



## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE – APRIL 2016

We open this Newsletter by declaring 2016 as our 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary year! That is 21 years since the Society's formation meeting in 1995. Further into this newsletter you will find more details of our early beginnings, plus our Members Recognition Program to mark this special year.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** This was held in Thredbo on 14 November 2015, with 20 members present. The meeting was significant in that one of Thredbo Village's iconic residents and Life Member of our society, Frank Prihoda advised of his intentions to stand down from the committee after 20 years. His long years of service were always matched by his innate wisdom brought to the table.

Also of significance was the resignation of Treasurer Ben Rushton and the subsequent welcome into that position of Caroline (Caz) Simmons. Living in Jindabyne, Caz operates her small bookkeeping business in the Monaro area and has had a close association with Thredbo in many roles over the years. We thank Ben for his professional service in the role. Ian Boxsell also stood down and his assistance in the technical area has been most valuable. Chas Skinner of Cooma was then elected to the committee. Welcome to Caz and Chas. See full committee listing on page 2.

**2017 - THREDBO 60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY BOOK PROJECT.** The society has built on an initiative which emerged late in 2015 - where we thought it important to place all of our Oral Histories into booklet form so that they are accessible to the general public. The project has since grown with plans to now produce a "coffee table" book of approximately 100 pages.

It will condense the oral histories and create some new biographies of Thredbo Identities and Pioneers who have made substantial contributions to the development of Thredbo as an embryonic ski resort/township since 1957. It will also cover the history of the 10 Thredbo community groups that have emerged in that time plus the Company's further developments in the last 10 years and some additional cameo sections on NPWS, Snowy Hydro & related activities.

A steering group comprising the President, Jerry Krejzar & Graeme Holloway is progressing the project. Proposed authors Jane O'Hara and Chas Keys were introduced and addressed our February committee meeting. It is proposed to launch in May 2017, Thredbo's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. (cont. Page 2)

## THS CALENDER OF EVENTS –2016

**Tuesday May 24<sup>th</sup> 2016, 5.30 – 8.30 pm**

### **Sydney Cocktail Evening**

RAHS History House, Macquarie Street

Guest Speaker: Andrew Horsley: leading

Australian X country skier

Iconic Malcolm Milne film: first Australian World

Cup win 1969

Members \$32, Non Members \$35

**Saturday June 18<sup>th</sup> 2016 5.30 – 8.00 pm**

### **Snowfall Cocktails**

Thredbo Museum – Launch of new exhibition:

Snowboarding: 30<sup>th</sup> Thredbo anniversary

Guest Speaker: Adrian Gibbs, Thredbo

Snowboarding veteran

Members \$12, Non Members \$15

**Wednesday July 20<sup>th</sup> 2016:**

### **Mid Winter Dinner & Faces of Thredbo Awards**

Kosciuszko Room, Thredbo Alpine Hotel

Members \$75, Non Members \$80



Toni Sarri and Acacia Rose at the 2015 AGM

### **THREDBO MUSEUM – Winter**

Opening Hours: 1 – 5 pm

Peak: July and August

(closed Mondays)

Other: Wednesdays & Weekends only

June, September

plus public holidays

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**PRESIDENT'S UPDATE** (continued)

**INTERN STUDENT:** We again have been fortunate to secure the services of a Wollongong University Intern Student, Amanda Zenkis, who is in her final undergraduate year seeking to major in a double degree of Marketing and Design. Her project with THS involves reviewing our Marketing and Promotion strategies and how we may be able to increase our membership base through a wider demographic. We look forward to working with Amanda on this mutually beneficial project.

**THREDBO SKI MUSEUM FOUNDATION:** This important initiative continues to be supported and we are pleased to advise that we have recently received further donations to the Foundation from Ron Finneran, Rick Walkom and Jerry Krejzar. Thank you gentlemen.

**FACES OF THREDBO:** Our selection panel have now made their decisions on the 3 Faces for the 2016 Faces of Thredbo awards. These will be announced at our Mid Winter Dinner on Wednesday 20 July.

**AUSTRALIAN ALPINE SNOWSPORTS HISTORY ASSOCIATION (AASHA) :** Will hold their third annual conference on Saturday 30 April at the Mt

Field National Park in Tasmania. This year's hosts, the Southern Tasmanian Ski Club, have put together a very appealing program over that weekend which should see a good roll up of interstate visitors. If you seek further detail, let me know.

