

THREDBO ALPINE MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 81 | January 2023



TAM AGM November 2022: Around the table: Errol Hanlon, Brian Farmer, Raylene Jarvis, Leslie Kirkpatrick, Wayne Kirkpatrick, Del Fisher, Randy Wieman, Adele Kelly, Maureen Roberts, Rowan Kelly, Judy Lenne (half hidden), Rachel Hayden, Cees Koeman

Photographer: Chrissi Webb

President's 2022 Year Report & Goals for 2023

Co-presidents Randy Wieman and Errol Hanlon have completed a year in their positions. After a period of disruption due to COVID, the TAM operation has returned to a degree of normalcy.

TAM successfully hosted two events during winter:

1. Meet and greet of Winter Olympians and Paralympians. past and present, held in the museum.
2. The Award of Faces of Thredbo to 5 individuals which was well attended and received. Further discussions on timing of this event is ongoing.
3. TAM has an excellent working relationship with KT.
4. The dynamics of visitation to Thredbo has changed in recent years. TAM is endeavouring to open the museum more frequently especially during the period post winter. To achieve this, we rely on the efforts of our volunteers which is appreciated.

Key Items achieved in 2022;

1. Branding and exposure of TAM is ongoing with new signage being organised.
2. The interior of the museum is in a state of change with a move to digital displays and an easier flow of guests.
3. Halved rental costs due to storage of museum items.

The goals for 2023 are to;

1. Increase the profile of TAM in Thredbo.
2. To grow the TAM membership base.
3. To continue to remain relevant to Thredbo's past present and future.

We would like to acknowledge that we will miss Frank's contribution and smile.

Co-Presidents: Errol Hanlon Randy Wieman

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Join - support - drop in &
check out our displays

Thank you



AASHA CONFERENCE

AUSTRALIAN ALPINE SNOWSPORTS HISTORY ASSOCIATION (AASHA) CONFERENCE UPDATE

Exceptional winter and spring rainfalls in 2022, across the northeast of Victoria caused a major landslip on the Mt Bogong Road, forcing its closure for an indefinite period.

This is the main access route into Falls Creek. Local Resort Management there advised all scheduled events prior to Christmas would be cancelled. This resulted in the 3rd cancellation of the annual Australian Alpine Snowsports History Association (AASHA) Conference in 3 years.

However GOOD NEWS has resurfaced with the Falls Creek Historical Society (the hosts) advising the Conference will now be held there on the weekend of 5-7 May 2023.

Information regarding refunds (or credits, for those who many want this option) will follow as soon as it is possible.

Friday evening will be informal welcome drinks and nibbles etc for guests. Saturday will see the conduct of the Conference including the AASHA Meeting agenda. Dinner on Saturday night will follow and Sunday will see some optional activities/local tours before "easy away"! The program includes guest speakers on Falls Creek history, deaccession of Museum collections, digitisation programs and curating small spaces. Also, a round up from the 4 Historical Societies of their activities, successes and challenges over the past 3 years.

Falls Creek through AASHA will be sending out their full conference details plus accommodation options in Falls Creek in the months leading up to May.

ALL WELCOME!

Alan Fredericks AASHA Past President.

STOP PRESS

Extraordinary Circumstances once again causes Conference Postponement



Current and continuing high rainfalls across the northeast of Victoria have caused an unprecedented ongoing land slip on the Mt Bogong Road forcing its closure for an indefinite period. This is the main access route to Falls Creek.

Resort Management have advised that all events scheduled prior to Christmas are being cancelled and rescheduled where possible. There are concerns about safety and emergency access as well as access for goods and services.

This includes the AASHA conference.

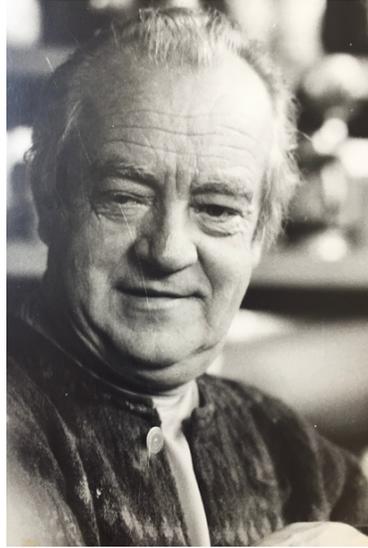
The AASHA Committee has decided to reschedule to April/May 2023 (back to our usual timing). The weekend of 5-7 May is currently being considered. This will be confirmed as soon as possible.

