

The Bogong Bulletin



Issue 44 – Spring 2003

The Alpine Rovers and Venturers Newsletter

Coming Events

- ❑ 20/9/2003 – Week 13
- ❑ 27/9/2003 – “Week 14”
- ❑ 8/10/2003 – AGM
- ❑ 7/11/2003 – Old Rovers Ball
- ❑ 8/11/2003 – 70th Anniversary of Alpine Rover Crew Reunion
- ❑ 23-26/1/2004 – Australia Day Working Bee
- ❑ 5-8/3/2004 – Labour Day Working Bee
- ❑ 8-12/4/2004 – Easter Working Bee and Nob's Training
- ❑ 7-9/5/2004 – Food Working Bee and Final Lock Up for Winter
- ❑ 10/6/2004 – Outdoor Expo
- ❑ 25/6/2004 – 2004 Season Opens and Week 1 Commences

**Ski It – Hike It - Bike It
I Like It
For bookings Call
0407 CHALET
0407 242538**

70th Anniversary Reunion

On the 8 November 2003 the BCMG will be hosting an afternoon tea to celebrate the first 70 years of Rover Skiing on the High Plains. It is to be held at the 1st Vic Sea Scout Hall, Aquatic Drive, Albert Park from 1.00 pm to 4.30 pm. There will be historical and video displays and we ask that everyone brings along their own photo collections for everyone else to see. Afternoon tea will be served from 2.00 pm with speeches after. Please invite along any alpine rover or venturer of any age (that is from 16 to 106!) that you may know of for this great get together and to swap yarns and a cuppa. The afternoon is entirely free and please come and go as you like. Please RSVP for catering purposes to Mick Simpson on 0397296607 or smsimpson@virtual.net.au

www.rovers.scouts.com.au/vic/bogong

Reduced rates for Spring!!!! \$250 Winter Parties

There is over 1.5 metres of snow at the Chalet and the plains at the moment and another significant fall predicted this coming weekend. The snow will extend well into spring and skiing is probably going to be possible on the drifts at Christmas!! The chalet is currently closed with weeks 10 through to 12 not running for lack of applicants. The BCMG has decided, in an attempt to get the chalet open and get some new Rovers or Venturers into the chalet during the forthcoming school holidays to offer winter parties at a reduced flat rate of \$250 for all applicants for the spring of 2003 only. There will be week 13 and another ‘week 14’ if there are 10 applicants for each week. So if you are considering a spring ski this is the time to do it. Get your applications in now!!!! Use the attached form or amend the form on the website. The spring parties will run only if there are 10 applicants for each week and suitable persons to appoint as Nobs. This is a great chance for some great spring skiing so apply now. Contact the Bookings Officer on 0407CHALET (0407242538)

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Bogong Chalet Management Group will be held at Victorian Branch HQ, 50 Barry Street, Carlton on 8 October 2003 at 8.00 pm. Full Uniform Please. A light supper will be served after the meeting. The AGM is the time the new Bogong Chalet Management Group (BCMG) is elected by you, the Alpine Rovers and Venturers. It is the opportunity for you to be involved and get into managing one of Scouts Australia best assets. I have detailed the various roles and responsibilities of each of the members of the BCMG later in the Bulletin so everyone can consider how they may develop themselves as well as contributing to the improvement of the Bogong Rover Chalet. Please come along and get involved. Contact Mick Simpson 03 97296607 for further details or apologies or smsimpson@virtual.net.au

Bogong Rovers for 2003

Congratulations to the new Bogong Rovers for 2003

**Luke Moore
Nicole Baker
Adam Branford**

**Rohan Tepper
Peter Love
Brett Gardner**

Bogong Chalet Management Group, PO Box 190 Carlton South, 3053

The Fire That Nearly Cost Us All

I doubt that there's anyone who doesn't know about January's fires in the Bogong Alpine Region. What some of you don't know is that a piece of scouting history was nearly lost in those fires, the Bogong Rover Chalet. As thousands of people logged on to chat forums around Australia desperately awaiting the news of the Chalet it was found that the good luck fairy was in our favour. The fire that burned 70-80 per cent of the region went up the valley in front of the chalet, and then up and around the chalet onto what they call the "home slope" fortunately destroying just our ski tow hut.