*Alan Fredericks*



**Ed Denny, Heinz Reichinger and Randy Weiman at the 2015 AGM**

**THS COMMITTEE : 2015/2016**

- Patron: Alan Rydge
- President: Alan Fredericks alanf@bigpond.net.au  
02 9449 7610 / 0417401403
- Vice President: Graeme Holloway 0447 648 478
- Vice President : Ed Denny 6457 6222
- Secretary: Maureen Roberts 6456 1289
- Treasurer: Caz Simmons 0417 911 747
- Membership: Anne Collet 6281 1525
- Publicity/Museum: Christina Webb 6456 2279
- Committee: Marion Murri, Jerry Krejzar, Randy Wieman, Chas Skinner

**FRIENDS OF THREDBO MEMBERSHIP FEES 2015/2016**

- Individuals: \$45/1-yr; \$225/5-yrs; \$450/10-yr
- Family: \$60/1-yr; \$300/5-yrs
- Group: Club \$220/year
- Corporate Gold: \$1500/yr
- Silver: \$1,000/yr; Bronze: \$500

**WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:**

- Caz Simmons (Jindabyne)
- Yvonne Lazette (Ainslie)
- Anthony Bannerman (Balgowlah Heights)

**VALE:**

**STUART MURRAY (1926-2016)**

Sydney architect and skier, Stuart Murray's love of skiing kicked off in 1942 at the Hotel Kosciusko and later became a member of the Kiandra Pioneers Ski Club. He owned an apartment at Riverside for a number of years and he joined THS in 2010. It was Stuart who introduced Thredbo architect Robin Dyke to skiing when Robin was working for him at the time.

Stuart began his career working in the office of Walter Burley Griffin and Eric Nicholls who later became involved in Thredbo architecture. Stuart went on to work on designs in the 50's for public housing in Canberra where Leightons was a contractor. In the early 60's he accepted an invitation from Leightons to design their North Perisher Lodge, Barrakee. Whilst he practised in Sydney, Stuart continued his interest in alpine architecture throughout his life.

**GUSTAV (GUS) HERSTIK ( - 2016)**

A recent THS Member, Gus died doing what he loved. Gus died after a fall on Thursday March 31<sup>st</sup> whilst competing in the Steamboat NASTAR Nationals 2<sup>nd</sup> run after a win in the 1<sup>st</sup> run. Gus skied with the Perisher Masters and competed in the annual Thredbo Masters, often achieving a heavyweight category podium finish. He is fondly remembered by his wife Josephine, children Les, Marcus and Nicole, and 5 grandchildren.

## VALE: BOB ARNOTT 1922-2016

Bob Arnett died on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016. "He played a significant role in the development of skiing as a Winter Olympian, Australian FIS representative, President of the NSW Ski Council, and ASF Council member. In 1981 he researched and authored a study of snow areas worthy of future development. In the pioneering days of computing he was an engineer with an English computing company, Ferranti and involved in the development of its iconic Ferranti Mark 1 computer." (THS member Phillip Woodman) In addition he was a published author, a member of the Ski Club of Australia, a life member of the Thredbo Historical Society and an ambassador for the Friends of Thredbo Development Fund.

Born in Sydney on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 1922 and christened William Robert Arnett, he was the great-grandson of William Arnett, who founded Arnett's Biscuits. His father, Henry Dixon Arnett, was a barrister and President of the Royal Aero Club of New South Wales.

Bob Arnett attended Cranbrook School where he excelled at sport. In 1935 on a school excursion, he first experienced skiing at the Hotel Kosciusko. From then on he travelled to the mountains each year to ski at Charlotte Pass until 1941 when the Chalet closed down during the war years.

He was in the Air Force for a brief period during the war, but the family decided he would be better off going to the University of Sydney. After graduating as a Bachelor of Science in 1945, Bob began work at the AWA Materials Research Laboratory, researching the effects of humidity on electrical equipment.

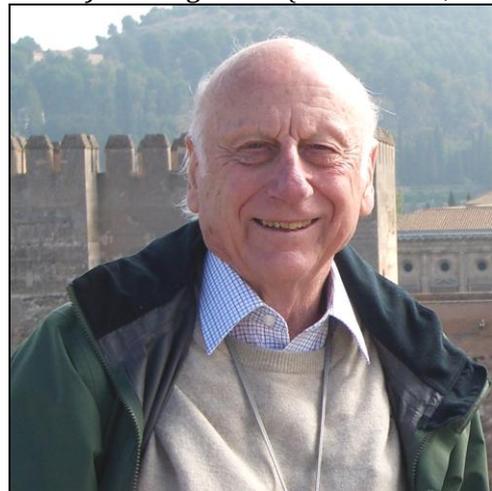
It was not until the International Services Ski Race meeting in 1946, that he began ski racing as a member of the university team. The interest in ski racing continued at Mt Buller and Mt Hotham, whilst working for the Post Master General's research laboratory in Melbourne between 1947 and 1948.

"By the late '40s, Bob had established himself as one of the top Australian racers of his day, posting strong results at home and in New Zealand. 1950 his sights were firmly set on representing Australia at the Oslo Olympics of 1952." (Axel Arnett, 2016). On his first ski trip to Europe in 1951, Bob trained with the Belgian and British ski teams

before returning to Australia in a Percival Proctor piloted by his friend David Allen. They made 34 stops en route doing some sightseeing en route in India and then island hopping to Darwin via an unscheduled landing on a coral airstrip on Bali.

