

Mountain Turk Club Presidents report

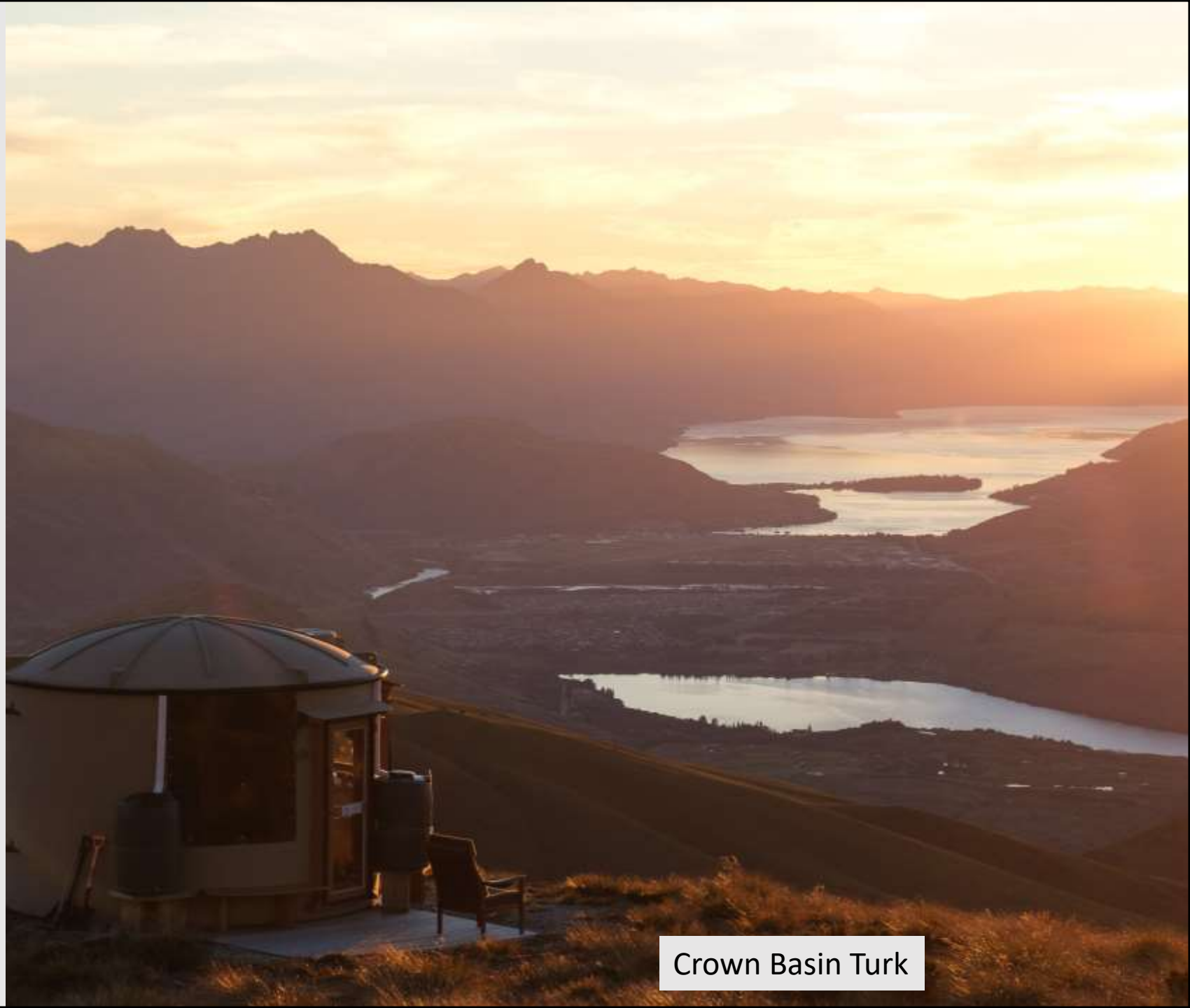
Welcome to the first real president's report for the club. The club is now 16 months old so this is the first opportunity to present a complete picture.

As you will observe the club is in excellent health with positive and engaged membership, a good amount of money in the bank and a new set of Turks in the mountains.

We have fulfilled all of our bureaucratic obligations under land, building and resource legislation.

Looking forward, the critical challenge for the club is managing growth. We need to balance the reward to existing members with those who want to join now the evidence of the founders hard work is apparent.