The long Easter weekend saw up to 30 Rovers go in to clean up the chalet in preparation for the winter season. As we drove towards Falls Creek, we saw what the fires had left behind, black bare spots speckled the mountain range. But in amongst it all, promise shone through as new life poked through on the ashen ground, and on the sea of brown trees moss grew. There was excitement and anticipation amongst us as we walked towards the chalet and saw what I had heard; the chalet was alive and well. The chalet became a buzz of life as we all set to work on the chalet. Floors, vents and flues were cleaned, the wall was finished in the dining area and the wood was stacked all before we set up the home slope to tidy up the remains of the tow hut. The weekend turned out to go quickly as we soon ran out of things to do. So we all set out on walks to see what was left of the neighborhood. Wallace Hut (the one in the Uncle Tobys' add) was barely saved as the fire came right to the edge of it. Cope Hut didn't have any problems, as a walk during the day showed that the runs above the hut weren't even burnt. The fire came up the valley in front of the hut, and swung around the pole line below Cope Hut where it hardly crossed the 4WD track to the other side. A look across the Rocky Valley Dam to Rocky Knobs was hardly recognisable, as the whole length of the ridge on the dam side of the road was blackened. This is a perfect excuse to experience the unforgettable Bogong Rover Chalet winter parties. Within the space of 8 days you get to meet new people, ski all over the Bogong Alps and see the views, and in general have a ball. You spend nights playing bizarre and entertaining games with people from other states that you have never even met before and when you go to leave you're best friends. As an Alpine Rover, I have been to five of these parties and I must admit I've never had so much fun in the snow, for so little money. The Bogong Rover Chalet now needs your help. Come along and experience the fun that encompasses the Chalet. Call '0407 Chalet' for bookings and, "ask for a good time with Linda". Click on the website below for booking forms, information and past winter party pictures.

<http://rovers.scouts.com.au/vic/bogong/welcome.html>

Kristen Brett, Alpine Rover Crew

Season Report

2003 has proved to be a consistent season with snow for most weeks and some bumper snow for the last week which ran on week 9. The chalet was locked up after week 9 with nearly 2 metres of snow on the ground!!!. Bookings were slightly down on previous years and as a result the BCMG is extending the winter season and offering two weeks of skiing at reduced rates in the September school holidays. The chalet ran well with few problems and everyone enjoyed a great week of winter parties. There are some great events coming up so please get involved and we hope to see you at some of them. The dates for the 2004 season have been set and remains the same as 2003. Otherwise we all hope to see you at the Chalet over summer or in the coming 2004 season.

Mick Simpson, Chairman, Alpine Rover Crew

Maintenance Report

The chalet ran well during the winter of 2003 but there are some things that will require attention once the snow has melted. These are

- Rubbish removal
- Repair/replace the bulk pantry fridge
- Repair the new Lister generator which isn't working at all
- Repair/replace the dam which is leaking
- Replace the ski two shed and motor
- Replace the floor under Theodore

The new BCMG will no doubt have some new priorities so there is plenty of work to do. Please volunteer for one of the scheduled working bees or you can organise your own. Contact the Bookings Officer on 0407CHALET (0407242538) to book a working bee.

The Wardens of Bogong Rover Chalet

Since the late 1950's the Branch Commissioner (Rovers) has appointed a warden to the Bogong Rover Chalet. While some of us will remember Mick Scarff there were a number before him. The first warden was Colin Batt appointed in 1958. He was replaced in 1963 by Geoff Peers and then in 1965 by Miles Hough. Miles held the position until 1972 when Mick Scarff replaced him. Miles had been assisted by Mick since 1969. Mick Scarff was the warden until 1991 and during that time was assisted by Alan Parkin, John Clark and Les Weibanga since 1990. Les remains an assistant warden to this day. In 1991 Tony Coleman was appointed warden with John Clark and Les as his assistant. He was replaced by Chris Cole and with Matt Anderson as his assistant and in 1999 on Chris's retirement Matt Anderson was appointed Warden assisted by Andrew Gallagher. The role of warden is a never ending one and our thanks go to the wardens for their efforts over the last 12 stressful months.

1981 – A Season to Remember!

This was one of those winter seasons that you dream of ... with more snow on the Victorian Alps than had been seen in 15-20 years. Snow depths were such that the majority of snow poles on the Bogong High Plains were buried. On a July attempt on Mt Feathertop via the Bungalow Spur we found ourselves having to force our way through the frozen foliage of the upper canopy of the snow gums. The majority of refuge and cattlemen's huts above the snow line were buried to their eaves and beyond. The Feathertop Hut collapsed during the same weekend.