Arriving in time in Australia for his successful selection for the 1952 Olympic selection trials. At the 1952 Winter Olympics held in Oslo, Bob Arnett represented Australia in the Downhill placing 71<sup>st</sup> out of 91 starters, and in the Slalom he placed 53<sup>rd</sup> and 64<sup>th</sup> out of 90 starters. Following is Bob's account of his run in the Downhill which was run on very little snow:

*"I started off behind a Greek, there were probably one minute intervals or something like that. The Greeks were always going to be in the Olympics because the Greeks started the Olympics and they were always entered. The start of the race was fair straight forward: The Greek disappeared and I was sent off, and we came to a traverse, it was fairly steep and the Greek had fallen down the hill, and so I passed the Greek. Then the same thing happened to me, I fell down the hill, and he passed me, and then I got up and I managed to pass him again with a schuss to the finishing line." (Bob Arnett, 2012)*



**Bob Arnett**

Bob continued to improve his ski racing technique whilst he worked for the Physical Sciences Branch of the Snowy Mountains Authority based in Cooma on his return from the Winter Olympics. It was at this time he became aware of the good skiing above the Thredbo Valley and with the approval of the Park service felled the necessary trees for a downhill race course in the Twin Valleys.

## VALE: BOB ARNOTT (continued from Page 3)

Winning the 1953 Australian slalom championship, Bob captained the Australian inter-dominion team to New Zealand in the same year.

Moving to England in 1956, Bob began to work with Ferranti as a logical designer for their new computer laboratory and over four years he worked on the Pegasus, Perseus and Apollo systems. Around 1960, he transferred to Ferranti computer sales department. This brought him back to Australia to set up their sales office in Melbourne.

1963 was a special year for Bob. At the Ski Club of Australia Race Week at Thredbo he met the winner of the ladies' slalom, Simone Pirenne. They were married in 1975 and by 1970 had two children, Adrienne and Axel.

Skiing played a major role the Arnott's family life and both children trained for a number of years with the Thredbo Ski Racing Club. At ski races in Thredbo, Simone was always Chief of Gates.

Bob Arnott was appointed as the first Australian member of skiing's international governing body, the Fédération Internationale de Ski (FIS) and attended the 1963 congress in Athens. He served on FIS for 27 years, initially on the Downhill/Slalom Committee and later the Classification Committee on which he remained an honorary member for the remainder of his life.

At Bob's memorial service, Axel Arnott eloquently explained the circumstances leading up to the introduction of "2-Bob Rule":

*International Skiing needed a better method of ranking its skiers and assigning start positions for each race. The higher in the order a racer started, the greater their advantage because the race course deteriorates with every racer, especially in those days. The existing system essentially involved a small room filled with large Austrian coaches yelling at each other until the officials could take no more. Something had to be done.*

*So Dad, the physicist set to work developing a system that could account for the many variables necessary to rank different skiers, competing in different races, on different courses and conditions. He created a system that worked quite well, but he knew it had its problems: it tended to overweight some variables. Meanwhile Bob Beattie a US representative to the FIS was*

*working on an alternate system, and it too had it's problems.*

*With the '68 Olympics at Grenoble fast approaching and plenty of pressure to solve the problem, there was a eureka moment late one night when they realized that if they combined both of their systems they tended to cancel the errors out acceptably.*

*It was introduced in 1967 and while it has had some modification since, it is still the basis for ranking skiers around the world today. It's affectionately referred to as the 2 Bob Rule."*

For a number of years Bob served on the Ski Council of NSW which later became the NSW Ski Association. In 1981 he participated in a ski plan for the development of new ski areas including The Chimneys and Twin Valleys amongst others.

Bob Arnott's book "Seventy-Five Seasons – The Ski Club of Australia" 1920 – 1994" is an amazing history of the club which he joined in 1950. When he decided to write the book of 180 pages with its excellent black and white, and colour plates, he thought it would take one year. Five years later the book was produced.

Nearly every year, Arnott raced in the Thredbo Masters Giant Slalom competition. The last time he competed was in 2010, placing 6<sup>th</sup> in the Men's 75 & Over at the age of 88. His ski finale was at Thredbo's inter-club races the same year, as a member of the Ski Club of Australia where he was known as "Rubberlegs".

Bob Arnott's passing was mourned by his wife Simone, his children Adrienne and Axel, father in law of Oliver, dear brother of John (deceased) and Karen and much loved grandfather of Hugh and Charlotte, together with over 200 people who attended the Memorial Service was held for him at St Mark's Anglican Church, Darling Point on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The service was followed by a private cremation.

**Note from the editor:** THS is grateful to Adrienne and Axel for supplying the eulogies which were of great assistance in compiling this tribute to Bob Arnott.

**MEMBERS RECOGNITION PROGRAM  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY 21<sup>ST</sup>**

For the next 12 months we will be celebrating our 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary year, in a number of ways. Most importantly we will be recognising and saying thank you in this newsletter to all those who attended the initial Formation Meeting in 1995, which was followed by the first Annual General Meeting in 1996.

Secondly we will recognise and thank those who have supported us during many of those years through their continued membership of the society for 15 and 20 years or more.

We have researched our records to reveal the following;

**THOSE PRESENT AT FORMATION MEETING – 1 MARCH 1995:** Wendy O’Donohue, Graeme Holloway, Albert Van Der Lee, Pat Bowles, Lyn McIntyre, Louise Gibson, Adele McCallum, Janet Hines, Michelle Reichinger, Barry Knowles, Marlene Knowles, Lindsay and Leanne \_\_\_\_\_? .

