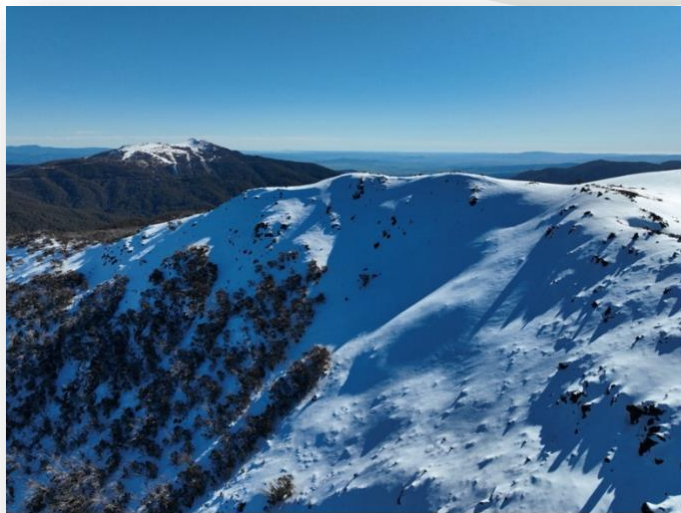




April 2026 NEWSLETTER



President's Message --- IAN MIDDLETON ---

Fellow Members,

Welcome to your Club's newsletter for April 2026. Like past years we aim to produce two newsletters each year, one before Christmas wrapping up last season, and this one prior to the next season starting.

Last season was better than the previous two years with good snow coverage across all resorts. Despite the great conditions we were not fully booked in peak periods with even a couple of vacant beds at Perisher in school holidays. The resorts reported similar shrinking numbers, and it was probably due to a combination of a depressed economy and high prices. Despite this we managed to make a small profit, but not at the level the board had hoped for. Bookings have already opened and disappointingly, our booking officer has reported a lower level of early booking applications already. The board understands the cost of skiing is probably regarded by most as luxury in these troubled times and we have kept our own prices as low as we can; the mid-week high season rate at Buller is \$62 a night! Resorts have also offered discounts on annual passes, including Thredbo with a reduced rate for our club members.

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is scheduled for Saturday 16th May at the Thredbo Lodge. This year the Board is asking for a vote on a special resolution to amend our constitution. The constitution was last amended in 2015 and we aim to update it on a ten yearly cycle to ensure we stay up to date with Federal legislation and regulations, hence we have asked our lawyers to suggest changes to stay aligned to the various regulations as well as meet contemporary

regulations as well as meet contemporary standards for new technology use (such as virtual meetings).

The Board is also asking members to consider adjusting the Board requirements to allow two of our seven positions (not including President) to allow nomination by Associate members. Previously your Board was open to only Ordinary (Navy) and Honorary members, but we are aware we have a pool of talent we aren't using and noting 35% of our members are Associates we are suggesting a change. The Board will be sending out the draft Constitution with the normal pre-AGM pack on 17th April so you can all have a look ahead of the meeting. I encourage you to either attend the AGM at Thredbo lodge in person or join us online on the day. Details will be published shortly for the virtual attendance details and if you want to attend in person please give our Booking Officer Liz a call.

We also call for nominations on our Lodge committees at the AGM. This is a good way to give back to your Club and get involved. It is also a great path to nominating for the Board. We have consistently seen the usual people nominate for the committees, but we would like to see new nominations and new ideas for running our lodges. One of the key positions on these committees is Maintenance Manager...I know VP Buller is certainly looking for a member to nominate for this position! We will also provide an update on our Thredbo Lodge redevelopment effort at the AGM. I look forward to seeing those who can make the AGM in person or hearing your views online.

From the Editor

As we bid farewell to summer, another snow season will be upon us very shortly. Hopefully the snowy weather in March and April is a sign of things to come.

To keep our costs to a minimum, we rely on our members helping out at work parties. To get contractors in will increase prices for everyone.

Most of our lodges still have one or two work parties planned before the start of the snow season. See the website for details.

Work parties are a lot of fun and a great way to meet other members. We'd love to see you at a work party in 2026.

Definition of a 'Work Party':

Camaraderie, Painting, Satisfaction, Old friends, New friends, Working hard, Playing hard, Painting, Learning, Teaching, Painting, Fun, Fulfilling, Interesting, Participation, Teamwork, Community, New skills, Painting, Club life, Contributing, Collaboration, Engaged, Lending a hand, Celebration, Cleaning, Socialising, Get together, Painting, Social Event, Sharing, ...