It important we are an open club who encourages people into the back country, however to facilitate this requires the construction of more Turks.



Crown Basin Turk

I am confident neither money, enthusiasm nor skills will be the barrier, instead the challenge will be access to suitable places to place Turks.

It is inevitable that future installations will be on Public Conservation Land administered by DOC. Success in this domain will require a “full court press” with effective engagement with government minister, conservation board, DOC area manager, operational staff and the general public.

The club doesn't currently have the internal structure for such a challenge but I plan to have it in place by early 2022.

The Turk concept offers a new paradigm for how people are accommodated in the outdoors environment. It is a solution half way between a tent and a hut.

A Turk can be installed in a day and equally removed in a day with minimal environmental impact. This flexibility is not recognised in current management and legislative frameworks.

A idea we all need to promote is that this is a new approach and should be viewed with fresh eyes.



Assembling a deck at the first build day

History

Since this is the first full president's report I thought it worth while to go back to day zero and explain how it all started.

Pre 2016 – Erik, like many others, wanders around the mountains thinking “I wish there was a hut here” and wondering how that could easily be achieved. The plastic water tank comes about - he is not the first person with the idea (Australians used them in the sub-Antarctic) but he is confident the idea can be hugely improved on.

Feb-July 2017 The first Turk is built and installed in the Crown Basin behind Arrowtown. Paid for by Erik's family and with the fly-in costs covered by Henry Van Ash and Darryl Totem.

2017 The Turk name comes about to confuse building inspectors and because it rhymes: “Not a hut, not a yurt, not a tank, must be a Turk”

2017 Erik dreams up the idea of series of Turks between Treble Cone and Coronet Peak on the Mahu Whenua Covenant land.

August 2018 Erik proposes the idea to Soho Properties (Russell Hamilton) which is enthusiastically accepted.



The original Crown Basin Turk on day of installation

...history continues..

2018-2019 Erik skis and walks over the Harris Mountains looking for suitable sites.

Club website is created and first newsletter sent.

Spring 2019 Erik is concerned about keeping the club idea/momentum moving while progressing the various consent applications so a Turk is built at his house.

2019 Boffa Miskell agrees to work on Resource Consent pro-bono. Erik realises how little he understands about bureaucracy.

2019 Building consent granted with Engineering by Win Clark. Concern we might need to make the wheel chair accessible avoided.

2019 QLDC agrees to cover Resource Consent filing costs. Patch Landscape provides the landscape impact assessment. Bureaucrats go for a jolly in the helicopter.

Dec 2019 Resource Consent granted for 6 Turks.

Feb 2020 Meeting organised proposing the creation of a club to own the Turks attended by 70 people. Motion strongly supported and agreement to "go for it".



Motatapu/Polnoon Saddle Turk on the day of installation

...history continued..

Feb 2020 Club created and incorporated.

Feb 2020 – Newsletter #5 with title “fortune favours the bold” results in donation of \$107k in the first 3 weeks

31 March 2020 (year end) Donation of \$124k allow the Mahu Whenua project to surge ahead and also enough capital to re-do the Crown Basin Turk.

April 2020 – All existing funds and materials moved into the club. 6 water tanks, 110 sheets of plywood and many other materials ordered.

March 2020 – first building day with 50+ people attending. Organised on a “see who turns up” basis.

March 2020 – Second build weekend. Watertanks cut into and doors/floor/windows inserted.

Covid lockdown announced and building halted.

April 2020 Erik Builds 5 “Dymaxion” toilets during lockdown to maintain sanity.

May 2020 4 decks, foundation frames and toilets are loaded onto a Truck and driven up Skippers as far as Branches Station (not for the faint hearted). 20 people install the foundation frames and toilets at 3 sites and also fly in 12 tones of gravel.



View from Vanguard Turk

...history continued..

June 2020 3 artists join the club to provide paintings for the Turks. Southland, Otago and Christchurch search is on for suitable armchairs.

June 2020 The old (and uninsulated) Crown Basin Turk is removed. Mark Johannson from StoryWorks joins the team to shoot a documentary about the project.

July 2020 The Crown Basin Turk is replaced with the new insulated model. A bottle of Cardrona Whiskey is enjoyed and Erik's family spend the first night in the new improved design.