**APOLOGIES** were received from: Tony Sponar, Patricia Saunders, Jane Kuzar, Jane Mitchell, Anne McRitchie, Marion Murri.

**FOUNDATION MEMBERS IN INAUGURAL YEAR 1995/96:**

Walter Auer, Anne McRitchie (Barnes), Christine Belle, Bruce Marshall, Jann Mattick, Karen Mitchell, Marion Murri, Pru Parker, Michelle Reichinger, Charlotte Sainsbury, Robert Scholberg, Tommy Tomasi, Ric Walkom, Barry Young, Graeme Holloway, Frank Prihoda, Bob Arnott, Lois Anderson, Kurt Lance, Sasha Nekvapil, Patricia Saunders, Elisabeth Sponar.

**20 YEARS MEMBERSHIP:** Graeme Holloway, Frank Prihoda, Lyn McIntyre, Louise Gibson, Michelle Reichinger, Walter Auer, Bruce Marshall, Marion Murri, Pru Parker, Brad Spalding, Tommy Tomasi, Ric Walkom, Barry Young, Alan Fredericks, George / Hillary Freuden, Del Fisher.

**15 YEARS MEMBERSHIP:** Irene Ashburn, Tony Carroll, Margie & Barry Figtree, Michael Goldberg, James Graham, Phoebe Hoy, Chas Keys, Cees Koeman, Jerry Krejzar, Julie McMorrow, Allan & Beryl Smith, Edie Swift, Christina Webb.

**CLUBS 10 YEARS MEMBERSHIP:** Avior Lodge, Silver Brumby Club, Ski Club of Australia, Hi-Noon Ski Club.

**CORPORATE 10 YEARS MEMBERSHIP:** Kosciusko Thredbo Pty Ltd, National Parks & Wildlife Service.

**RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION CERTIFICATES** are being prepared for all 20 year and 15 year members and 10 year Clubs and Corporates for public presentation to these valued supporters, who attend any of the 3 Social functions we will be holding in 2016. (See Calendar of Events in this Newsletter). No prior advice required – just register and turn up for the event of your choice.

Of course we value and thank **all members** for their ongoing support and membership which contributes substantially to the ongoing building of our significant historic collection of Australian skiing and Thredbo’s development and its display to the public through the Thredbo Ski Museum.

On behalf of our Committee – I say THANK YOU.

*Alan Fredericks, President*



Seen at the BBQ lunch following the 2015 AGM in November

## IN THE MUSEUM

At last, a glass display cabinet houses the iconic and controversial Prue Acton ski suit courtesy of the NSW Government through the Arts NSW Volunteer Museum Grant Program devolved funding program administered by Museums & Galleries of NSW. The grant was to the tune of \$1,630 for its purchase from Artisan Products. With over 5,000 visitors passing through the Museum each year, it is necessary to protect it from people wishing to touch the fabric.

To celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of snowboarding in Thredbo, there will be a special display of snowboards and scenes of snowboarding during its early years. Our University of Wollongong intern student, Amanda Zenkis is pictured right, with the unusual Snowfish Board designed by Claude Benny and Jean-Louis Benny in 1984. It handled well in new snow and spring snow but poorly on ice due to lack of edges. It was also used in water as a precursor to wake boarding.

There will be some changes in the ski display as we will be exhibiting skis made in Australia from 1861 to 1961, including those purchased at Neville Locker's recent Happy Valley auction. At this stage the costs of a loan from the National Museum of the Fritz Wesselman skis which are the oldest provenance skis in Australia for the display, are beyond our budget.

Nick Kirshner kindly donated to the Society two Bursill K-2 ski presses from the early 1950s for the Museum.

During the recent staff reunion from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> March, the Museum was alive with the chatter of circa 100 past staff members reminiscing about their happy times in Thredbo.

**STATISTICS:** Numbers visiting the Museum continues increase, principally due to the early openings at 9 am by Chas Skinner. Visitation

this summer from early December to Easter 2016 totalled 1999 people including children.



**Amanda Zenkis with a Snowfish Snowboard**



**Finding time to visit the Museum were Phil Daley of the NPWS together with colleagues from ACT and Victorian National Parks attending the Alpine Heritage conference in Thredbo,**

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## COMMENTS FROM VISITORS

Deborah Fox, Sydney: So much fun to reminisce  
Shannon and Mark Seaman, Bonnells Bay: Friendly place to visit. Brilliant display of skis and Thredbo.

Gayla & Keryn Thomas, Brisbane: A lovely museum capturing Thredbo's history. Volunteers are very informative and friendly.

Steve Cooke: Researching for a screen play. Great background information. Thank you

Peter Gaubchin, Switzerland: Museum is well presented.