Work parties: All part of being in our great Club



THE CBD WEB ONLINE SYSTEM

Some things you might not know...

- Can't remember your member number and password? No problem, all you need is your registered email address and you can retrieve your member number and reset your password.
- In the Manage Account / View My Details section of your account, you can amend personal details such as address, phone number and email.
- Please avoid using "defence.gov.au" emails or "admin@" email addresses, as this will often prevent our Club emails from getting to you.
- The system allows a live view of the number of beds available in each lodge on each day. CAUTION: Don't hold off booking because you can see lots of availability – this can change quickly when group booking are accepted!
- **For all booking enquiries, please phone the office:
Tuesday to Friday 9am – 2pm (02) 6295 6634**



Test Your Knowledge

1. Which event is the most successful for Australia in the Olympic Winter Games?
2. What is the longest ski run in Australia?
3. When was the best Australian snow season on record?
4. Which new sport was added to the 2026 Winter Olympics?
5. Which country gets the most snow?
6. What is 'snurfing'?
7. What mountain is in the photo at the top of Page 1?

(Answers on the back page)



***Make sure you get hold of
some
Club merchandise!***

The link to the store is on our
website:

<https://www.ranskiclub.com.au/club-merchandise/>

Membership snapshot (31 March 2025)	
Ordinary	360
Honorary Life	17
Associate	635
Family (partners & children)	790
TOTAL	1802

Ratio of ORDINARY / ASSOCIATE: 36% / 64%

Membership update

Club vs Business

--- VP MMC (JEREMY BUTLER) ---

A very warm welcome to all our new members.

The current ratio of Ordinary to Associate members has remained relatively constant over recent years.

Recruiting campaigns and a reduced joining fee for junior Navy ranks have increased the number of Navy personnel wanting to join the Club; however, this has been offset by an increase in Associate memberships derived from 21-year-olds who were former family members.

The total number of members has also remained close to our maximum capacity.

Therefore, new Associate memberships, other than former-family members, have continued to be restricted from time to time and this is working to maintain a membership balance.

Associate members are an integral and valued part of the make-up of the Club. It is just a matter of optimising the numbers and getting the balance right.

So, Club membership continues to be managed closely to maintain the mix and number of memberships in accordance with the Club's charter and strategic plans.

Notwithstanding the membership figures summarised in the above table, true membership totals are notoriously difficult to pinpoint.

This is because only a minority of members who leave the Club give notice. The majority who leave just simply don't pay their annual subscription or are prompted to pay their overdue subscriptions when they try and make a booking.

As you will appreciate, carrying 'unfinancial members' is not conducive to accurate planning nor good business.

Members have over four weeks to pay their membership subscriptions in January, but we usually have over 200 who don't pay on time! This costs the Club money, as planned revenue cannot be invested.

We are primarily a Club but must operate like a business to ensure our ongoing prosperity.

Therefore, members who do not pay their subscription invoices by the end of January will be sent a final reminder notice requesting immediate payment.

If subscription invoices remain outstanding and/or no communication is received from the member, then membership may be cancelled.

This will enable the Club to have an accurate picture of the membership numbers and allow others to join the Club.

So please endeavour to pay your subscriptions on time.

We would hate to lose you!

Communications

Stay in touch with the latest Club news

The Navy Ski Club uses a variety of ways to keep you informed of Club business. These include our website, Facebook, newsletters and bulletins.

Like most organisations, email is our primary method of Club communications.

Therefore, it's so important that you keep your email address up-to-date. We still get many 'bounces' from invalid addresses when we send out newsletters and bulletins.

Data also shows that about 75% of our news bulletins are opened, so many of you may be missing out on important Club business. Please check to ensure emails from xxxx@ranskiclub.com.au are not diverting to Trash or Spam folders.

We aim to send out a newsletter biannually (April and December) and periodic bulletins to keep you informed of important business.

Additionally, we use Facebook to advertise various events and activities.

Finally, the Club website should be your 'go-to' place for a wealth of Club information.

Suggestions and input from our members is always welcome.

Email

info@ranskiclub.com.au

Website

<http://www.ranskiclub.com.au>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/RanSkiClub>

Newsletter editor: Jeremy Butler

vpmmc@ranskiclub.com.au

Please note:
The Club no longer has a fax machine or PO Box.

2026 Club Championships

The Scottish Highlands are coming to Mt Buller !