July 2020 A team of five move 14 tones of snow and gravel to install the Vanguard, Saint Just and Mt Hyde Turks all in one day.

August 2020 Bill Day flies in a team of 8 to establish the foundation and deck at Motatapu/Polnoon Saddle. This involves building a small retaining wall and substantial digging since it is a sloping site.



Preparing the Motatapu/Polnoon Saddle site

...history continued..

September 2020 The Motatapu/Polnoon and Deep Creek Turks are installed. With 3 helicopters on the go and 22 people Erik discovers the limit of his cognitive ability.

September 2020 teams return to Deep Creek, Vanguard, St Just and Hyde to complete installations of toilets, water tanks and other details.

October 2020 Bill Day takes Soho Properties manager Russell Hamilton and family on a lunch visit to the Turks. He is well impressed.

December 2020 – Toilet and deck at Mt Hyde is completed

December 2020 – Erik announces the Mahu Whenua Traverse open.

Christmas 2020 Erik and family walk the traverse, use the “shot ski” at St Just and have a great time.

until March 2020 people start getting their heads around the resource. 245 bed nights and about 400 day visits.



Cutting fabric for mattress covers at The Hangar

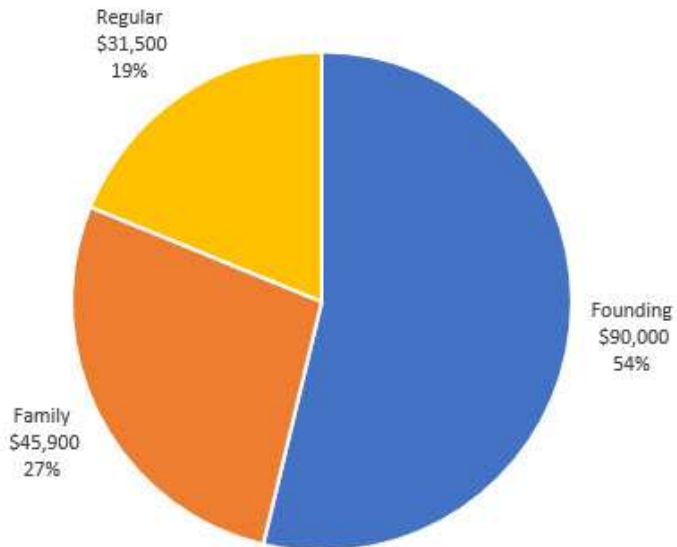
Source of money

All income was from non-commercial donations in these categories (commercial sponsorship was politely declined):

- 9 Founding members @ \$10,000 each
- 17 Family members @ \$2,700 each
- 105 Individual members @ \$300 to \$500

Note: This is not exactly represented in the accounts because of timing issues and the first Turk (Erik's) is before the club's formation.

Source of revenue to build Turks



Evening at Saint Just Turk

Labour / building

In total 110 people helped build and install the Turks.

The build and install process took a total of about 3000 hours.

The total project spanning several years has taken approximately 2000 hours of Erik's time.

Skills ranged from sanding and painting to joinery, plastic welding, sewing and wiring.

There were no accidents or injuries of significance (requiring more than a small plaster) during the project.

Many people developed new skills.

The building was social and fun and many new friendships were made. The club provided lunch to encourage people to get around and talk.



Flying in the Crown Basin Turk

Total effort

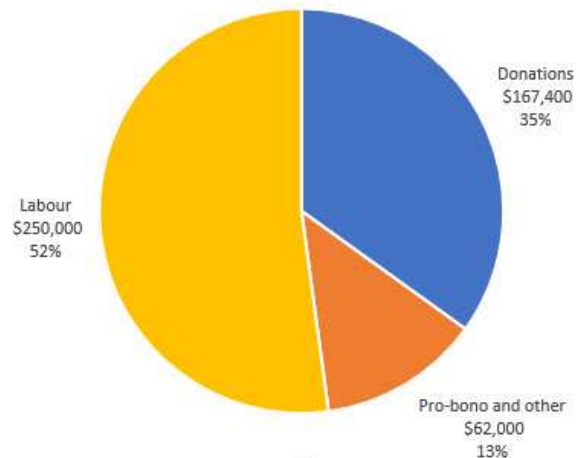
This is an attempt to summarise the total effort of the project. Although the goal is not financial a monetary comparison is the simplest.