Chris Smith, Parks Victoria, Melbourne: Wonderful display of artefacts and stories. Thank you.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THREDBO ALPINE ARCHITECTURE by Albert van der Lee

Lend Lease Corporation, took over the Kosciusko Thredbo company in November 1961. Much infra-structure had been planned for Thredbo following the take-over. I came to Thredbo as part of a construction team a year later.

As it happened I was soon to be appointed as Thredbo's Resident Engineer and, before the winter of 1963, as Thredbo's Resident Manager.

The man who had been behind the take-over of KT by Lend Lease was its chairman and driving force: Dick Dusseldorp. He was attracted by the long term nature of its lease with the State Government of NSW and the planning control it offered him.

Thredbo became an important exercise in town planning and Dusseldorp spent almost every weekend there, for several years, to develop time Master Plan for development. We used to spend walking all over the mountain and the village and evaluate potential uses of land to include in this development plan. He established the concepts, I followed up.

Under the terms of the [head] lease with the State Government, the company had the right to issue sub-leases to individual landholders, but had not done so yet before the take-over. Many buildings had been built before 1961 [from 1957], as the early company was keen to get residents to lock in skiing customers.

On completion of the first Snowy Mountain's project at Guthega, the Norwegian contracting firm of F Selmer, was selling their staff buildings, which had been pre-fabricated WW2 Luftwaffe huts. Tony Sponar, Thredbo's founder and first manager bought two to be joined together. 'The Lodge' became the first Hotel of the Company and later its staff quarters. It was one of Thredbo's first two buildings [1957]. (Crackenback Lodge being the second building).

Other Selmer huts were to follow: Roslyn's first building, the original Youth Hostel, High Noon, the Ski Cub of Australia and their neighbouring Ramshead Ski Club, both of which have been considerably altered. Six in all, only two of the Selmer huts are still standing.

Dusseldorp soon introduced subleases to those who were already there and for those who were to follow. The sublease gave the Company, the right to approve buildings. Under the head-lease the same power was vested in the State Park Trust [from 1967 the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS)]. Of course the laws and the rules of the State Government, like building codes, would apply, so this power was limited mainly to architectural control, which is what the Company really wanted.

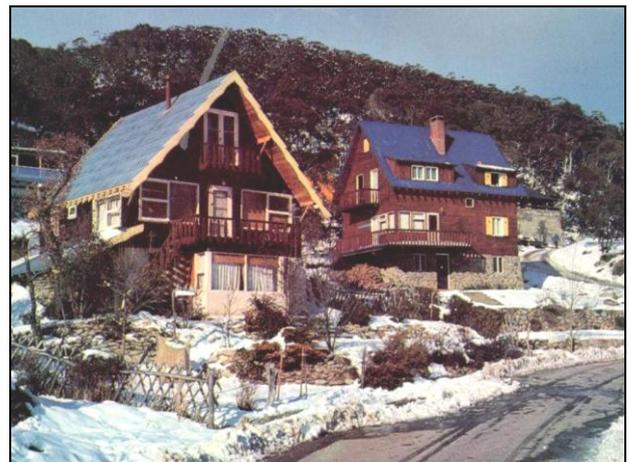
This architectural control was aimed at making the village visually attractive, which was to every-

one's advantage, as it would add value to all real estate.

By the nature of its steep terrain, the village was to become rather compact with buildings quite close together. This required special architectural consideration in order to achieve a visual balance related to positioning, size, height etc.

I believe that this aspect had the most influence on the alpine nature of the architecture in Thredbo. This is quite evident when the architecture is compared with, say, Perisher Valley. There, in a much wider valley, the buildings are spaced much further apart. At Perisher, the Park Trust/NPWS, as the only governing authority, was mainly concerned about buildings blending in with the surrounding landscape.

At Thredbo the architectural concern was for buildings to blend in with each other and to preserve their unique views towards the mountain and across the valley.



**Sequoia designed by the Paynter family and Belah Rackso designed Schlupfwinkel (right)**

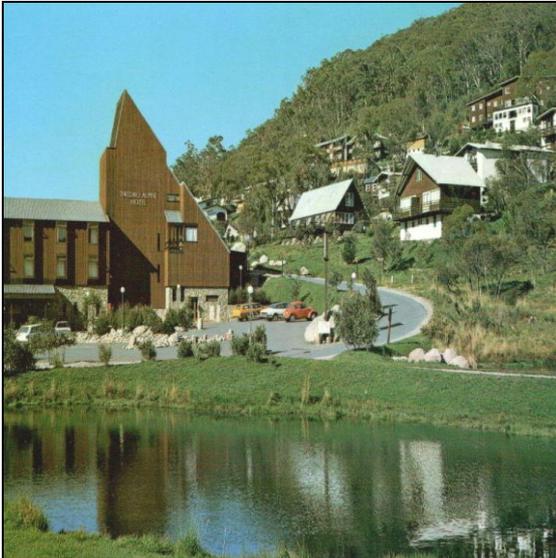
If there are any individuals to be named influencing alpine architecture at Thredbo, it would be the first one, Bela Racsko and the last one Robin Dyke. Bela Racsko was a resident of Thredbo from as early as 1957. When Lend Lease took over in 1961, he had designed and built over 30 of the 50-60 buildings that were there. His designs stood out for their simplicity with ease of construction being the overriding consideration.

