

SCHUSS NEWS

Edition No. 189

December 2017

Pedal power: our plan to embrace the bike boom



The Schuss board is discussing plans to provide secure storage and other facilities for mountain bikes at our lodges, as the sport booms at the major resorts. See story inside.

ALSO IN THIS EDITION:

- Help! New club secretary needed
- Nominations called for Schuss board
- Club IT overhaul completed



Schuss Ski Club
schuss.asn.au
PO Box 796 Braeside Vic 3195

10 Parallel Street, FALLS CREEK
17 Alpine Way, THREDBO
25 Stirling Road, MT BULLER

Wanted: new Schuss club secretary

THE Schuss Ski Club board is seeking applications from members for arguably the most important role in the organisation: club secretary. The call is going out after incumbent secretary Brad McDonell (right) announced he would not be continuing in the role in 2018. Brad will also not seek re-election to the Schuss board at the forthcoming annual general meeting. Brad has been an excellent administrator and dedicated servant of the club over the past two years, bringing his strong business skills and calm, personable style to the role. Though he will be greatly missed by other board members, we will no doubt continue to enjoy the company of Brad and his wife Rosemary at their beloved Schuss Lodge Thredbo for many years to come.



The secretary's role at Schuss has varied over the years depending on the occupant, but essentially requires someone to be the chief organiser and administrator of the board and the club. The secretary is responsible for organisation of board meetings, including preparation and distribution of agendas and minutes. The secretary also has broader administrative functions such as ensuring the club is observing its legal obligations, handling club correspondence and keeping club files and records up to date. The successful applicant will ideally have sound writing and personal skills, along with some administrative experience. For practical purposes, the secretary should also be a member of the Schuss board of directors, and any applicants for secretary will be strongly encouraged to stand for election to the board at the forthcoming annual general meeting in Adelaide (see director application form in this edition of Schuss News).

Club secretary is largely a voluntary position, with a modest honorarium paid each year to help cover individual costs. But the non-financial rewards are considerable: the secretary is part of a team of dedicated club members on the Schuss board who enjoy great companionship and derive enormous satisfaction from giving back to a club that we all love being a part of.

The successful applicant will have the benefit of guidance in the role from Brad and his predecessor, club legend Rob Hogan, who held the secretary role for the best part of a decade and knows the club and its administrative workings better than anyone else. It should be emphasised that we do not expect the next secretary to work as ridiculously hard as Rob did; he was a one off. Some delegation or sharing of secretarial tasks around the board is possible when needed.

If you are interested in applying, please send an email to the secretary (of course) at secretary@schuss.com.au, or phone Brad on 0417 218209. And don't forget to put in your nomination for a board role by 8 January 2018 (see details below).

Nominations called for board of directors

WOULD you like to become more involved in the running of Schuss Ski Club? Nominations are now open for the Schuss board of directors, with elections to be held at the club's 2018 Annual General Meeting in Adelaide on Friday 16 March.

Six of the 12 board positions will be up for grabs, including the vacant position created by the impending departure from the board of Brad McDonell (see story above).

Could this be the time to make your contribution as a director? We truly welcome the interest of any and all members to nominate for these positions. This club exists solely due to the hard work and skills of volunteers, and the board is the primary vehicle for this work, so if you have any desire to contribute to the club's well-being and future direction, please consider nominating yourself.

Be aware that the Schuss board is in reality an executive body. Each director is expected to roll up their sleeves and do real tasks to help run the club, whether tending the membership list, marketing the club's facilities, caring for the lodges or even writing pieces for the newsletter!

With ongoing works at Thredbo, continuing maintenance requirements for all the lodges, the upcoming Falls Creek lease renewal, and knowledge of impending further departures from the current board, we will need new, motivated people who are willing to contribute their time and energy. We would particularly encourage nomination by members with experience in marketing, building and construction, and administration, governance and the law.

We can assure you it is very worthwhile and personally rewarding giving back your time and expertise to the club. At the same time, serving as a director gives you greater knowledge of club operations and adds to the enjoyment of being a Schuss Ski Club member.

If you are interested in seeking a board position or if you have any questions, please complete the Nomination Form below and we will send you the Directors Induction kit or answer any questions you have. You have until 8 January to lodge your nomination.

If you have any questions about board nomination, email Brad McDonell at secretary@schuss.com.au

Director Nomination Form Schuss Ski Club Ltd

Nomination to the Schuss Ski Club Ltd. Board of Directors

To be in the hands of the secretary by 5.00PM Central Summer Time, Monday 8 January 2018.

Please scan and email to secretary@schuss.com.au. Copies received by email must be from the nominee's email address registered with the club.

