**Presidents Start of Year Message**

Welcome to 2017! As many of you are aware, bookings for all AAC lodges in Australia have opened up to members of their own lodge, with reciprocals and guests having booking rights in turn over the next 6 weeks. I hope you all have the opportunity to visit the snow this year.

**Long range forecast**

As per usual the long range expectations for the snow season range from dryer and colder to wetter and warmer, so we are all left to estimate ourselves what we expect from the season. The continued increase in snowmakers around the resorts has improved reliability of snow and the enjoyment of the snowfields by us as members.

**The History of the AAC**

The Australian Alpine Club was founded in 1950 by Charles Anton and was then known as the Ski Tourers' Association. Charles Anton had a vision of forming a chain of ski lodges across the Australian Alps. The first four AAC lodges were built along the Main Range of the Snowy Mountain prior to the establishment of the major ski resorts. The Australian Alpine Club currently consists of 5 lodges, 4 in Australia and one in Japan.

Our web page includes a more detailed history of the AAC and the Ski Tourers Association, put together by life member Warren Peck, as well as some old videos converted from film that have all been provided to the club from our members’ archives, under the heritage tab. They are well worth a look.

<http://australianalpineclub.com/history.html>

<http://australianalpineclub.com/heritage.html>

**The Future of the AAC**

Last year our constitution was redrafted to comply with the latest not for profit regulations and occupied a large amount of time for the delegates from each lodge and the AAC executive in getting the constitution accepted. In April this year the delegates from each AAC Lodge (Anton, Dinner Plain, Falls Creek, Niseko and Perisher) will meet in a special session to review the Aims and Strategic Direction of the AAC. After 66 years it’s time we reassessed where we are heading and how we should be best placed to get there.

I encourage all members of each lodge to provide suggestions to their respective committees on where they think the AAC should be going, what next and what we should be focusing on before the end of March so that we can discuss and agree on any changes to our constitution.

**Reciprocals**

I also remind you all that reciprocal rights are part of what each of us enjoy as members of an individual AAC project. I encourage you to try the other lodges, learn from the different operations, and see a different mountain. Personally I have been lucky over the last few years to get to AAC Perisher Huette in NSW and ski the slopes of Perisher and Thredbo, as well as ski Hotham and stay at the Dinner Plain lodge.

Regards

Noel Poon

President – Australian Alpine Club