----- Jeremy Butler
(Chief of Race)

Planning for the 2026 RAN Ski Club Championships is well underway.

The date for your diaries is Saturday 1st August 2026 at Mount Buller.

The Club Championships are one of the longest running ski races in Australia!

Events include a Giant Slalom race for skiers and snowboarders, held on the Skyline Racecourse and a X-country race on the Village Trail.

Trophies and medals are awarded within a variety of categories including Junior, Open and Veteran. A handicap system is applied to ensure fair results regardless of age.

The premier award and biggest trophy of the night, the Championship Trophy, is awarded to the fastest uncorrected male and female times.

As is tradition, the races will be followed by a 'themed' evening dinner and awards ceremony.

This year's theme is 'Scotland'.

The 'piping of the haggis' will no doubt be a highlight of the night, yes, we have a real Piper lined up, one of our new members!

Along with great food (haggis with neeps & tatties, deep-fried Mars bars, etc.), there will be lots of wine, whiskey and dancing.

All Club members are welcome to attend the Club Championships. If you can turn and stop on an easy Blue run, then you will have no problems completing the race.

If you don't wish to race, but would rather just spectate and attend the dinner, that is also fine.

As all 62 beds in the lodge will fill up, members are still welcome to participate if they are staying elsewhere on the mountain or making a day trip.

We can squeeze in up to about 75 for the dinner!

Those that have made the trip from interstate have always thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

It's a lot of fun, so hope to see you there!

The lodge is always full on Club Champs weekend, so don't miss out.

Get your bookings in without delay 😊



Lodge updates

Perisher Valley

--- VP PERISHER LODGE ---(ANDREW SMITH)

The Perisher Lodge was again open from 1Jan-15Feb to encourage summer occupancy. The inaugural RAN Ski Club Fly Fishers Gathering was held early February and attracted a great crew with a mix of master and apprentice fly fishers. The mountain trout proved allusive (this is part of the attraction) but several nice Browns and Rainbows were landed with participants enjoying a grand tour that included Snowy, Thredbo, Mowamba and Murrumbidgee rivers and Lakes Jindabyne and Ecumbene.



The Lodge will be open again for a similar period in 2026 with a Bushwalkers week also planned (details to follow) together with a repeat of the Fly Fishers Gathering 1-5 February. Why not put a placeholder into your calendar now.



Lodge Maintenance

Snowy Mountain weather applies constant pressure on buildings (even relatively new ones) generating a solid program of planned maintenance and requiring constant vigilance to identify and address unplanned defects. Our aim is to ensure the lodge remains functional, safe and comfortable.



Consequently, the Perisher Committee and Work Parties have been particularly busy this March with routine activities involving minor repairs, painting and cleaning. March is also when restocking of cleaning and kitchen supplies and firewood occurs. Even 10cm of March

snow did not deter our stoic Work Party from stowing the firewood delivery.

Major Works

Some significant major works have also been undertaken in recent months including:

Cell Booster

Members will be aware that mobile phone reception within the lodge is close to non-existent. Aside from inconvenience to members and guests it makes communication with the resident lodge manager very difficult. In March a 4G/5G booster was procured and extensively tested. The results were positive and installation will occur before Winter. The exact location of internal aerials will be dependent on what is possible with respect to cabling.

South Facing Windows

After a complex and long planning approval process, installation of replacement windows occurred in early March. These windows have a stronger metal (thermally broken) frame and improved glass for UV protection. A stirring effort by the March Work Party enabled internal painting of frame, architrave and adjacent walls to be completed. 22/23 May is the final planned work party.

Fire Doors

In conjunction with the replacement of windows, three South facing fire doors were replaced. Previous timber doors and first floor frames had rotted due to constant exposure to snow drifts and prevailing southerly weather. The replacement doors and frames are metal.



Electrical

Significant electrical work was completed over the Dec/Feb period to address defects related to bathroom fans and lights and associated sensors, the major challenge being limited access to fans and cabling including requiring removal and replacement of ceiling plaster in some instances. Some further work is required with the majority of these issues expected to be resolved before Winter.



Thredbo

--- VP THREDBO LODGE ---

The Thredbo lodge has enjoyed a busy summer with many members and guests enjoying a variety of activities in the alpine environment. These included biking and hiking or just sitting on the balcony and reading a good book. Bookings peaked during the ever-popular Thredbo Blues Festival.

Due to a slowdown in bookings, the lodge closed on Easter Monday, 6th April.

