a lease 18 years early was unexpected. With a building that is only five years old, we are in a different situation to clubs with buildings that are approaching their "use by" dates, although it appeared at the SLOPES AGM that 75% of clubs would take up the offer.

With the right to remain in the lodge for what is close to 50 years, we could amortise the building over a longer period than at present — we are currently restricted to writing it off over the next 18 years which; while that is a book entry, does affect our balance sheet.

On the other hand, unarrested climate change will likely reduce the available snow in Perisher Valley in winters from 2025, but if there's money to be made, Perisher Blue or its successor will likely have further snowmaking.

The options we had were—

- * No lease extension & take the risk.
- * 30 year extension and express an interest in additional beds.
- * 30 year extension without additional beds.
- * 3 x 10 year options to extend and express an interest in additional beds.
- * 3 x 10 year options to extend without additional beds.

The Board has decided to apply for 3 x 10 year options as we gain the ability to walk away if it turns out that activities in Perisher Valley are unattractive, such as due to a lack of snow, without finding ourselves facing a claim from National Parks for continuing lease payments. On the other hand, in common with all those who have accepted, we have to pay a substantial up-front extension payment (Warrugang - \$33,880) on commencement of the lease and a \$1500 administration fee each time we take up the 10 year option.

The Board also decided to express an interest in 4 additional beds. We have a little time to make a final decision on number of beds (if any) and depending upon the level of interest of other clubs, we may be allocated less beds in any event.

The Board plans to put this to the membership, if possible at the AGM, but would like feedback from members prior to that — late news is that NPWS will likely want our decision earlier.

Whether we could financially support additional beds is an issue. We seem likely to be able to use all the beds we could get for the school holidays, but whether they would be taken up in peak season is uncertain – we already have weeks when there are few members in the lodge. With each bed entitlement costing \$14,000 (ex GST), plus purchase of the bed and any related building changes, the financial issue is a live one.

Ideas so far put forward for extra beds—

- * Configuring a larger bedroom to sleep
 - * 4 children in bunks, or
 - * 2 adults and 2 children in a family setting.
- * Creating a bedroom for 4 children out of the boot room downstairs.
- * Flexible configurations, coupled with storage, so that we could change larger rooms as needed to cover demand – such as having two extra beds in one room and an extra bed in two others at one time or 2 extra beds in 2 rooms at another.

All members are invited to express their views on these important issues. Please send feedback to Warrugang News - editor@warrugang.com or write to Tim Doubleday, 83 Cassia Street, Dee Why NSW 2099.

Members Booking Forms out soon — return by 2 May

VALE RONALD MORTON SIM 1929 – 2008 *(contributed by Duncan Sim)*

Ronald Sim, one of the original members of the club, died on Friday 15 February 2008.

Ron was born in Maitland NSW in 1929. He graduated from Sydney University in 1950 with a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering and a passion for music, sailing and the outdoors, particularly the NSW alpine country.

Following a number of trips to Perisher and Kiandra, Ron (& Margaret) joined the newly incorporated Warrugang Ski Club in 1955. He subsequently held a number of positions on the board, including building director, where he oversaw the installation of generator sourced lighting throughout the lodge, a vast improvement to the original 'tilly' lamps. He was also responsible for the design of our distinct club badge, the stylized shape of the alpine gum (growing on the northern end of the lodge) in front of the outline of Perisher and Back Perisher. Uniquely Australian compared to the European style emblems of other clubs.

Ron and Margaret's love for Perisher and Warrugang continued following the birth of their sons Duncan and Alister, with the family regularly spending winter holidays at the lodge as well as walking trips in Summer.

Although never excelling in club races, Ron preferred to explore the high country on cross-country skis.

Ron and Margaret changed to summer members in 1998 but continued to holiday at the lodge and be active in the club they were passionate and proud of.

SOME NOTES FROM MYRNA BURKE

Firstly, Adam Zapensky. He was a ski instructor in Perisher for many years and was widely known, mostly for being very bad tempered and rude to females in his classes!! Around 1958 he came to the Valley from Lech, Austria and conducted classes Austrian style on the slopes across from us whilst Jean Ecuyer held classes on the north side teaching French style. A formal ski school commenced with 1961 season led by Jean Ecuyer. Adam stayed at Warrugang for at least one season as caretaker. After he retired he went to a retirement facility in Berridale where Peter Roberts used to visit him over the years on his way home from skiing. In latter years fellow ski instructors used to bring Adam in his wheelchair to the Valley and they had a very hard job getting him back down the mountain. He died on 2nd August and his funeral service was held in Jindabyne on 7th August. Sigi Drexall attended and reported there was a large congregation to farewell Adam.

Helen Wilkinson died on 29th August. Alison and I saw her in the Valley last year during our stay at the Lodge and discovered she had not been well after returning from a skiing holiday in Japan earlier in the year. I attended her funeral service on 5th September at Woronora Crematorium. Former Warrugang members Dorothy and David Hammond and Ron King were also present. Michael Wilkinson delivered the eulogy on behalf of Tony and Geoff and the respective grandchildren and Ron King also spoke during the service. Helen and Bruce joined the Club in 1965 and the boys joined when they were eligible. Bruce was a Board Member and President for a number of years retiring from the Board when his work took him interstate.

NPWS LEASE EXTENSIONS & BED RESULTS

SLOPES has advised that of the 88 Clubs and 35 Commercial operations (123 in total)—

- * 52 (42%) - applied for lease extensions and beds.
- * 44 (36%) - applied only for lease extensions.
- * 27 (22%) - did not apply at all and will presumably wait until 2023 to try to renegotiate.

PUB 2 PUB

The first Thursday in September is Pub to Pub day and Thursday 6th September 2007 was the 25th race. While designated as a cross country race, starting and finishing at Smiggin Holes during which the competitors must have a drink in several Perisher Valley pubs, there seemed to be alternate forms of cross-country transport; snow shoes and the bus between Smiggin Holes and Perisher being just two.

With the prize for the best fancy dress out-stripping the value of the prize for the fastest competitor, the time and effort put into the colourful costumes seemed enormous. It's a fun filled event and if you're thinking of skiing in early September this year, it's well worth coming along - even as a spectator.



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DIRECTORS & OTHER OFFICERS 2008

If you've got a question, query or just a comment to make, please phone any one of us - but here's the specific areas we look after:

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Left & below — David (Prince Charming) & Cristina (Puss in Boots) organised a Shrek team for the 2007 Pub2Pub—don't they look great!

HUMOUR

Some Freudian slips for this month—

"Sure, I look like a white man, but my heart is as black as anyone's here". Alabama Governor George Wallace, addressing a predominantly Afro-American audience

"This is a lovely hostess dress with a low neckline for easy entertainment". Dress designer on the Johnny Carson Show

"I've worked so hard to have a fur coat and I don't want to wear it any more because I'm so wrapped up in the animals" Diana Ross

"It's a hot night at the Garden, folks, and at ringside I see several ladies in gownless evening straps." Broadcaster at Madison Square Gardens

"After serving morning and afternoon tea, the flight hostesses, with trays, should report to the senior steward, who will strip and stow them in the baskets provided." from a 1948 Qantas cabin crew manual

"Arnold Palmer, usually a great putter, seems to be having trouble with his long putt. However, he has no trouble dropping his shorts." Golf broadcaster

"They never stop thinking about new ways to harm our country and our people, and neither do we." President George W. Bush