



NORTH STAFFS



SKI CLUB LTD

# Newsletter

June 2015

## CLOSURE AND OPENING TIMES FOR REST OF SEASON

Closed on Saturday afternoons from June

Sunday closing June - close at 2.00 pm

Close for the summer - Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June

Re-opens - Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September

## Who's who at the club?



**Name:** Gerald Loton.

**Role:** Committee Member.

**Responsibilities:** Maintenance of slope and skiing equipment; Level 2 Instructor; general dogsbody; tolerant husband of Chair.

**Member since:** 1986

**Club highlights:** Becoming a Level 2 Instructor and enjoyment of teaching beginners to become confident intermediate skiers; being involved with the development of the slope we have now.



**Name:** Norman Salmon.

**Role:** Volunteer Coordinator.

**Responsibilities:** To point volunteers in the right direction; works in ski and boot room on Sundays and Wednesday nights.

**Member since:** 1982.

**Club highlights:** Level 1 instructor (retired); to keep going to the ski club till I'm 100 to watch my mates and friends eating Brenda's bacon baps!

**Contact Norman:** to volunteer at norm-ski2@hotmail.co.uk (see list of jobs at the club on page 2).

## Boot room volunteers needed

Want to look as happy as Norman when you're 80?

Research shows that volunteering makes you happier and live longer!

Can you help in the boot room on a regular weekly or fortnightly basis?

Full training provided. Gender no barrier. Contact Norman for details.

Read about the benefits of volunteering at:  
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3766013/>



SNOWSPORT  
ENGLAND

Member of the British Ski Slope  
Operators Association

Kidsgrove Ski Centre, Bathpool Park, Kidsgrove,  
Stoke on Trent, ST7 4EF Telephone (01782) 784908

[www.ski-kidsgrove.co.uk](http://www.ski-kidsgrove.co.uk)

Company Number:4337963

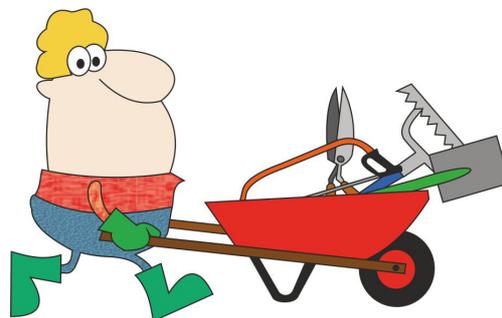


Active  
Accessible  
Accredited

## Summer Volunteer Work Parties

In preparation for re-opening in September, volunteer work parties are needed over the summer period. The list of jobs includes:

- Making improvements to the freestyle slope, building new features
- Construction of a path and a new observation area at the far end of the slope
- Car park weed spraying
- Servicing skis
- Cleaning boots
- Extending the canopy over the seating area
- Cleaning spray heads
- Replanting trees that are not growing
- Cleaning windows inside and out on the clubhouse
- Grass cutting, where needed



Can you spare a couple of hours? Please bring along any friends/relatives willing to help. Groups will meet on:

**Wednesdays 7 – 9 pm during July and August**

**Sundays 9.30 am from 28<sup>th</sup> June to end of July**

There will be a meeting to organise the programme of work on **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June at 12 pm**  
If you are unable to attend, but would like to help, put your name on the list at the club or contact Ann directly at [ann.loton@ntlworld.com](mailto:ann.loton@ntlworld.com)



We are proud to announce that the Club is now a Children's University validated Learning Destination.

Children's University is a Charitable Trust which aims to promote social mobility by providing high quality out-of-school-hours activities to children aged 5 to 14 and engaging the wider communities as learning partners in this process. The Club has been validated and will be promoted on their website as a "Good place to ski".

Through their school, children obtain a passport to log details of any activities. When the children have gained sufficient activities to reach a certificate level they are invited, with family members, to take part in a graduation ceremony at Staffordshire University.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/>

For details of local validated courses, visit:

[http://www.staffs.ac.uk/partnerships/community/childrens\\_university/](http://www.staffs.ac.uk/partnerships/community/childrens_university/)

### Club holiday 2016 Sestriere, Italy

Just one place remaining to share a twin room (male).

For further details contact Jo Stackhouse at:

[NSSCholidays@outlook.com](mailto:NSSCholidays@outlook.com)

### End of season clear out

There will be a sort out of the boot-room during the closure period as more space is needed to store hire equipment

Please make sure any personal equipment or items for sale left are removed before closure on the 25th June or they will be donated to charity or disposed of.

