

Dec/Jan

2011/12

cheeseman 

CHAT

Winner
Ski Area
Service Award

2007, 2008
& 2010



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Season's Greetings and happy New Year to all our members and their families. I hope everyone has had a safe, enjoyable and restful Christmas and holiday period. I have recently returned from 10 days camping at Glendhu Bay in Wanaka and we were lucky to have a great stretch of weather which meant many hours of boating and water activities!

You should have now received your 2012 Membership renewal Invoice via Email or by post (to those who we don't have email addresses for). If you haven't received your renewal please email Gordon on office@mtcheeseman.co.nz and he can get it sorted for you. The Early Bird payment discount cut-off is 31st January and we would appreciate prompt payment of subscriptions as this helps fund many of our summer projects. You will note that subscriptions have remained the same price, as have many of our rates for 2012. Lift rates have gone up \$1 to \$70 per day but this does not affect members with your Season Pass. Some other realignment and deletion of under-utilised rates has also occurred to streamline and simplify the vast array of price categories.

With the change in our financial year came a change to the AGM date and this is now booked in for Monday 5th March 2012 at the Cashmere Club – see notice elsewhere in Chat. We are well underway with our accounts review and Annual Report which will arrive in your mail in due course.

**AGM - MONDAY 5 MARCH
CASHMERE CLUB
Details on p. 3**

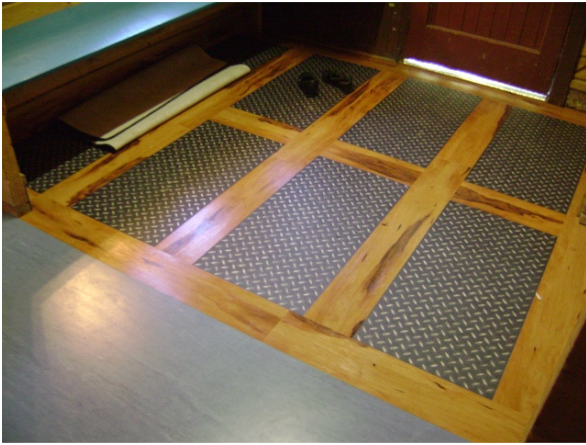
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As we launch ourselves head first into 2012 its shaping up to be another busy lead-up to the 2012 season! Workparties are a bit slow to get underway but will crank up over the next few months – please keep an eye out in Chat and the website for Workparty Notices. A small amount of work has been occurring since shut down in October and has mainly been focussed around mechanical and Lodge Maintenance. We have recently had the vinyl in the entrance foyer, kitchen and lounge area replaced at Forest Lodge so it's beginning to look very smart now. Forest Lodge is in need of a full external repaint when time permits and this will further enhance this excellent facility for year round use.



New vinyl - Forest Lodge



At the entrance

The list of summer work has been formulated and one important task is realigning and securing our mains power cable which failed during last season due to snow creep. The electric motor has been removed from the Main Tow and is currently being refurbished at ABB. A speed controller is to be fitted to the Main along with an upgrade of the aging electrical control equipment. The speed controller will allow us more flexibility and better control of starting and stopping the tow and will give us more options around running the tow in windy conditions.

A new Groomer will hit our slopes this coming season – well not a new one but a new one for us! The Committee has approved the purchase of a 2004 PB200 “The Edge” from Treble Cone. Our existing machines are becoming increasingly unreliable and consume hours of time fault finding and repairing and by upgrading to newer technology we are looking for increased grooming time on the slopes rather than repair time in the workshop. Obviously we will also be looking for a very careful and machine friendly operator too!



“The Edge”

Some history – Our first groomer was purchased from overseas in 1993 at a cost of somewhere between \$60K - \$70K (correct me if I’m wrong) and once arrived was given an extensive overhaul. It has served the club well. In 2007 we purchased a second PB240d for \$15k from Whakapapa originally with the intent to provide spares for the other but after it arrived we decided to use it as a mainstream machine giving us more flexibility with two machines and allowing breakdowns of one to be covered by the other. For our \$15k investment we think we have done well to get 5 seasons out of this 2nd machine and to have had 18 years’ service from our first machine, a 1988 model, is pretty impressive too!