At the Rover Chalet necessity was again the mother in invention. At this time the generator and fuel storage shed incorporated the refuge room and were isolated from the old garage/wood store on the end main Chalet building by some 5-6 metres. The continual heavy snowfalls made maintaining access between the two buildings very difficult. The solution was to tunnel through at ground level. With some added shoring in sections of the roof and a Y intersection in the passageway giving access to all doors of the out-building it provided all weather access. On the rope tow the idler wheels had to be raised significantly on a number of poles. Our winter party was virtually a full house with a mixture of 35 rovers, venturers, rangers and leaders. The nucleus was a group who were never content to sit around idle, even during foul weather. In such conditions during the same winter party in the previous year they had hit upon the idea of playing golf in the snow. Within 24 hours this had evolved into a 9 hole golf course laid out between the long banks of snow gums above the tow hut and to the west. The pins in the holes were old skis retrieved from the rafters of the woodshed, with pennants cut from garbages and stuck to the ski tip with electrical tape. After much experimentation, the best golf ball was determined to be a tightly compressed garbage wrapped in tape, while the most reliable club was a mattock handle. The course rules required the playing of the game on skis. Accordingly, the building of a tee up to 30cm in height was allowed for each stroke, to avoid hitting the tips off one's skis. Tournaments were soon organised and after the initial disbelief, the visiting Warden, Mick Scarff featured prominently. The Bogong Golf and Country Club (BGCC) came into being during this week and was duly minuted in the Logbook. In the knowledge of the previous year's activities, it is not so surprising to see what occurred during the 1981 winter party. The BGCC had taken the decision to expand into Snooker and Pool. Accordingly, on selecting a sheltered site just below the Chalet the shovels and trowels were put to work sculpturing a half-sized billiard table from the snow. Timber cushions were inset for durability with plastic drinking cups for pockets. Appropriately coloured golf balls and lengths of dowel from the workshop set the game going. Before long a cue rest and a triangle had been made. In keeping with the best tradition, the game was to be played at night. So, on the first operational night a pressure lantern was suspended over the table from a line between two adjacent trees. As the shadow from the lamp proved a problem, the following night saw its replacement with a pair 240v lights complete with white china reflectors connected back to the Chalet. The night breeze down the valley proved somewhat chilling, so the solution became a 2.4m high ice wall around two sides with an arched opening providing access to the top of a three tiered seating for the gallery. The whole project became infectious. While a team of people were working on the wall, another was building the snow throne for the match referee and another excavating a clubroom in the 3m of snow under the table. Not to be left out, the cooks for the day built a bobsled track that enabled a baking dish of refreshments to be delivered with some speed from the kitchen door to the clubroom under the table. A tournament was soon planned for the Thursday night. Formal invitations written in copperplate handwriting and sealed with candle wax, were subsequently delivered to Cope, Wallace's and Wilkinson's Huts, inviting the occupants of the hut on the night to a pool tournament at the designated time. On the day, disaster nearly struck A northerly wind sprung up with an accompanying rise on temperature. The ice block wall softened and became unstable, suffering a number of partial collapses. This was eventually rectified in the best traditions of cathedral engineering through the construction of buttress walls. Of bigger concern was the softening of the playing surface of the table. Nothing like having an experienced plumber on hand though! The surface was refrozen again shortly before dark by emptying the liquid contents of a 9 kg LPG cylinder over the surface. With the surface trowelled off and no smoking signs hanging above the table, the stage was set. Mick Scarff who had arrived late in the day had been effectively distracted by a bogus pool table just outside the ski door under the dining room windows. He then became a somewhat bewildered host as equally bewildered guests arrived from the surrounding huts. After appropriate ceremony welcoming all, a deliberate fracas developed resulting in the destruction of the bogus pool table. The shocked look on Mick's face was incredible. Just when recriminations were about to start, the power switch was hit and the Bogong Pool Stadium (complete with its name in silver letters cut from building insulation) lit up in the valley below the Chalet. What followed was an event that could never be repeated. With the gallery filled with an enthusiastic crowd of around 45, a grand knockout tournament got under way. Tradition was followed wherever practical, with the Championship Referee being dressed in a tuxedo, long rainbow striped toe socks, ski boots and a fur hat. The crowd were kept warm with a log fire on a raised metal plate and the TWOTS (tray way over the snow) kept all supplied with refreshments throughout the night. The invited guests had so much fun they were reluctant to leave at the end of the night. *(Continued Page 4)*