Information regarding refunds (or credits, for those who may want this option) will follow as soon as it is available.

A road collapse caused the postponement of the AASHA conference.

FACES OF THREDBO 2022

Karel Nekvapil 1916 - 1993



Karel Nekvapil was born in Czechoslovakia. His parents had several establishments in Luhacovice and Brno, Czechoslovakia, including a café, restaurant and night-club. Karel managed these in turn, along with his older brother, Jan. Both became experienced restuaranteurs and managers.

In November 1945, he married the Czech ski racer Sasha Prihodova and quickly developed a friendship with her younger brother, Frank Prihoda and their mutual skiing and racing friend, Antonin (Toni) Sponar. Together with Frank Prihoda, he escaped from Czechoslovakia in early 1949 following the "Putsch". Once in Austria, the three men using Toni's jeep, adjusted according to Toni's design, set up a portable ski lift in St Christoph, near St Anton in the early months of 1949. This venture wound up with the thaw, which was also the time for them to move on.

Karel, Sasha and Frank moved to Belgium to live with Karel's brother Jan, whilst waiting for visas to emigrate another country. During that period, Michael was born. Eventually Australia accepted their application and Karel, Sasha and Michael landed in Melbourne on December 31, 1950. Frank having travelled separately some months before them. During their first Australian winter n 1951, Karel found employment of the Australian Postal Institute club lodge at Mt Buller, which he managed some time. Karel also started the Arlberg Ski School and helped the Forrass brothers build a canteen on the mountain. When Sasha went to work at Charlotte Pass in 1952, he continued to manage the lodge and to instruct. When Sasha went to work at Charlotte Pass, he continued to manage the lodge and ski school at Mt Buller.

By January 1959 there was sufficient money (and borrowed) to build the first part of Sasha's Lodge in Thredbo. The architect was Otto Ernegg, with Bela Raczko and Steve Szeloczsky as project managers and builders. The lodge opened in June 1959. Karel and Sasha ran their commercial lodge featuring traditional European hospitality for twelve years serving breakfast, lunch and dinner for the first seven years. They could never take holidays together as the lodge was open 365 days a year. The couple sold the lodge in 1971 to Jan and Jari Nekvapil who renamed it "The Black Bear Inn" after the family restaurant in Brno, Czechoslovakia. Karel and Sasha built Sasha's Apartments next door, where the ground floor Sasha had her ski fashion shop.

In 1980 after 21 years in Thredbo, Karel and Sasha moved to their farm on the Alpine Way. They remained there until where he passed away in 1993. Karel always enjoyed his skiing. In June 1961, he fractured his leg in six places below the knee. This put an end to his ski racing. He was very supportive of children's skiing and organized ski races for them during the winter school holidays prior to the formation of the Thredbo Ski Racing Club. In 1972 he was a founding committee member of the Thredbo Ski Racing Club, of which he was elected as the Club's first patron in 1979.

Today, Karel's T-bar lift located high above Thredbo Village, stands as memory to his contribution to the development of Thredbo.

by Michael Nekvapil

FACES OF THREDBO 2022

Michelle & Heinz Reichinger



Michelle & Heinze Reichinger



Photos by Randy Wieman

Michelle's introduction to Thredbo was in 1964 at the of 14 years – the year of the bi snow dump. Heinz was born in 1937 in Innsbruck, Austria. He first came to Thredbo in 1968 as a ski instructor after teaching in Mt Buller, then in Perisher Valley during our winters and instructing in Sun Valley, Idaho USA during our summers.

Michelle and Heinz met in the 1971 Australian winter when she worked at Eagles Nest restaurant for Rudi and Schritzle. They married the following winter in 1972 in Sun Valley.

Their retail dynasty began when Michelle's father, Alex who was a partner in Snowfield Enterprises, lured them back to Thredbo to take over the existing retail operations. They threw themselves in at the deep end, running "Heinz's Hots" snack bar, the mini mart and pharmacy. The mini mart evolved into a continental delicatessen catering for the European locals and patrons.