“The Edge” was sent to New Zealand in 2004 as a demo of this new model and was launched at Treble Cone during the 2004 season - which I was lucky enough to attend. It was then purchased by Cardrona and was based there until 2 years ago upon which time Treble Cone purchased it to use as a backup to their 2 leased machines. With a recent change in management at Treble Cone the decision was made to sell any surplus or owned equipment hence its disposal. It has done approx. 7600hrs and has a good service history. It comes with a spare set of tracks and a spare tiller as part of the deal. We recently inspected the machine and are now waiting for some tests to be completed on one of the hydraulic pumps to verify its condition before completing a purchase agreement. “The Edge” 200 is basically a smaller machine than the more common PB300 but utilises the higher HP engine of a PB300. It is a more basic machine than a 300 with familiar componentry to us but also has some newer technology and diagnostic equipment fitted as well. With a later generation Flexi-tiller as standard we will see a vast improvement in the product it leaves behind!

Summer bookings have continued with interest and enquiries slowly increasing. We have a wedding booked in at the top over the first weekend of February followed by a computer programmers retreat for 4 days.

Grading work on the upper road above Middle Hut has commenced and I am meeting with DOC to discuss road maintenance on the road below Middle Hut in the next few weeks. Hopefully last year’s culvert gang will return again this summer

to give them a once over. I recently flushed out the upper reservoir/collection tank that supplies Forest Lodge water – the coarse filter in the centre of the tank which stop much of the large debris is in need of repair as it is rusting out so a new one will be fabricated. The water filters in both Lodges have been replaced recently and some water testing needs to be done to verify our water is still safe to drink. These are all little items that go on behind the scenes but are important in keeping the overall operation ticking over, safe and compliant.

Stu and Ryan from CHILL have been investigating online booking management systems for us and elsewhere in Chat you will see that we have now signed up with them to use the Checkfront platform.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Chat and let's hope the summer weather continues for a good while longer!

Cheers Cam

NEW TREASURER NEEDED

As noted in last Chat, Richard Walklin is standing down and we need a new treasurer. If you think you might be interested, give Cam a call on 021 104 0599 or email him at cam@mtcheeseman.co.nz

IMPORTANT DATES AND COMING EVENTS

Fri. 10 February - closing date for Committee etc nominations and notices of motion for AGM

Sat-Sun 18-19 February - Infrastructure work party

Sat-Sun 25-26 February - Infrastructure work party

Sat 3 March - Opening of Hogs Back Track (see p. 5)

Mon 5 March - Club AGM

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 82nd Annual General Meeting of the Mount Cheeseman Ski Club Inc. will be held on Monday 5 March 2012, at the Cashmere Club, Hunter Tce, commencing at 7:30pm.

NOTICES OF MOTION

Any notices of motion must be received at the Registered Office of the Club **no later than Friday 10 February 2012**

NOMINATIONS

Nominations for President, Vice-Presidents (2) Treasurer, Club Captain, Committee members (5) and Development Council member (1) **must be received at the Club Office no later than noon on Friday 10 February 2012.**

NOTE 1: The Registered office of the Club is at present 66 Derby St, Christchurch 8014.
Fax 366 4972, email d.hinman@xtra.co.nz

NOTE 2: Nomination forms are available by email or post, or can be downloaded from the Club website - www.mtcheeseman.co.nz

Ring the office - 344 3247 (please leave a message if the office is unattended), or email office@mtcheeseman.co.nz or d.hinman@xtra.co.nz

NOTE 3: The Constitution of the Club provides that any member wishing to resign from membership shall do so by notice in writing *before* the Annual General Meeting, otherwise they retain membership and are liable for the payment of fees and levies for the following year.

Online Accommodation Booking and Management System

A report from Sue Cumberworth (a.k.a. marketing@mtcheeseman.co.nz)

Background

Currently most Cheeseman accommodation bookings are taken manually by phone and/or email and managed in a spreadsheet system. Information provision is manual and systems for managing bookings by admin staff during the winter season

are generally manual, basic and in some areas inadequate. System deficiencies include poor tracking of payments, lack of a customer database and inconsistent communication with customers.

