

Southern Tasmanian Ski Association

Presidents Report - November 2019

The 2019 season marked a significant milestone for the Mt Mawson Ski Field with the opening of the long awaited new Public Day Shelter and associated facilities for the STSA. The new Mt Mawson Shelter has been built on the site of the original Sitzmark Lodge, and provides a truly modern, fit-for-purpose facility which can be used by bushwalkers and skiers year round. It was opened by the Premier of Tasmania the Honorable Will Hodgman MHA on 28 March 2019. The Premier was joined by a number of senior officials from the Department of Parks and Wildlife who have been actively involved in the project, including Perry Foster, Jason Jacobi, Andrew Roberts, Ashley Rushton, Brendan Moodie, and Trevor Norris. Vos Constructions and Damian Rogers from the architects were present, as well as Peter Mowbray from the Australian Ski Patrol Association who had flown from interstate especially for the event. It was also great to see so many of our volunteers present, including representatives from the STSA Ski Clubs, the Mt Mawson Ski Patrol and the Friends of Mt Field.

STSA Volunteers worked hard over the summer to fit out the new ticket office and ski patrol room in the new building, as well as undertaking the usual long list of tasks to prepare the ski field and tows for the arrival of winter snow. A total of 36 volunteers worked over 13 working bee days and contributed 79 man days of effort – a great community effort. Key achievements are summarised in Ambrose Canning's Tow Coordinator report, with highlights being the installation of a new rope for the Mawson tow, transfer of ski patrol equipment and belts into the new building, removal of protruding rocks above the loading area for the Mawson tow, and construction of several snow fence panels to improve the snow cover near pole 6.

I would particularly like to thank Paul Vince for his work on fitting out the interior of the ski patrol room, Ian Stewart for running cabling from the motor hut to the ticket office as well as upgrading the web cameras and enclosures, and Craig Larsson for leading a big effort to get the Rodway tow ready for operations.

The new facility got an early test when an early season blizzard meant that the ski season was able to get underway on 20th July, with a big crowd coming up to check out the new facilities and enjoy a great weekend's skiing at southern Tasmania's only operating ski field. The Lake Dobson carpark was filled to overflowing, and volunteers from the Wellington Outdoor and Ski Club were kept busy all weekend issuing tow belts and running the ski field. Visitors greatly appreciated having somewhere warm and dry to get in out of the snow. The building performed well on its first major test, with Ski Patrol, Ticket Office, and the Public Shelter all being fully occupied. Even the ski rack sculptures were full of skis and boards!

The building continued to perform well throughout the season, although as to be expected there will be some learnings which can be applied for the next winter. The main area for improvement would be the provision of some additional plastic grid between the two buildings to reduce the risk of ice build up and consequent risk of falls, as well as an increase in heating capacity for Ski Patrol and the ticket office.

The work STSA has invested in snow fencing over the past few years paid dividends this year, as whilst it was only a moderate snow-fall season the snow held enough to allow 8 consecutive weekends of operation. As a result three of the STSA's clubs (Wellington, the Hobart Walking Club combined with the Alpine Club of Southern Tasmania, and the Mt Mawson Ski Club) provided tow operations on two weekends, with Oldina and the Ski Club of Tasmania volunteers providing one weekend each. A good turn out of skiers, together with the impact of a modest increase in ticket prices (the first for many years) assisted STSA to recover from some of the losses of previous low-snow years. The cost of public liability insurance continues to be a challenge for STSA, as a number of weekends of operation are needed just to cover this cost.

A big thanks to the volunteers from all the ski clubs who through their efforts allow skiing to be offered to the Tasmanian public and visitors to Mt Mawson Ski Field. With the new facility in operation there was a great sense of camaraderie as the ticket office volunteers and ski patrol were all in close proximity to the public, rather than being isolated in separate buildings.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of the volunteer ski patrollers of the Mt Mawson Ski Patrol, without whom it would not be possible to continue to offer skiing and boarding at Mt Mawson. Stalwarts of Ski Patrol, Andrew Davey, Liz Koolhof and Paul Vince continued to put in a lot of work both on the mountain and off, and this year it was pleasing to welcome a number of new patrollers (including some with paramedic backgrounds).

STSA is a great volunteer organization, with a group of really positive and helpful people providing an opportunity for winter sports in Tasmania's great outdoors. With the great new facilities it is a great time to get involved and make new friends at Mt Mawson.

Thank you to my fellow committee members for their contribution to STSA's activities this year. We look forward to another great season in 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Peter Davis

STSA President 2018-2019

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