**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
CLEAR  
OUT!**

# Member profile

Learn more about club member 8-year old Mia Brookes following her success at the recent BRITS competition in Tignes, France, where she won 3 medals in the under-12 category: Gold in the Half-Pipe, Gold in the Boardercross and Bronze in the Slopestyle.

## How long have you been snowboarding?

I started snowboarding at 18 months old at Kidsgrove ski slope.

## Do you ski too?

Haaa — no skiing is lame!!!!

## How did you get into freestyle?

Just through riding with my Mum and Dad in the fun parks in France.

## How often and where do you train?

I don't train, but I do snowboard a few times a month at Chill Factore.

## What's your favourite trick?

I don't really have one favourite, but I love riding powder.

## Where's your favourite place to snowboard?

La Plagne / Les Arcs in France.

## Who are your sponsors?

Phew... at the moment I'm riding for Nitro snowboards, Deeluxe boots, Dragon goggles, Colourwear clothing, Celtek gloves, But-tawax, Bern helmets, Chill Factore and Contour cameras.

## Who inspires you and why?

My friend John Weatherly— he's AWESOME!

## What are your top tips for anyone trying to get into freestyle boarding?

Just have fun and have a go.

## What do you think of the freestyle slope at Kidsgrove?

Kidsgrove's slope is RAD !

## What do you do when you're not snowboarding?

I skateboard more than I snowboard in the summer and I'm learning to play electric guitar.



# Kidsgrove Freestyle Academy



Just a couple of the great shots from the under 14s FREESTYLE ACADEMY session in May — check out the rest of the photos on the club Facebook page.

Details of the next FREESTYLE ACADEMY session in the August newsletter.



THE FREESKI ACADEMY has been set up and is run by KIDSGROVE FREESTYLE ACADEMY head coach Chris Mavin.

Take a look, it is a new and fresh approach to freeski coaching in the UK and Europe. Visit:

[www.thefreeskiacademy.com](http://www.thefreeskiacademy.com)

# Member news

*Jo Whitton and her family are regulars at Kidsgrove ski slope, but due to illness in recent years Jo has been able to ski. Inspired by our recent article on Disability Snowsport UK, Jo has been able to get back on the slope and has been kind enough to share her experience with us.*



I learnt to ski many moons ago (too many to remember) as a child at Kidsgrove Ski Club in the days when there was only one small patch of matting. I loved skiing from the very beginning and I have skied and snowboarded across the globe. In fact when I first met my husband in Australia, it was one of the things that we had in common.

As both my husband and I love the snow, we started taking the twins to the snow before they could even walk, in fact they don't remember not being able to ski. In January this year we took them to Klosters in Switzerland for two weeks to meet our Australian friends and their twins. Unfortunately due to my health problems I was unable to ski and spent the two weeks staring at the four walls of the bedroom, but at least it was a different four walls to my usual view.

I have multiple issues with my health that on a good day restricts my activity and on a bad day leaves me bed-ridden. This past year has resulted in me regularly using crutches for my mobility and at the worst needing a wheelchair.

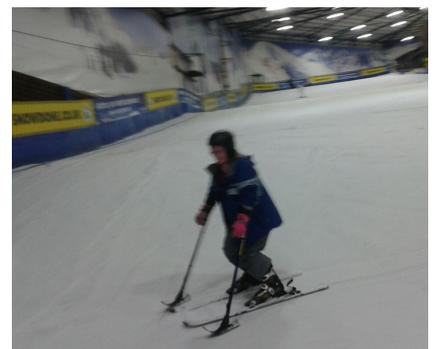
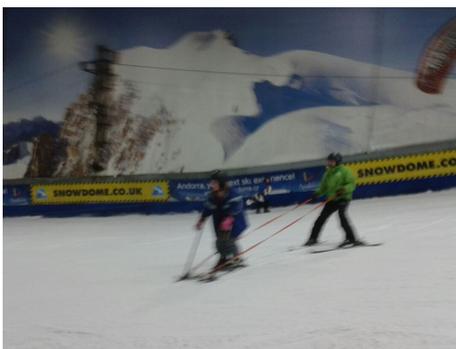
I thought my days of skiing were long gone so it was with renewed interest that I read the last newsletter as there was an article about Claire Holdcroft, a former club member, and Disability Snowsport UK (DSUK). I didn't know if I was disabled enough to be able to ski with DSUK, which thinking back is a really silly idea. So I contacted them via email, explained my health conditions in detail and asked if they could help me? To my surprise and excitement they said they could!