Excavations had to be done by hand as no machines were allowed by the Park Trust for fear of erosion of the steep terrain. This required light weight construction. Bela's buildings from that period typically consisted of a basement of concrete blocks faced with local stone, set back in the uphill bank, topped with two stories of timber construction, with alpine ash hardwood for external cladding and galvanised steel roofing.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THREDBO ALPINE ARCHITECTURE *(continued from page 7)*

The Park Trust required 15 % of external walls to be clad by local stone and earthy colours to blend in with the land. Most buildings were oiled, not painted as oil was better to protect the wood from the harsh sun. There was only one building in Sydney that made 'acorn oil' and it came only in mission brown and black. Mission brown became the dominant colour, which was rather boring. Now, with modern technology this has changed. The Thredbo Alpine Hotel for instance is now a greenish-grey painted over the mission brown acorn oil.

Alpine Ash hardwood was readily available from timber yards in Adaminaby, Cooma and Nimmitabel. The Thredbo Alpine Hotel was lined with it outside and inside. That came to an end soon afterwards [1967]. It is now a very expensive and luxurious timber as it is so scarce.



**Thredbo Alpine Hotel**

After some years, hardwood was not used for structural timber as it was not weathered enough and it warped causing gaps opening up where walls met ceilings. So for the bigger size of structural beams and girders, Oregon pine, imported from California or Canada became the timber of choice. A local softwood, Pacific Maple, was used for window and door frames.

Due to the increasing expense of Alpine Ash, Cedar [soft wood] took over for external lining and Radiate Pine for internal cladding. Cedar was also imported from the USA or Canada. Most architects using Cedar did not like it painted or oiled, as they liked the natural discolouring of it. This was more evident in walls exposed to the sun than those in shadows.

Bela Racsko's design- and- package proved very popular and he went on to build many more as cost effectiveness was a very important factor to the many cash strapped fledging club lodges. He mostly finished his buildings on-time-and-on-

budget. There were, however, several designs by other architects, which introduced a welcome variety of the scenery.

Crackenback Ski Club, the first habitable building in the village [opened on 6th July 1957], was designed by club members Donald Mclurcan and Constance Crisp [née Hughes].

Stage 1 of Candlelight, the first commercial lodge [1958], was designed by Otto Ernegg, who also designed Kareela Hutte [1958]; Sastrugi was an early private lodge [1958] also by Otto Ernegg *in collaboration* with Eric Nichols for Thyne Reid, the then Chairman and financier of KT. Derek King of Frenchs Forest designed Berghutte (1958) although alterations have since been made.

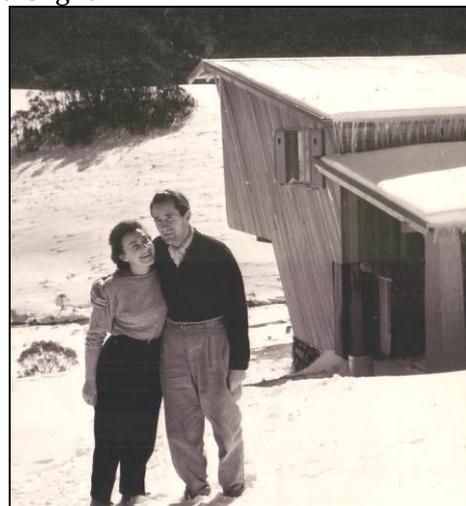
Snowman was the first apartment and shop also designed by Constance Crisp for her mother Mrs Hughes. Currawong, the 'Round House' was designed by noted architect Robin Boyd [1960]. Moonbah [1961] was designed by Bill Lucas for the prominent interior designer Marion Hall Best

Gore Hill [1958], Obergurgle [1959], Coolibah [1960], Sitzmark and Geehi were also architecturally designed. Munjarra (1967) was the first commission for architect David Epstein.

Two of the most photographed buildings were Schlupfwinkel, [Club 19] by Racsko and Sequoia by the Paynter family based on photos taken in Europe.

Perhaps the most remarkable design from this period was Wombiana [1958] designed by Peter Muller for the Victor Lawn Mower family of Gary Richardson. Partly dug into the ground it provided an earth-shelter to keep comfortable temperatures in winter and summer. This building remains virtually unchanged.