The term of a board position is 2 years, and 1 year for the Chair. For the 2018 year, of the 12 board positions, there are 6 positions available for re-election. (The other 6 positions are 1 year into their 2 year terms).

I wish to nominate for a position as:

- A Director of the Schuss Ski Club Ltd.
- The Director Chairperson of the Schuss Ski Club Ltd (open to nominees for a Director Position and current Directors.

NAME:

ADDRESS

Email address

Telephone number(s): AH:

Mobile:

SIGNATURE

DATE:

Nominees must submit a 200 word statement supporting their nomination and email this separately to the Secretary at secretary@schuss.com.au, by Monday 8 January 2018 for publication in the club newsletter that will carry the agenda for the meeting. This should include personal contact details (email address or telephone number) to allow contact by members who wish to discuss any aspects of the statement. It is recommended that nominee profiles include details of qualifications and/or work experience relevant to Board responsibilities and operations. A head and shoulder portrait photo (as a jpeg image) should be included with the nominee statement.

AGM - call for agenda items

The Schuss board invites members to submit any motions to be put to the AGM and these must be received by 5.00PM Central Summer Time Monday 8 January 2018. Motions must be included in the agenda for the meeting and cannot be raised from the floor. Motions can be either posted to the secretary at PO Box 796, Braeside, Vic 3195, faxed to 08 8276 5697 or scanned and emailed to secretary@schuss.com.au from the nominee's email address registered with the club. Names and signatures of the proposing and seconding member must be included.

Club IT overhaul completed

Lift-off for new website, booking system and dotcom

AFTER months of hard work and careful planning, led and overseen by Schuss board member **Carina O'Brien (nee Jacob)**, the new-look Schuss website and online booking system have been successfully launched. Both the website (see homepage snapshot below) and booking system were re-designed from the ground up, with one overriding aim: to offer Schuss members and guests a far more user-friendly experience.

We also have an important announcement for those who missed it: the club has formally transferred from its previous internet domain address (schuss.asn.au), and is now located at **schuss.com.au**. All club email addresses, including lodge email addresses, now also end in .com.au.

The changes will create a more obvious and easier pathway to the club's website and email addresses for potential visitors. In the transition period, anyone who types in schuss.asn.au will be automatically redirected to the new domain.

The new Schuss website, we hope you will agree, is far more attractive, easier to read and better organised than its predecessor. It is still subject to some fine tuning, and we would encourage Schuss members to provide feedback and suggestions on how it might be further improved.

The new booking system went live just in time for the opening of the Schuss member priority winter booking period at the start of November. Initial reports are positive, with most members who used the online booking system managing to do so without significant problems or incidents.

The booking system is on the commercial RMS (Reservation Management System) platform, which is widely used in the hotel industry and will feel familiar to many members and guests.

Importantly for the club, RMS provides 24-hour technical support, and is able to automatically generate valuable data for the club such as occupancy statistics. Users are able to book and pay online at the same time, and no longer need to correspond with the booking secretaries or lodge managers over payments.

Big thanks go out, first, to **Carina O'Brien** and fellow board member **Elissa Raptis**, who put in long hours planning and working with RMS and our website designers over the past year to achieve a great result. Thanks also to our booking secretaries **Meryl and Andrew Briggs** for their patience and hard work in helping to implement the new booking system.



Our plan to bring on the bikes

By **TOM ORMONDE**
Schuss News Editor

IT IS one of Australia's fastest growing participation sports, and unquestionably *the* fastest growing recreational activity in our alpine resorts. Summer mountain biking, if you hadn't noticed, is booming – and three of the biggest destinations for this sport happen to be the places where Schuss Ski Club has its lodges: **Falls Creek, Thredbo and Mt Buller.**

The Schuss board has for some years had intermittent discussions about investing in new facilities to make our lodges more attractive to bike riders and racers, but has never undertaken any significant works or promotions to become an active participant in this exploding scene.



All this, we hope, is about to change. After unprecedented investment by the big Victorian and NSW resorts in new mountain bike trails and in major events across the non-winter months, and with the numbers of visitors continuing to swell, the Schuss board at its December 2017 meeting agreed to get moving on plans to promote the use of our lodges by bike riders – not just mountain bikers, but also the road variety whose numbers in alpine regions are booming as well. Notably, the Falls Creek Lodge is usually full for a weekend in March for the now legendary Peaks Challenge, where road riders have 13 hours to complete a circuit including Tawonga Gap, Mt Hotham and the back of Falls Creek from Omeo.

The first step will be to adapt our existing facilities as soon as possible to enable convenient and secure storage for what are often very valuable pieces of sporting equipment. Eventually, at Falls Creek and Thredbo at least, we will investigate the feasibility of building new stand-alone facilities for bike storage and maintenance.

