

Central Jersey Ski & Snowboard Club



A Brief History of the Central Jersey Ski & Snowboard Club

In the early 1970s, a group of friends that liked to ski together started talking about forming a ski club. Often they skied at Arrowhead, a small ski area with one rope tow in the Wickatunk section of Marlboro, NJ, operated by the Red Bank YMCA. They held their first regular meeting of the informal club at the Andiron Inn on December 29, 1971. Membership was \$7.50 per year.

From the earliest days, the group, which steadily expanded, sought a ski lodge in the North Country. Members scoured the Northeast, looking for a facility that could be used as a ski lodge. They found a suitable property on the same land which the club owns today. At first, the club leased the lodge and land from the owner, and then decided to buy it.

On September 17, 1975, the club was formed as a Not for Profit New Jersey Corporation known as the Central Jersey Ski Club ("CJSC" or the "Club"). At that time there were 13 trustees, now known as the CJSC Board of Directors. This incorporation allowed the Club to enter into an agreement to buy the lodge. During the negotiations with the owner, the lodge burned down. They agreed to rebuild a lodge on the site if the Club would purchase it. In December 1976, the Club purchased the lodge from Summit Development Corp. for \$45,000 who held a \$15,000 mortgage.

In the mid 80's, to support the growing membership, a large expansion was completed giving us more living room, kitchen and bathroom space. By 1991, all mortgages and bond loans were paid in full. In 1996 the Club began a new bond campaign to fund another expansion project, adding the bus driver's room, safety exits and other improvements."

Over the years, the Club has offered bus trips to the lodge, and long trips out West and to Europe. It grew rapidly and reached its peak membership in the mid-1980s with over 350 members and up to 13 bus trips per year. Sometimes two buses would go to Vermont the same weekend, with the additional members housed next door at the Summit Lodge and Tupper's Inn.

Early bus trips were close to mayhem, with first come, first served for bunks, only one water heater, which served up only about 8 warm showers, and cigarette smoking everywhere. In time, a Trip Captain's Guide was developed to make bus trips a more organized and manageable endeavor, and water heaters were added and improved to provide a hot shower for everyone. The themed trips began...Games People Play, Ooh La La- Licks & Kisses, Kamikaze, Blues, and Trashy Trips to name a few. Traditions evolved, such as the ETA pool for guessing the bus's arrival time, everyone sharing in unloading the bus at the lodge, and pizza and a movie on the way home to shorten the Sunday night trip. New ideas and improvements come about every year.

The Sunday River Trip began with only 9 members in 1993, an annual tradition that continues. Long trips out West and to Europe have been run by a number of different members over the years, who manage all the trip planning, at considerable savings to our members.

Work weekends at the lodge have been held for many years in the fall, with members contributing their time and energy to making needed repairs, sprucing up and cleaning. In late August 2011, Hurricane Irene dealt the lodge a severe blow, with water from the river across the street flooding the lower level. Many members pitched in and supplied expertise, money (via another bond campaign) and sweat equity to totally redo the ground floor and update it as well.

The Club has always strived to focus on keeping skiing (and now also snowboarding) affordable. In the warmer weather, it has steadily expanded to be a social and outdoor club offering activities as diverse as the ideas from members. A Winter Schedule and monthly newsletter keep members informed. These began in paper form and were mailed, and have evolved to electronic newsletters and the use of e-mail blasts and other digital tools to keep members up-to-date.

Meeting venues have changed over the years. In the 70's we met at the Andiron Inn in Wickatuck, the 80's was a move to Don Quixote in Matawan, some years at Steak Exchange (now Far East) in Hazlet and a short stay at Friday's in Hazlet bringing us now to the Red Oak Diner in Hazlet. The Club continues to evolve as membership demands, but the friendships forged among members will last forever.