

Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting of the New Zealand Alpine Club
held on Friday 30 October 2020 at 7.10 p.m. at the Christchurch Adventure Park,
Christchurch.

1. Welcome and Attendance

The President, Lindsay Smith, welcomed all who were present and thanked them for attending. He presided over a meeting of 35 other members from throughout New Zealand.

2. Apologies and Proxies – no proxies

Apologies were received from Shaun Norman, Chas Tanner and Katrina McKenzie, Clare Jones, John Cocks, Stuart Gray, Louise Porteous, Peter Harris, Nick and Dara Shearer, Rob Mitchell.

3. President's Report

Lindsay presented his report summarising the far-reaching implications of the Covid-19 pandemic. He explained the Board's position in March when the pandemic first struck New Zealand and he detailed the many implications for the Club; there was no travel insurance income but refunds had to be given, all hut usage stopped and school hut bookings were cancelled, all local and national instruction programmes ceased. This had serious implications for the Instruction Pathways Programme where national standard courses had been mapped out and a system for recognising instructors developed, but no further progress was able to be made.

A Board review of the situation at that time projected a \$180,000 loss for the year, which could only be met by using the entire value of our accumulated funds to avoid insolvency by year end. To avoid that occurring difficult decisions had to be made and actions taken to significantly reduce costs, including the loss of two long-serving, respected staff members.

Lindsay then outlined the positive actions undertaken to improve income. NZAC membership was asked for help and between Sections and member donations the Club received over \$80,000. Successful applications were also made for all available government subsidies and to Sport New Zealand for their support packages. As a result of the cost savings made, the income support actions taken and the gradual lifting of the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, the Club ended the year in a much better financial position than expected.

Lindsay acknowledged the outstanding contribution our General Manager Karen Leacock had made to our success for the year and passed on the Board and members thanks to her and her staff for efforts during this extremely challenging period. He then thanked members for electing such an effective Board. Their very broad experience and guidance were certainly positive factors during this year when such difficult decisions had to be made. He has found them a pleasure to work with. The Board will miss John Palmer but welcomed Clare Kearney as President Elect.

He concluded his Annual Report overview with heartfelt thanks to the Club's members for their active involvement and support during the year and offered his more positive expectation for the year ahead.

4. Confirmation of Minutes and Matters Arising from the 2019 Minutes

It was moved: ***“That the Minutes of the 2019 AGM of the Club be adopted as a true and accurate record.”***

Ross Cullen/ Gillian Crombie

Carried

There were no corrections to the minutes and no matters arising.

5. In Memorium

A minute’s silence was held to remember those Club members who had died during the past year. They were: Emma Langley, A. Forrester Davidson, Jack Taylor, Paul Laurie, B. Dawn Ibbotson, Terry Crippen, Isabel Tocker, Donald Millward, Peter Hicks, Paul Corridon, James Spaile, Ronald Dickie.

6. Financial Report

Financial highlights for the period July 19 to June 20 were presented by Karen Leacock and Gillian Crombie.

- Gillian advised that the surplus for the year was \$155,000 (\$35,000 was budgeted). Total revenue was down by \$132,000 but this was offset by major increases in donations from members and Sections, and grants from the Government and Sport New Zealand.
- Total expenses were down because of the actions taken to reduce costs, although we did record an increase in hut expenses.
- Loans (Unwin Hut) have decreased by \$53,000.
- There has been an increase in reserve funds by \$75,000 – from Section donations but a decrease in cash by the end of the year of \$56,000.
- The SBS loan will be fully paid by the end of 2021.
- Travel insurance is not available and most revenue has been refunded.
- There has been an impact on accommodation in huts and lodges, instruction, and timing of Banff screenings.
- The Climber and NZAJ have been adjusted due to Covid-19.

Looking forward to the 2020-21 financial year, Gillian advised that cashflow was currently satisfactory but being monitored carefully. Karen reported that Banff Film Festival was underway in November with reduced screenings, so there is less revenue than normal. Hopefully another screening will be held 2021 May/June. The Membership Management Programme replacement and the website upgrade are underway and it is hoped they will be running before Christmas 2020 or soon after. These will streamline administration.