In 2011 Chill Studio began investigating online booking system options for Cheeseman. They have now come back with a proposal for our consideration, using the booking platform "Checkfront".

Benefits of Checkfront online booking platform

The aim of putting Cheeseman's accommodation booking online is to streamline the process for both customers and administration staff in Christchurch and on the mountain. It will eliminate or minimise the possibility of many booking errors and will provide a system to manage bookings, beds, bunkrooms and payments, provide automated emails and information provision, accommodate deal and voucher offers, social media interfaces, member and non member rates and will operate from within Cheeseman's website pages.

Checkfront is a booking engine that is highly customisable but the fewer customisations made the fewer problems we're likely to have. With this in mind Chill recommends that we simplify Cheeseman's product mix as much as possible to fit within the intended parameters of the programme – an aim that we have already been working toward.

Development Programme

Chill have provided a development programme, timeline and cost estimate as follows:

The timing estimate is for the system to be live on the Cheeseman website by late March/early April.

Total estimate excl GST \$7100 + website design to be confirmed (not expected to exceed \$1000).

Cam and I met having met with Chill believe that this system offers many benefits to Cheeseman's customers, staff and administration systems and recommended to the Management Committee that the estimate be accepted allowing work to proceed. The latter benefit alone, of an effective and professional system of managing our accommodation bookings and interface with our customers, we believe justifies proceeding with the programme as outlined by Chill. Following Committee endorsement including comments like this from Richard: *"This is fantastic. I believe we will save the \$7k investment required almost instantly by better customer satisfaction, less double bookings, less mistakes and loss of*

income due to these which we all know has occurred in the past. I vote "LETS DO IT NOW"

the go-ahead was given earlier this week.

Members and non-members will be able to book and pay for ski week, DBB & 24hr packages online and the system will streamline our back end booking admin as well. Booking confirmations will be automatically sent with links to attachments of info. packs etc.

If you wish to check out Checkfront, see <http://www.checkfront.com/>

Sue Cumberworth

INFRASTRUCTURE WORK PARTIES

Dean Johnsnton reports:

The "infrastructure" work party will run on Feb 18th / 19th and Feb 25th / 26th. Several projects are starting simultaneously and we need lots of people power please.

1. Relocating and burying part of the mains electrical cable
2. Constructing the new "top Box"
3. Building a radio phone link for Forest Lodge

Mains Cable project runs from 200m above Middle Hut site down the road approximately 200m. A digger will have dug 95% of the trench and we need to pick the three cables up, move uphill and wrap them in a protective plastic layer finally laying them into the trench. The digger should be able to most of the backfilling. For part of the lower route; the cables will be relocated to a new position on the surface. We will need to hammer several Waratahs into the ground and anchor the cable to these.

The project is happening irrespective of the weather as we are well down the hill and out of the worst of the winds. Two weekends are allocated in case we can't complete this in one weekend (we must complete the project in the shortest time as we will have to cut the cables and then must get the mains power reconnected). You will need outdoor working clothes (hot and cold weather) but this is largely "unskilled" physical work. Your "get fit" weekends compensating for holiday indulgences??

A new Top Box (ski patrol shelter and storage) is being planned for the top of the Ridge tow. It requires a foundation pad to be dug (200mm deep, 2m x 2.5m), boxed and steel reinforcing or

gabions assembled. Basic carpentry and concreting skills will be useful. At this stage, we are planning on a concrete pour using a helicopter on another occasion. We will fly in the new building and fly out the old top box. If the track conditions are good, we will be walking to the Ridge from the top of the Main tow (Club vehicles will be available to travel up the field.)

The foundation is also to enable us to construct a new communication tower so we can modernise all the radio, phone, internet and web cam systems in readiness for Tarn Basin. The new building is intended to protect the electronics and batteries.

The new phone link to Forest Lodge - constructing a new tower in the field 450 metres from the Lodge is the third project This will completely bypass the ancient and troublesome phone cable. We need to dig several holes and mount a 5m pole in the ground along with supports for the electronics enclosures. Once again, digging and carpentry skills required. We also hope to dig a trench short trench across the carpark in readiness for a cable from the pole to the lodge.