So I booked a lesson with DSUK at the Snowdome in Tamworth; the lessons are one-to-one so a lesson costs £50 (ouch!) plus £1 for your carer, which makes it a little more reasonable. I thought I'd need to use a sit ski due to my mobility but my instructor Paul wanted to try to get me standing skiing as I knew how to ski prior to my injuries / illnesses. I was a little wary, but he was the expert, so we tried using 'out-riggers' which I can only explain as a set of crutches that switch between a little ski and a pole. To begin with I had my skis joined together at the front with ski-tip connectors (like they do with kids) and had a rope system attached to my skis which Paul held to control my speed and steering — like a set of reins.

I can't adequately put into words how amazing that first run felt to me. It made me feel free and almost normal. I saw a future where I'd be able to ski with my six-year old twins and what joy this would bring us all. Skiing with out-riggers is similar but different to normal skiing — almost like a cross between boarding and skiing. You turn by turning the out-riggers and looking where you want to go. By the end of my first lesson, I was skiing without my skis being joined and without the reins, under my own steam. I knew that I'd pay for this in the days/week that followed with extreme pain and fatigue but wow it was so worth it! I haven't been able to book another lesson yet, as my dad has been away, and also at £50 a time, I need to save up for it, as I can't work.

There is no doubt in my mind that I will go again though — you cannot put a price on that feeling. We are booked on the club holiday next January and I have looked into hiring the equipment. You can hire out-riggers in Sestriere. I can't wait, even if I only manage one run a day, it will be worth it.

If like me you have become injured / disabled or you know someone with a disability, I can thoroughly recommend DSUK. They have ski schools at various places around the UK and can be contacted at [admin@disabilitysnowsport.org.uk](mailto:admin@disabilitysnowsport.org.uk) or 01479 861272. They offer lessons for children and adults with varying levels of both physical and learning disabilities.





## Dave Dick

1943 - 2015

*Dave Dick, a member of the club since the late 1980s has died.*

*Many club members will remember Dave but here are a few notes to summarise his achievements.*

In the late 1980s, when he was about 45, Dave took the family (Tina, Chris and Nigel) in the caravan to Le Grand Bornand to try out skiing. By the end of the holiday they were hooked; Nigel had transferred his skate-boarding skills to a snowboard, Chris had picked up yet another sport with no problems, Tina had enjoyed it, and Dave was Captain Snowplough. On his return he decided that this was a Good Thing and the family joined the ski club to learn properly and get more practice. He started going away on the various club holidays; an early trip to Chamonix was apparently very memorable. After a while he became a Club (Level 1) Instructor and began what became one of the great pleasures in his life: to teach people to ski.

In the mid-1990s the club only had one ASSI (Level 2 instructor), so Dave, Gerald Loton and Lionel Ryan spent a couple of years travelling every week to Telford or Swadlincote where they were trained up by Alan Ashfield. Eventually, after a hard assessment day in the pouring rain at Pontypool, they were rewarded with success.

Dave became Chief Instructor, a role that he played until the last year or so when Neil took over. He set about encouraging a group of club members to become club instructors and that started us off on the way to where we are today with over 30 instructors. Regular Friday evening instructor training sessions were often hosted by Dave as everyone struggled to be better. His insistence on high standards was typical of him. His view of life was that if something was to be done it should be done to the best of his abilities. He was proud of what he and the instructor team achieved at Kidsgrove and the proof was that any candidates sent to courses or assessments would be more than good enough to be successful. He set high standards and expected excellence.

He was key to teaching a group of young people from Strathmore House in Stoke to ski. They became good enough to attend the Special Olympics for people with learning difficulties where they won several medals. He taught on Wednesday evenings for twenty years until he became unwell and many are the people who benefitted from his lessons.

He was conscious that the Kidsgrove slope was not really designed for teaching people to ski so he started discussions with Mike Keating in the late 1990s with a view to re-profiling the slope with the aid of some Lottery money. All that initial work paid off in the early 2000s when we did the Lottery bid. In November 2004 he was Chairman and the new slope opened with an improved beginner area and two carpet widths that ran from top to bottom at the same gradient thus providing a suitable progression.

As well as going on the official club holidays Dave anchored a March trip to Chamonix for several years where a group of up to 12 had an amazing time skiing both there and at many surrounding resorts. This was where he could enjoy "the real thing" whilst also helping and encouraging others to try new things and improve technique. He had learned to snowboard and would use that on some days.

In the last few years he has been a doting grandfather and especially enjoyed going away with Nigel and granddaughter Mia (see page 3), who is a rising star in snowboarding.

Dave gave so much help and support to so many people as instructor, chairman, friend.

Thank you, Dave.

If you would like to contribute an article to the newsletter please contact Mel Jones at the club or by email: [niallandmel@talktalk.net](mailto:niallandmel@talktalk.net)