Questions were welcomed from the floor.

Publication dates for the Climber were requested. Karen advised there had been a change in strategy and this would be covered in detail later in the meeting by the Publications Committee.

It was advised that hut insurance will be looked at again next year.

Lindsay noted that while the Club had ended the year in a sound financial position, we do need to be prepared in case NZ Covid alert levels change again as the impact of any such changes are unknown..

It was moved that: ***“The financial report be accepted.”***

Moved: Gillian Crombie. Seconded: Lindsay Smith. Carried

7. Appointment of Auditor

It was moved that: ***“NZAC appoints Ashton Wheelans as auditor for the Club.”*** Moved: Gillian Crombie. Seconded: Jim Peterson Carried

Gillian noted that Ashton Wheelans carries out a Review of the Club finances and are not required to do an audit.

8. Volunteer of the year announcement

Scott Taylor a Wellington Section member was named Volunteer of the Year for 2019-2020. He has been an instructor with the Section for 25+ years. Within a year of joining the Club he was co-opted onto the Section's instructor group and has been a key cog in it ever since. Each year he has instructed on, or more recently run, the Section's annual basic rock instruction course. As well as planning and preparation this includes six indoor evening sessions and three weekend outdoor sessions. He also runs trad climbing and self-rescue courses. He has in the past instructed on Section snowcraft courses. He is a qualified instructor (NZOIA Rock 1 & 2) – qualifications he gained solely to enable him to continue with the Club's rock instruction programme. He is unassuming and has a passion for the Club and for helping newcomers develop safe climbing skills.

10. General Business

George Edwards asked about publications but was advised there will shortly be a presentation after which his questions would be answered.

Mike Daisley from MSC said NZAC is in a very good position compared to many other organisations and he thanked NZAC for all its support. It had helped them make good decisions.

It was moved that: ***“John Palmer be thanked for all his work spearheading the change of rules and governance structure of the Club.”***

Moved: Karen Leacock. Seconded: Jaz Morris. Carried.

Meeting Closed 7.50 p.m.

ACCOMMODATION REPORT presented by Nina Sawicki, Richard Wesley and Derek Crombie.

The Accommodation Committee presented a detailed report on the proposed upgrade of Aspiring Hut to meet the earthquake, waste disposal and regulatory requirements of a range of organisations. They explained the intention to carry out the works within the existing footprint and iconic stone walls and outlined the current funding available and fundraising needed for the project. When questioned about the need for what has become a “tourist” hut, Richard explained the importance of the revenue from Aspiring to fund maintenance of the higher hut more frequently used by climbers. Derek also noted the expected increase in use by Club members once the hut becomes more attractive to use.

Richard explained the problems with the current build of the mid-Tasman Hut and advised that it will be flown in next summer season when the helicopter required can be tied in with DOC work on the Stocking Stream toilets. On behalf of the members, Lindsay thanked the Accommodation Committee for their work in caring for the Club's assets and for the complexity of the environment they worked within.

PUBLICATIONS – Ross Cullen.

Ross presented a detailed report on the proposed changes to the Club's publications. He outlined the many changes which had occurred over the years of the Club's history and explained the reasons for the proposed changes.

He used the opportunity to detail the new flagship publication – *The NZAJ – Climbing in Aotearoa*, which will be published twice each year. The high-quality publication will continue the Club's long tradition of recording climbs of note and its more frequent publication will allow for a wider coverage of such achievements.

The Climber has had its last print publication and its content will now be published on a new look Alpine Club website, planned to be live in early 2021. This format will allow for much more current publication of climbing information, with news, updates and current information available almost instantly.

While there was some concern about the proposed changes, and the method use to advise members, there was also support for the planned publications. In thanking the Publications Committee for their innovation, Lindsay concluded by recognising that while the Board had tried to be open with its communication with members regarding such changes, there was no doubt that they could improve further in the future.

Evening finished at 9.15 p.m.