Following the births of Marcus in 1974 and Luke in 1975 whilst living "cubby hole" style in the attic of Kirk Lodge, now the Peak Apartments, the Kosciuszko Thredbo company eventually released to the young couple a block of land on which they built Frankheinzstein's Apartments, together with their long-time neighbour and friend Frank Prihoda and Helmut Steinocker of Stein's Ski Tours.

In the 1980s Heinz and Michelle also operated a grocery/deli in Perisher Valley for several years alongside their Thredbo shops. With the opening of a second village supermarket by 1981 they realised that Thredbo could not support two supermarkets year-round and that it was time to diversify and focus on ski fashion and resort wear. The result was that the supermarket evolved in to "Michelle's Boutique" whilst "Heinz's Hots" snack bar began trading as 'Heinz's Ski Tech.'

With the advent of snowboarding in the 1990's, ski fashion became very androgynous and lost its appeal to Michelle. Meanwhile Marcus and Luke developed the first dedicated snowboard shop in Australia named "Shredbo" located in the Valley Terminal. The boys then took over 'Heinz ski Tech' and changed to the name to become known as "The Good Board Store." Fashion changes in the 2000's allowed Michelle to focus more on high-end fashion and resort wear.

After 45 years continuous retail operations, Heinz and Michelle in May 2014, closed the doors of their now iconic boutique "Michelle's" in order to pursue other business opportunities and enjoy the "good life in the mountains." Michelle and Heinz Reichinger will always be remembered as Faces of Thredbo for their longevity and enormous contribution to the community, commercial and social life of Thredbo.

by Michelle Reichinger & Chrissi Webb

VALE - FRANTISEK (FRANK) PRIHODA 1921 - 2022



Frank Prihoda 2016

It is with sadness that we report the passing of Frank Prihoda at the age of 101 years, on 9th November 2022 in Melbourne. His funeral was held on 21st November at Springvale Cemetery. On behalf of the Thredbo Alpine Museum members, TAM wish to express its deepest sympathy and condolences to Frank's family. On the day of Frank's funeral a report clip by Lukas Landa was shown on CT1 (the Czech National broadcast channel) at around 9pm on the nightly Reportaz show, to honour Frank. It's a 12 minute Facebook clip excerpted from the 30 minute program:- (in Czech).

<https://fb.watch/h00SdxDPcB/> The footage was taken around the time of the commencement of the pandemic, as 'Czech Footsteps in Thredbo' was no longer an option, and was not to go ahead. Lukas interviewed Frank instead and included footage from KT and TAM and saved it for the occasion.

A TRIBUTE TO FRANTISEK (FRANK) PRIHODA by Jerry Krejzar

A skiing life well lived Frantisek (Frank) Prihoda was born on July 8th, 1921 in Prague, Czechoslovakia and became a companion to his sister Sasha who was a couple of years older. Frank has experienced an extraordinary skiing life, first as a boy in the Krkonose Mountains (Giant Mountains) in his former homeland, formerly then known as Czechoslovakia. Frank even managed to keep on skiing under the Nazi and Communist regimes. There followed the amazing escape from the clutches of the communists on cross-country skis, with Karel Nekvapil his brother-in-law, and his sojourn with Tony Sponar in St Anton in 1949. Towards the end of 1948 four Czechs escaped the imminent totalitarian grasp of communism enveloping their homeland - formerly known as Czechoslovakia. First Tony then Frank and Karel and Sasha, made their way separately to St Anton am Arlberg.

The Czech National ski champion Tony Sponar fled Prague just after Christmas in 1948 in a World War Two jeep. Karel Nekvapil and Frank Prihoda escaped on cross-country skis, gliding silently across a frozen lake, situated on the Czech Austrian border. And in the winter of 1949 Sasha Nekvapil simply slipped off a train at the Swiss station of Zurich-Engel; unbeknown to her team members of the communist Czechoslovakian Ski Federation, who were returning from a race meeting in Grindelwald to Prague, always having planned to join her brother Frank, husband Karel, and Tony in St Anton in the Arlberg.

To make ends meet the jeep was utilised as the engine-power for the first ski-lift in the adjoining Arlberg ski village of St Christoph am Arlberg. (The home of the Bundersportheim the training centre for the Austrian Ski Federation). Our yet to become Australian Czech physically carried Austrian soldiers, who were amputees, up the ski-lift, which at the time was situated in the post-war French Occupied Zone. The three Czechs operated their ski lift until the Easter of 1949.' Karel, joined by his wife Sasha (Frank's sister) travelled to Belgium with Frank. Tony went to Innsbruck to marry his English fiancée, Lizzie, and they all applied to emigrate to Australia'.