If you are available to help with any of these projects on all or any of the 4 days allocated, please contact Dean on Ph. 942 5659 or email dean-johnston@clear.net.nz

Whats new in the mountains ?

From: Julie and Tom Wilson
email: droverscafe@yahoo.co.nz
Ph: 03 318 4044

Hi there,

Tom and I have recently taken over 'Ned's Cafe & Bar' at Springfield, renamed " Drovers Cafe & Bar".

We would be grateful if we could be included in your newsletter, encouraging chilly skiers to visit us and try our selection of wholesome hot meals, mulled wine and hot drinks, on their way home after a hard day on the slopes.

We offer a welcoming, cosy, country atmosphere, with amazing views of the Torlesse Range.

Our opening hours are 8:00 am - 5:00 pm Sunday-Thursday and 8:00 am - 9:00 pm Friday and Saturday, with evening meals available.

Kind regards.
Julie Wilson.

Land ownership change finalized.

The Gazette Notice has now been published and the land occupied by Mt Cheeseman Ski Club has finally been vested in the Department of Conservation.

DOC, through the Nature Heritage Fund, purchased part of the Castle Hill Station Pastoral Lease as long ago as 2004. For a number of reasons it has taken a long time to conclude arrangements with the pastoral lease holder and to complete the transaction. The land was previously held by the Commissioner of Crown Lands.

**CASTLE HILL
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

The Castle Hill Community Association invites you to join with us to celebrate the official opening and family walk/ride of the

HOGS BACK TRACK

Saturday 3rd March 2012
09:30 at Texas Flat

Kids' activities along the track
➤ Track fundraising **bacon butties (\$4)** and coffee at Texas Flat; sausage sizzle (\$2), coffee and **petanque** at Castle Hill Village Hall from 14:00
➤ Spot prizes for walkers/riders at Village Hall at 16:00
➤ Texas Flat is 4.5 km along the Cheeseman ski field road
➤ Hogs Back Track is 7.5 km long and takes around 2.5 hours to walk or 1 to 1.5 hours to ride
➤ Event will be cancelled in bad weather - notification on Facebook page "Castle Hill Hogs Back Track" (contact: paulwinberg@vtm.co.nz)

Image © Corrick Boyd

CLUB CONTACTS 2011

Management Committee, Development Council, Office and Web.

Patron
Rob Gibson
Ph 384 2536

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:	
President Cameron Lill Ph. 021 104 0599 cam@mtcheeseman.co.nz	Club Captain Helene Haase Ph (H) 332 4302 helenehaase@slingshot.co.nz
Vice President Paul Lamont Ph. 338 3788 paul@hydropower.co.nz	Treasurer Richard Walklin Ph. 327 2760 treasurer@mtcheeseman.co.nz
Vice President Alison Kircher Ph. 351 5672 kircher@inet.net.nz	Immediate Past President Paul Rogers Ph. 0274 400 867 paul.rogers@spireconsulting.co.nz
Committee Sue Alexander Ph.: (H) 332 1659 s.alexander@clear.net.nz	 Sue Cumberworth Ph. 03 329 6456 marketing@mtcheeseman.co.nz
Mal Dowding Ph. 942 7282 malcolm@dowdinghomes.co.nz	Dave Hinman Ph. 366 4903 d.hinman@xtra.co.nz
Ros Service Ph. 351 2311 rozmorris1@hotmail.com	Minutes Secretary Fiona Steel Ph. 352 3383 familysteel@xtra.co.nz
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL:	
Dean Johnston Ph 332 1659 (Chairman) Sean Moran Ph 359 8202 Michael Shand Ph 332 4921 William Fulton Ph 366 7165 Graham Stephenson Ph 03 572 7379 + President, one Vice- President, Treasurer and Immediate Past President	
Mt Cheeseman Ski Club Inc P O Box 22178 Christchurch, Office Phone (03) 344 3247 Office Fax (03) 344 3300 E-mail: office@mtcheeseman.co.nz Mountain ph (03) 318 8794(Snowline) ph (03) 318 8716 (Forest Lodge) Webpage: http://www.mtcheeseman.co.nz	

Mt Cheeseman Ski Club Inc
P O Box 22178
Christchurch 8140