Looking ahead, we're excited to share that significant progress has been made on the lodge redevelopment plans. Thanks to Phil Gregory and his project team, we are now in the very final stages of the Development Application.

We are currently in correspondence with our neighbours, the House of Ullr, where we need consent to our landscaping plans at the rear and side of the lodge.

A comprehensive update will be made at the upcoming AGM next month.

Thank you to everyone their ongoing support and enthusiasm (and patience).

One more work party is scheduled for 22/23 May.

Other work planned before the snow season includes replacing the floorboards in the downstairs accommodation passageway and outside the manager's office to strengthen the structure and hopefully eliminate the squeaks and creaks that have plagued the area, in preparation for re-carpeting.

One more work party is scheduled for 22/23 May.



Mount Buller

--- VP MT BULLER LODGE ---

The Breathtaker lodge has been available for various bookings during the summer period and many have taken advantage of the opportunity to enjoy the delights of the alpine environment.

The lodge was also open for bookings over Easter and the following week.

As advised previously, the lodge didn't come through the winter totally unscathed. During a large snowstorm late in the season, the curved perspex windows at the top of the stairs sustained considerable damage.

This is a priority to repair prior to the snow season commencing.

Treasurer's Corner

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(SEAN NOBLE)

Hi Clubbers (not to be confused with PTIs or Ravers), I have been busy with the auditor and preparing the financial statements for the AGM. I wanted to give everyone a heads up on a trend we need to turn around:

Late Cancellations and the Impact to your Club. (Consider Travel insurance)

We had a large number of late cancellations this past season where we could not resell the cabins, so they went vacant. This impacts other members (your Club) insofar as they cannot get into the lodge with such short notice.

As part of our membership, I am torn between refunding the late cancellations, which all had real reasons for cancelling (remember we had great snow last season) and keeping our prices low.

Empty cabins do not pay the bills, which still keep coming. If we can't plug the cost of refunds (\$37,173 last season) then we must offset this cost with increased prices.

I recommend Travel Insurance to cover yourself for exceptional circumstances. You can purchase travel insurance up to the day before you depart. Austpost offer a convenient cover and for the more regular travellers, I recommend you shop around for a seasonal travel policy which covers you away from home for longer periods.

Fifty years ago ...

Fifty years ago, work parties at Mt Buller were preparing the foundations for what would become the main accommodation wing of the current lodge. I'm not sure we would get away with using dynamite at our current work parties!

The Ships Log from the Navy 'Breathmaker' Lodge at Mount Buller in 1976 recorded the following:

Saturday 31st January 1976

Weather fine, partly cloudy, temp 25 deg (perfect working day)

Excavations commenced 0900 (approx.) 2 ½ rows completed during the forenoon. Adjourned to the Kooroora (pub) at 1300.

Frank Belcher and Peter Selkowski still working as they were late arrivals.

32 holes completed during the day. 2 or 3 had rocks too big to move.

Saturday 7th February 1976

Straight to work and kept at it until 8.30pm. An early night was had by all...

Sunday 8th February 1976

0900 start by some and a full crew by 1000. The main activity during the day was blasting. Very successful day and the last for the day was at 1830 leaving only nine to go.



Breathmaker lodge accommodation wing, under which the "blasting" took place.

Vale David Woodruff



The Club was saddened to hear that Ordinary member David Woodruff recently crossed the bar.

David joined the Club in 1983 and was a regular at the Buller lodge with his family over many decades. He was still skiing at the age of 80 and staying at the lodge.

Our thoughts are with his wife Cheryl and daughter Vanessa who remain valued members of our Club.



Hopefully a sign of things to come. The Perisher lodge on 27th March 2026 and Buller lodge on 12 April 2026.

2026 Booking Rules & Pricing

Cheap midweek Rates continue

--- VP MMC (JEREMY BUTLER) ---

Membership

In recognition of tough economic times, subscriptions have only increased by CPI and the family cap has had no increase for 2026. Joining fees remain discounted for RAN junior ranks and former child members joining as Associate members.

Accommodation Rates

A lot of effort goes into setting accommodation pricing for the coming year. Amongst other things, the Board takes into account feedback from members and data on booking patterns at all our lodges.

Trialled in 2025 and continued in 2026, this has resulted in significant midweek discounts at the Mt Buller lodge, making a 'week-long' or 'mid-week' stay at Mt Buller a very affordable option, especially for families.

For 2026, the midweek discount has been extended to Perisher and Thredbo during the 'low' season.