I have valued labour at \$50 per hour. About 80% of the effort was by people working in their primary skill or similar who have commercial charge rates in excess of this.

Pro-bono commercial contributions from:

- Boffa Moskell
- Anderson Lloyd
- Patch Landscape
- E3 Scientific
- Queenstown Lakes District Council

Total value of club effort



Preparing the Saint Just site

Founding members

Special recognition needs to be given to the founding members. Their upfront and early contribution of \$10,000 each to the project were vital to getting it off the ground and ensuring the money was not a constraining factor.

I haven't mentioned names because this is a public document on the Internet. Of the 9 people 6 are resident in the Southern Lakes area and 2 of the remaining have property here.

All the founding members donated money within 4 weeks of the project being announced most with as little as a one line email or short phone call.

It cannot be understated how important the early injection of capital was.

Note: Erik paid for the first Crown Basic Turk. This is not recognised in the club accounts because it predates the club's formation. The original Turk is in storage in Arrowtown and will be refurbished at a future date.



Sunrise at Vanguard Turk

The achievement

Six well-built and fully-engineered Turks in the most amazing locations. The formation of an amazing group of people and many new friendships.

The establishment of the Mahu Whenua Traverse is unique in both New Zealand and the world. In time I am confident it will develop a reputation similar to the Wapta Traverse in Canada or the Haute Route in Europe.

The ultimate judgement of the project is how well it is used. Looking forward to the winter of 2021, the Mahu Whenua Traverse is fully booked. It appears we will need to actively manage demand for this portion of the year.

Summer usage will take longer to develop but because of its unique character I am confident this will increase over the next 5 years.

It is difficult to predict the lifetime of a Turk. We have applied a 10% depreciation rate with the goal being full renovation every 10 years.



Ski touring over Mt Hyde

Usage

There were a total of 245 bed night in 2020. This is only 5% occupancy rate which is quite low.

The newness of the project and a lack of understanding whether the Turks were finished were contributing factors.

Usage of the Crown Basin Turk dropped in 2020 because of its temporary absence and uncertainty of its existence.

For Crown Basin, Deep Creek and Vanguard for every night stayed there are about 3 day visits.

Note: Founding and family members do not pay the nightly charge. Hence income is not a simple multiplier of nights.

Site	Nights	Income
Polnoon Saddle	39	\$ 300.00
Mt Hyde	29	\$ 220.00
Mt Saint Just	32	\$ 220.00
Vanguard	61	\$ 640.00
Deep Creek	47	\$ 680.00
Crown Basin	37	\$ 760.00



Mt Hyde Turk

Improvements

Build process, assign people for:

- Managing time sheets
- Organising lunches
- Site management / tidy-up
- Improved bulk communication tools

Turk Build:

- Offsite/pre-made windows/frames
- More use of wood/carbon fibre composite in doors and windows
- More strengthening/ribbing on sunny sides of the Turk (plastic is prone to shrinking)

Moving forward

As the club matures I anticipate more people will gain an understanding of how they can contribute. While staying in a Turk people will think of their construction, maintenance, how to organise people to best use them and improve the functionality of the club.



Polyurethaning wall panels at a build day

Looking forward

Next 12 months

- Increase Turk usage to about 30%. Especially in summer.
- Complete finishing touches such as ventilation system, surface finishes and door seals.
- Evolve the club culture and establish regular, informal meet-ups (especially in winter)
- Develop a maintenance and cleaning schedule/system

Long term

- Looks for new Turk sites. This will be a challenge and the speed of the last 2 years will be difficult to repeat.
- Set realistic expectations for Turk use, especially in winter when the consequence of false perceived ability are serious.



Tired kids in Deep Creek Turk

Closing thoughts

If you have got this far you realise the last 2 years have been an incredible achievement.

There are too many people to thank but the recognition of the opportunity to create such an amazing alpine traverse is the nexus of the club's achievement. For this I would like to thank Mutt Lange and his land manager Russell Hamilton for their enthusiasm for such a wild new idea.

From a personal perspective I have met many amazing people and made wonderful friendships. We have made something for the future that will be enjoyed by many generation to come.

One of the greatest achievements in life is to bring out the best in others. I am very proud to have lead such an amazing team of enthusiastic and talented people and I'm confident we will shine brightly in the tail lights of history.

Erik Bradshaw

President, June 2021

