

# Thirroul Ski Club History

The Thirroul Ski Club was founded in 1969 and was originated by a small band of members from the Thirroul Leagues Club with a desire to establish a club for skiing enthusiasts. The leagues club offered encouragement, agency and support to the group.



Gaining finances to support the venture proved a challenge but eventually a loan was raised to enable the purchase of an appropriate building or a building site. Membership was still very low and the fledgling club members worked to establish their viability and generate interest. There was a great deal of promotion done by founding members to promote and encourage increased membership to get their Club up and running.



Some of the promotions included signs displayed on cars (as above), a newspaper article and a news story on local WIN TV.

The purchase of the already named Maranatha Lodge in Perisher Valley occurred in 1970. The lodge had been used as a Catholic Retreat with 7 rooms, and the current boot room was reportedly used for Sunday service. Originally the building had only one living area where the fire place is and very steep stairs rising to the upstairs landing that overlooked the floor below. The existing large light pendant hung in the cavity as it does today. The lodge was fortunately purchased with fittings and basic stores so by the time the snow was falling in 1971 the club had employed a manager, had an enthusiastic committee and by the end of the year a membership of 220 people.

Since those early days the club has grown to about 300 members of all ages. It is a family lodge that provides accommodation in a location with one of the best views of Mount Perisher and Centre Valley. Members and their guests can enjoy the comfortable rooms and living areas along with meals prepared by the resident manager during the winter season.

From the very beginning all visitors to the lodge have been involved in the basic running of the club which includes being involved in a roster to help with light duties such as setting tables and serving meals. This has been a fantastic way to enable people to get to know each other and increase their connection and belonging to the family focused club.

Thirroul Ski Club is for the use of members and guests for a variety of winter and summer related activities. These include downhill skiing, cross country, snowboarding, walking, hiking and many social events. The club has been actively involved in the promotion of snow sports since its beginning. In the past, the club conducted its races by heading up the mountain, choosing a location, placing some gates to set the course and getting out a stop watch. This is a far cry from the present day race system, which employs a team of ski field staff, electronic timing and carefully selected courses! Members have also competed in the Martini Rossi and Paddy Palin cross country events and downhill ski training has been run annually for the younger members to develop their skills. The clubs dedication to competitive snow sports was further enhanced as the clubs of the Illawarra began Interclub Races in the later 1970's.

### Old Trophies of the 1970's



Some of the Interclub trophies won in 2012





**Interclub competitors in the early 1970's**



**Cross Country Team 2011**



**Maranatha Lodge 1970**





**The lodge today.**

The running, maintenance and improvement of the lodge has been an ongoing project, with members over the years generously dedicating their time and skills to the club. This has included voluntary services on the committee, a great deal of maintenance and repairs by members on work parties and accessing professional services as the club has made improvements and changes to better provide a comfortable, safe and welcoming environment for all its members.

From its early beginning of a small number of enthusiastic skiers living in and around Thirroul, wanting to have a clubhouse in the snow to pursue their sport, Maranatha has become a home away from home. Our club is as strong as its members and for some families there are now four generations connected to its history. The camaraderie in sport and friendships developed are what makes it one to be held in high esteem and close to many hearts.