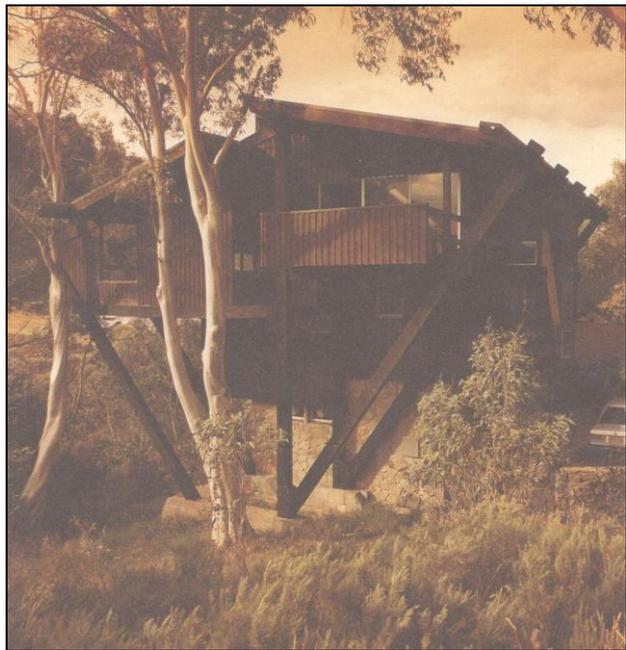
Most of Bela's buildings have now been redeveloped, but some of his designs are still quite prominent: Silver Brumby, Black Bear [ex Sasha's Lodge], Kasees, Karoonda, Punchinello and stage 2 of Candlelight.



**Suzanne and Kornel Deseo outside Candlelight Lodge designed by Otto Ernegg (1958),**

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THREDBO ALPINE ARCHITECTURE *(continued from page 8)*

When Lend Lease took over in 1961, their in-house architect Peter Storey [ex Snowy Mountains Authority], captured the elements of Thredbo's European character in his design for the Valley Terminal [1962]. Storey also designed stages 1 and 2 of the Thredbo Alpine Hotel [1962-63]. His architecture however was not influenced by the terrain as those buildings were not constrained by space or by having to blend in with other buildings.



**Lend Lease Lodge designed by Harry Seidler**

This also applied to the Lend Lease Lodge [Seidler Lodge] built in 1962. Dusseldorp had commissioned Harry Seidler to design this building. His brief asked for a design that would be "Australian Alpine" in character. When Dusseldorp was shown the design on site, a week or two later, he told Seidler to go back to the drawing board as he had missed the essence of "Australian Alpine". Rumour has it that this first design was not Seidler's own, but the next one certainly was and it won an architectural award in 1965!

What makes architecture Australian Alpine? The Seidler Lodge is a very good example of that. It's *diagonal panelled* walls rise parallel with the sides of the mountain. Imagine a building of such a shape to sit on flat land, or a building with its walls sloping in the opposite direction to sit in a mountain valley. That makes it certainly 'alpine'.

Yet there is nothing European about its design, unlike say the Valley Terminal or [the original] Sequoia. That makes it 'Australian'.

The very prominent design of stage 3 of the Hotel with its tower to link to the other stages and its very 'Australian Alpine' profile across the valley became a new architectural focus for the village. This design was made by Duncan Horne, from Healey, Bell and Horne, who had designed other projects for Lend Lease in Sydney.

When Lend Lease took over, they applied a consultant approach when it came to dealing with building applications on architectural merit. The first such consultant was Duncan Horne. He listed architectural guidelines for each vacant lot left in the Eastern Subdivision. I did the same for engineering matters.

This reduced the impulses for new applicants to use the company's consultant architect in order to assure approval. Duncan Horne mentioned at the time that the trend in architecture generally then was referred to as 'the Sydney style'. This brought the 'Australian' into designs at Thredbo. It was characterised by the roofs sloping in opposite directions separated by a vertical wall section.

The next consultant architect was Phil McMaster from Canberra who had designed the first buildings for the company at Merritt's Spur [now Woodridge], followed by several small timber structures in the western area of the village. Phil was also a landscape architect. He had a strong bias for timber to be the dominant material. We, at the Company, believed that the architecture in the village should not become influenced too much by one individual architect.

We haven't seen this however since the Rydge's Company took over in 1986. For nearly 30 years, the architecture has been dominated by one man, Robin Dyke. This is quite visible at the Friday Flat end of the village, although not so at Riverside or in the village precinct where most of Bela Racsko's designs have now been replaced by a variety of more contemporary designs.

This shows that architecture, including alpine architecture, is also subject to trends and fashion. But I believe that the overriding influence of alpine architecture at Thredbo has been the nature of the terrain.

*Reference: Swinbourne, H. (2006) Accordions in the Snow Gums – Thredbo's Early Years*

*Albert van der Lee (gijsbertus@bigpond.com.)*

**REMEMBERING**

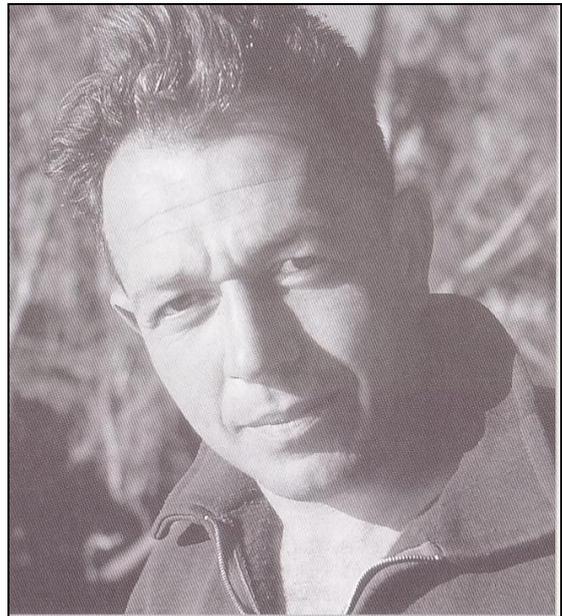
**BELA RASCKO ( - 1998)** escaped from Hungary during the 1956 anti-Communist uprising. Together with his friend Steve Szelockzky, he ran through minefields to freedom in Austria. From there they migrated to Australia.

