

Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club
President's report
AGM 21 May, 2014

I'd like to thank my fellow committee members for their hard work over the past year, especially our very efficient secretary, Trish Cross. Trish has done a marvellous job since she started four years ago, but has indicated that she would like to step down soon. It is time to pass over the running the club to the next generation, the parents of young children who are at the age now that we were in the club's early days.

Fortunately we have found someone who is willing to act as Assistant Secretary this year with a view to taking over the secretary's role next year. And I'm happy to say that several younger members have indicated that they are willing to take on roles too, and that a few experienced folk are willing to stay on for now, to guide the new committee.

We have nominations for all committee positions including, if elected tonight, a new vice president, a new treasurer and several new committee members.

As a founding member, (the first meeting was held in our lounge room in September 1977), I am saddened to be stepping down from the committee, but I look forward to watching the club continue to grow, to assisting in activities whenever possible, and to enjoying some blue sky days' skiing and then socialising afterwards in the clubhouse.

During the past year, our club continued its great tradition of encouraging and assisting in the development of cross country skiing.

Unfortunately, a lack of snow in July meant that our junior on-snow camp and our Birkebeiner Classic ski race had to be cancelled. Our Ski de Femme day for women and girls was postponed till August when it was successfully conducted by Ronice Goebel.

Our Casserole Dinner at Bogong village was a great success and we had a very interesting presentation, "Around the World by Bicycle" from Steve Seal and his partner, Emi, who cycled around the world over 11 years, including to Everest base camp. Thank you to Kerry Lucas who organised all our social events, including the casserole and midseason dinners and the end of year BBQ.

Michelle Forrer organised another successful Junior Joey program while Ronice organised the Junior Birkies. I'd like to commend Michelle and Ronice on their enthusiasm, and thank them for their contributions.

Many of the key roles in coaching and administration in cross country skiing such as FIS, Worldloppet, Skiing Australia and VSAXCC, are held by Birkebeiner members, e.g. Allan Marsland, Allison McArdle, Finn Marsland, Nick Grimmer and Ronice Goebel to name a few.

Other highlights of the season included

- a moonlight ski organised by Ian Franzke,
- coaching provided by our Swedish guest, Victor Gustaffson (special thanks to the families who offered billets and to Ronice for organising Victor's visit), and our own Anna Trnka who organised her first local junior squad

- Esther Bottomley and Phillip Bellingham, representing Australia at the Sochi Winter Olympics, while several others were in other representative teams,
- our organising several quality races including the Rocky Valley Rush, national championships and the Kangaroo Hoppet, Australia's Worldloppet event,
- several social functions and pre-season training events for members, and track and trail development and maintenance at Falls Creek
- And of course, we continued to maintain and improve our wonderful clubhouse at Windy Corner. Negotiations are continuing regarding a licence instead of a lease when the current lease expires in 2016, and a tender document has been prepared for the renovation of the clubhouse to meet safety and repair needs.

I'd like to thank Bill Little for the excellent job he does managing the memberships and producing the newsletters, Ian Franzke for looking after the club skidoo and the S&R team, our treasurer and webmaster, Paul L'Huillier, for managing and reporting on our finances, applying successfully for grants and keeping our website updated, Jim Gargan for his work on the Falls Creek Trails committee, and Bron and Paul Gray for looking after the clubhouse.

Thank you also to all our other volunteers, including the club race committee, the Hoppet race committee, our Hoppet Board representatives, the Search and Rescue volunteers, and to those who just lent a hand when asked, whether it be working bees, race organisation or tidying up at the clubhouse.

I wish the new president and committee every success and lots of enjoyment and satisfaction as they lead our club into the next year.

Helen L'Huillier
19 May 2014