Online Bed Availability

Due to our need to closely manage bed allocations to take account of the gender and age mix of members and guests, we cannot allow all beds to be available for online bookings. We must keep a certain number available for the Booking Officer to manage these issues. At times it is not possible to use all beds in the lodges.

This means that at some busy periods, Online Bookings will show no beds available when some might be. In these circumstances, members should contact the Booking Officer by phone to check whether individual bookings can be taken, and to register interest in being placed on a waiting list in case of cancellations.

Of course, you can always phone the lodge manager to check if any last-minute beds are available. Conversely, offline group bookings may suddenly take up a lot of beds, so don't delay an intended booking because it looks like there are still lots of beds available!

Booking Changes

Members are not to transfer bookings between themselves. Please remember that all transfers of bookings from one member to another for the same period must be handled by the Club's Booking Officer.

Priority Bookings

Please note that only one Priority Booking can be requested per year per member.

At the moment, these bookings are handled offline as it is not possible to easily identify who has work-party credits through the membership database.

Guest Bookings

Guests can only stay at our lodges as part of a booking made by a financial Member. The host member must be present at the Lodge for the duration of the booking, meaning that if the host member is unable to stay or needs to depart prior to the end of the booking, the guests are unable to remain at the lodge.

Payment for a member's guest booking must be made by the host member. This also applies to any amendments, cancellations or requests for refunds made to the booking.

Children

Family Members 18 years and over may stay in the lodges without their related Ordinary or Associate Member. Family Members under 18 years must be accompanied by an adult member (i.e. a member aged 18 or over).

Booking Enquiries

(02) 6295 6634

Tuesday to Friday

0930 - 1430

Cancellations & Refunds

We continue to get large numbers of applications for refunds.

The conditions for full refunds (more than 42 days' notice) and partial [50%] refunds (14 to 42 days' notice) are clearly articulated in our By-Laws and on the Accommodation Rates Form on our website.

Remember that there are no refunds for cancellations with less than 14 days' notice unless for exceptional circumstances (see below).

In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Directors may approve a full refund for a cancelled booking. Exceptional circumstances are those where the reasons for the cancellation could not have been foreseen and/or are outside the member's control. Changes in work and family commitments are not considered exceptional circumstances. Members are encouraged to consider travel insurance to protect themselves against these types of events.

Whether you are seeking an 'exceptional circumstances' refund or not, members are encouraged, as a matter of courtesy, to contact the respective Lodge Manager if plans change at the last minute.

IMPORTANT: Bookings must be cancelled with the Booking Officer prior to submitting a Request for Refund application.

CLASSIFIEDS

R.A.N. SKI CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

MT BULLER

SATURDAY 1st AUGUST 2026

X-country
Giant Slalom (skiers and snowboarders)
All ages and abilities welcome
Celebration and fancy-dress Awards dinner
2026 theme; "Scotland"

Save the Date

R.A.N. SKI CLUB AGM

THREDBO LODGE

SATURDAY 16th MAY 2026

All Members Welcome
(Advise attendance by 1 May 2026)

Work parties

Work parties generally commence early on a Saturday morning and conclude Sunday afternoon, although individual lodge work party leaders will specify particular timings to attendees as required.

Each of the lodges has work parties scheduled in 2026, before the start of the winter season. See the website for details and registering your interest to attend a work party.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

(Extract from Clause 19 in The RAN Ski Club constitution)

"If, six (6) weeks after the due date for an Annual Subscription Fee, a Member has failed to pay the Annual Subscription Fee, the Directors may declare that person's membership forfeited ..."

Quiz Answers:

1. Mogul Skiing is Australia's most successful Winter Olympic event. The sport has secured seven medals (four gold, two silver, and one bronze), with Jakara Anthony becoming Australia's first two-time Winter Olympic gold medallist in 2026.
2. Crackenback Supertrail (5.9km) at Thredbo Resort.
3. 1981 (peak depth 361cm recorded at Spencers Creek on 1st September)
4. Ski mountaineering or "skimo."
5. Japan.
6. Original term for snowboarding
7. Mt Stirling (Mt Buller in the background).

Best coffee in Australia is on the way to Mount Buller!

il salotto.

ITALIAN KITCHEN & CAFFÈ

Navy Ski Club members Mike Rich and Kath Bier run a fantastic little café in Mansfield.

Shop 3, 69 High Street, Mansfield VIC

www.ilsalotto.com.au