Bela was a high qualified and talented architect. Together with Steve, they formed the Sigma Building Company, and won the tender for Roslyn Lodge (now High Noon) in 1958. Their subsequent engagement to build Candlelight Lodge cemented their relationship with the emerging Thredbo Village. The next contract was the Golden Eagle and Karoonda Apartments.

Bela had a reputation for finding use for using every possible place in a structure.

Later the Rascko family sold Punchinello and moved down the hill to the Alpine Way before retiring to Tura Beach.

PS: 69 Gippsland Street, Jindabyne, home of Chrissi Webb, was designed by Belah Rascko.



**Belah Rascko (Photo: Gaby Rascko)**

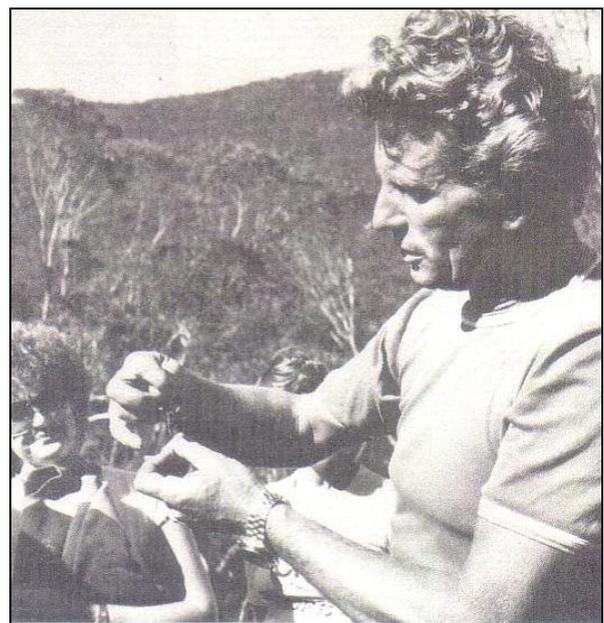
**LUDWIG RABINA (1929 – 2007)** after escaping from Slovakia where he was involved in active resistance to the political regime in force, he arrived with his new bride Brigitte in Thredbo in the early 1960s.

Ludwig loved working on the mountain in summer and winter, at first as a "Liftie" and then later he was the first professional Ski Patrol man in the mid sixties. After 1965 he was the Mountain Manager. His "people skills" were put to good use as the company's PR man. This led him becoming the man who took care of the Lend Lease Corporation's "Employee PR" Programme.

The first "Kosciusko Classic" foot race was held on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 1976. It was organised and run each year by Ludwig.

In the early 1980s, Ludwig left Thredbo to try small scale farming at Kalkite, and later moved to Tamborine Mountain in Queensland where he continued farming.

Three years before his death, he returned to the place of his birth, Trencianske Teplice. He is remembered as a great athlete, cross country runner, skier and above all, a mountain man



**Ludwig Rabina**



**2007 Spring Thaw Dinner when Ron Finneran was guest speaker (Photo: Randy Wieman)**



**Sharonne Rabina (Australian), Tania Perelesua (Ukrainian), Ludwig Rabina (Slovakia), Franticek (Frank) Pihoda, Sasha Nekvapil (Czechoslovakia), Karel Nekvapil (Czechoslovakia), Sandra van der Lee (Dutch), Resort General Manager Albert van der Lee (Dutch). (Photo: Pihoda Collection)**

# THREDBO HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOOK ORDER FORM (2015/16)

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QUANTITY	PUBLICATION DESCRIPTION	PAYMENT
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	Cross, Wendy (2012): <b>Australian Skiing: The First 100 Years</b> Soft cover, 270 pages, 30x21cm, b&w photos Cost \$39.95 Postage & packaging \$13.40	
	Darby, Jim (2006): <b>Thredbo 50 – a commemorative book</b> Hard cover, 123 pages, 22x28cm, colour photos Cost \$20 Postage & packaging \$13.40	
	Freuden, George: <b>Off Piste – My Way: A Memoir</b> Soft copy, 132 pages. 15 cm x 21 cm b&w photos, Cost \$20, Postage & packaging \$8.25. <i>Limited number of copies left</i>	
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	Southwell-Keely, Peter (2012): <b>Highway to Heaven: A History of Perisher and Ski Resorts Along the Kosciuszko Road</b> Hard Cover, 256 pages, b&w & colour photos. Cost \$50 Postage & packaging \$13.40	
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	Weiman, Randy: <b>Kurt Lance - Last time on the Main Range</b> DVD, Cost \$10 Postage & packing \$3.20	
	<b>TOTAL AMOUNT</b>	

## Ordering & enquiries

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