1981 – Year to be Remembered Continued

The winter party was voted one of the most successful ever, with the complete and enthusiastic participation by all members. The BGCC activities were largely undertaken during inclement weather or during the night. During good weather conditions parties were out touring the high plains, including a day trip to Dibbins Hut and back that involved such complications it is the subject of a separate account. Appropriately screen-printed windcheaters were subsequently produced commemorating the Bogong Golf and Country Club’s 1981 Snooker Championships. The wonderful camaraderie of this party became the nucleus of far bigger undertakings in the following years.

Tom Glass – Bogong Rover Crew

The Roles on the BCMG

The BCMG runs the Bogong Rover Chalet on behalf of the Victorian Branch Rover Council. The BCMG consists of 7 elected Rovers reps, 2 elected Venturer reps, and 4 older ex rovers. There are regional Rover rep positions also available. The chairman of the Branch Rover Council also has an ex officio place on the BCMG. The position of treasurer and historian are currently honorary and filled by nomination. These two roles do not have voting rights. The wardens also sit on the BCMG but do not have voting rights. The last voting position in the chairman of the Alpine Rover Crew. The elected positions are all elected at the AGM which is to held on 8 October this year and to be eligible the nominee must have completed a winter party - that is be an Alpine Rover.

- ❑ Chairman BCMG – must be a current rover and is elected from the floor of the AGM by current Alpine Rovers of Rover age from the 7 elected during the meeting. Runs the meeting and gives the BCMG some strategic direction.
- ❑ Alpine Rovers of rover age – any alpine rover of rover age can be elected to these 7 positions and take up a variety of roles in particular PR, assistant chairman, secretary or Bookings Officer.
- ❑ Bookings Officer – can be any member of the BCMG though of recent years has been an Alpine rover of rover age.
- ❑ Alpine Rover Crew chairman – can be an Alpine Rover of any age. Of recent years the position has become one of that of ‘information officer.’ Produces and distributes the Bogong Bulletin.

Gossip and Stuff

- ❑ Congratulations to Luke Moore and Linda Merrall on their engagement on the Queens Birthday weekend
- ❑ Congratulations to Robyn Hodge and Chris McAveney on their engagement
- ❑ And to Keith Leirse and Val Myles on their recent marriage
- ❑ Congratulations to Lorraine Jago and Paul Thompson on their recent wedding
- ❑ Well Done to all the Alpine Rovers who braved the extraordinary blizzard to compete in the Hoppit – the drink station normally manned by the Alpine Rovers was abandoned due to the extreme weather!!!



The Bogong Rover Crew in Cope Hut at Brett Gardner’s Investiture – 19 Bogong Rovers in total – a raging blizzard kept the investiture in the lee of Cope Hut but truly memorable for all!!!

- ❑ Ex rovers – in 2 categories up to 30 and over 30 with a total of 4 – these positions enable the rovers of rover age to draw on the experience of older persons and to assist in the management of the chalet – of recent times these BCMG members have been assisting in the physical aspects of the building.

There are a number of roles and the BCMG can always be improved (not there is much wrong with it currently!!!!) by the injection of fresh people and ideas. If you want some questions answered you can speak to the warden, Matt Anderson on 03 97331899 or the chairman of the Alpine Rover Crew, Mick Simpson on 03 9729 6607 and especially if you are considering nomination for the BCMG.

Bogong Bulletin

The Bogong Bulletin has a circulation nearing 600 copies. It is compiled and mailed by volunteers from the BCMG and helpers. Despite this volunteer labour, it takes over 30 hours to copy, fold, address, stamp and stuff in envelopes and costs over \$1000 a year to send out. Emailing links to those with internet access means the number of Bulletins that actually go into envelopes has been reduced to about 300. So if you have an email address you haven’t told us about please send it to me at smsimpson@virtual.net.au and I will add you to the email address list. You will stay on the email address list as long as you want to with no 3 year cut off. The electronic version is in full colour and has the odd colour photograph. If I have lost your email address or you were getting the Bulletin via email and then started getting it via snail mail please remind me with your email address. The money and effort we can save goes a long way to keeping costs down for future years. Older editions of the Bulletin can always be accessed at the website at www.rovers.scouts.com.au/vic/bogong. Anytime you like