The arguments for a modest initial investment in bike storage are irresistible. Most of the big bike events take place between November and April – in other words, in periods when, save for Christmas-New Year, our lodges are usually empty. Judicious investment in bike storage would be reasonably expected to pay for itself within a short period, and hopefully soon start generating valuable net income for the club, which in turn we will be able to reinvest in maintenance and upgrading of our lodges to benefit all Schuss members.

We would also hope to encourage an expansion of interest in bike riding among Schuss members and their families. We already have a number of keen road riders and racers in our ranks, and one of our esteemed board members, **Ed Vercoe**, is a veteran of the mountain bike scene, and he has the scars to show it. Ed will bring his insider knowledge and experience to our initial plans to adapt our existing facilities to accommodate bikes.

At Schuss Falls Creek, we have already been storing bikes securely in Room 19, which is much larger than most of the other rooms and conveniently located next to the entrance.

Thredbo is a more difficult proposition, though not impossible, with the only suitable spaces located downstairs from the entrance. At this stage discussions are centred on Room 12 and the level 1 games room. Eventually, if the numbers stack up, we will build bike storage under the lodge car park. Ed Vercoe told Schuss News we would also ideally install a tap and hose near the lodge entrance for washing the mud off the bikes.

Schuss Mt Buller has two logical existing spaces for bike storage: the boot room and ski room, both conveniently adjacent to the entrance. A handful of bikes were successfully stored in the ski room on Melbourne Cup weekend this year. Buller lodge officer, club chairman and keen rider **Ingmar Wahlqvist**

estimates another 4-5 bikes could be stored in the boot room, and can attest to the joy of riding the well-maintained trails from the village all the way down to Mirimbah.

Schuss board members are the first to admit we have not been quick out of the blocks in getting our club to embrace the mountain bike boom. In our defence, we have been preoccupied with big and pressing club projects in the last couple of years, including the major renovation of the Thredbo lodge and the launch of the new website and online booking system. Now that most of the hard work on those projects is behind us, we can turn more of our attention to what promises to be a major boon for our club. Extensive information about mountain biking and bike events at Falls Creek, Buller and Thredbo is available on each resort website. Go to:

<https://www.thredbo.com.au/activities/biking/>

<http://www.fallscreek.com.au/mtb/>

<http://bike.mtbuller.com.au/>

More works to come at Schuss Thredbo

MORE works are being planned for Schuss Thredbo over coming months after the completion of major renovation activity in spring. The last big renovation items were the installation of the entrance canopy and weather shelter in late September, and the restoration of stonework on the lower level.

While the main focus of the renovation has been on the upper level living and dining areas of the lodge, the Schuss board has now turned its attention to the lower three levels of the lodge, where all the bedrooms are located and which are in obvious need of new carpet, fresh paint and some other remedial works.

Walter Brooke, the Adelaide-based architects who expertly designed and oversaw the major renovation of level 4, have come up with initial recommendations for a new color scheme for the bedrooms and hallways, including new carpets, paint, linen, blinds and bed lighting. The details are still to be finalised, and the board will seek to have at least some of these works completed before winter 2018.

We will also undertake some external works in coming months to comply with the fire safety aspects of our planning certificate. The main items will be the addition of an external stair rail down the south (Tyrola) side of the building, and the landscaping of steps into the hill on the north side of the lodge.

Lodge managers appointed for winter 2018

Three new faces, including Schuss booking secretaries **Andrew and Meryl Briggs**, have been added to our stable of lodge managers for winter 2018. Andrew and Meryl, from Sydney, will manage Schuss Falls Creek for the entire winter.

The other newcomer to the lodge management ranks is **Neil Gordon**, a long-time Schuss member from Sydney and a regular visitor to our Thredbo lodge. Neil will manage Thredbo during July and part of August, with three other previous managers, **Tom Ormonde, David Hodge and Damian Waldron**, to share the remaining slots.

At Mt Buller, popular former Falls Creek managers **Gerri and Wayne McGregor** have signed on for the first half of the winter. **Kerstin Wahlqvist**, who co-managed the Buller lodge in 2017 with Laura Shirven, will return in 2018 to manage the second half of the season. Kerstin is the sister of Schuss chairman **Ingmar Wahlqvist**.

The manager appointments were endorsed by the Schuss board at its December meeting. Special thanks go to board member **David Johnston**, who does most of the heavy lifting on organising managers for our lodges.

Schuss News

SCHUSS News is published four times a year – in February, May, October and December. Editor **Tom Ormonde** will gratefully receive editorial and pictorial contributions from Schuss members. Send your contribution to tom.ormonde@hotmail.com