Frank Prihoda cont....

Frank settled in Melbourne in 1950, and set up a furniture business, and at 35 years of age Frank proudly represented Australia in ski racing in the 1956 Winter Olympics in Cortina Italy, skiing in the Combined and Slalom ski championship events.

Frank was an active member of the Victorian Ski Association and organised races in Mt Buller and became the Chairman in 1958.

In 1959 Karel and Sasha set up one of the first commercial lodges in Thredbo, 'Sasha's Lodge', which Frank would frequent regularly. Twenty-seven years later Frank sold his furniture business and in 1974 moved to Thredbo and opened 'Franks Gifts' - a souvenir shop - which he ran until he retired in 2001. Frank continued to actively pursue his Aussie skiing-life once he settled down in Thredbo. Frank never missed an opportunity to be involved with the Thredbo community, he was an inaugural member of the Thredbo Alpine Museum, (formerly known as the Thredbo Historical Society) and served as Vice-President. In 2000, his contribution to sport was recognised when he was asked to carry the Olympic Torch in Thredbo, lighting the cauldron on the Village Green.

In recognition for his services to the conservation and preservation of Australia's 163-year old history of snow-sports, Frank was appointed a Life Member of the Thredbo Alpine Museum. Right up until his death, he continued his interest in the future objectives of the Museum by sharing his wisdom with his colleagues. Frank was the Treasurer of the Thredbo Chamber of Commerce, and long-time manager of the Frankheinzsteins Body Corporation and an eager participant in Carnival week. In particular the Body Painting Competition where Frank was a local high-light, embracing whatever persona he was artfully painted as. Frank would have made 102 on 8th July and before his move to Melbourne late in 2021, was Thredbo oldest resident; and the nation's oldest living Olympian.

In his centenary year Frank was awarded the 'Gratias Agit' award by the Head of Mission, Embassy of the Czech Republic His Excellency Mr Thomas Dub for the promotion of the good name of the Czech Republic abroad, granted to prominent persons developing activities in non-governmental fields. Kosciuszko Thredbo Pty Ltd recognised the significant contribution to Thredbo's cultural and historical life and the support to community, that Frank gave, with wisdom, humour and goodwill. The company took the initiative and organised Frank's 100th birthday celebration, an event that, on the night, turned out to be spectacular; and much appreciated by friends and family alike. On the night, Master of Ceremonies two-time Winter Olympian Jono Brauer, and Thredbo General manager Stuart Diver spoke of the immense contribution Frank has made to the fabric of the Thredbo community, and to honour Frank, a ski-run, 'Frank's Face', was proclaimed. Its position on the western side of Karel's Basin T-bar, and below Sasha's Schuss. The family is now situated together at a high altitude up on Crackenback.

Director of Snow Australia representative, Winter Olympian and fellow Thredbo local Kim Clifford presented the Snow Australia Medal which recognises the achievement and careers of those past and retiring athletes who have represented Australia and the highest level of snow sport competition.

Events & 2023 TAM Committee

COMING EVENTS

April 2023

Oral History training session with Jerry Krejzar

May

Sydney Get-Together, watch this space

June 14

"Welcome to Winter" drinks, Thredbo Alpine Museum

September

Faces of Thredbo Dinner, details to be advised

November

Annual General Meeting, details to be advised

TAM COMMITTEE

Co-Presidents: Errol Hanlon 0439 646 313

Randy Wieman 0408 453 632

Vice Presidents: Christina Webb 02 6456 2279

Wayne Kirkpatrick 0184 766 484

Secretary: Maureen Roberts 0490 365 987

Treasurer: Raylene Jarvis 0414 679 409

Committee: Alan Fredericks 0417 401 403

Andrew Koczanowski 0401 958 321

Judy Lenne 0419 973 306

Brian Farmer 0428 619 788

Judy Lenne and **Brian Farmer** were welcomed at the November 2022 AGM to the TAM Committee. Judy is well known in Thredbo, having been there "forever" and brings her amazing work ethic and commitment to the Committee. She has been a Village resident since 1992.

Former Queenslander Brian moved to Cooma in 1965 to work for the Snowy Mountains Scheme, becoming a "Jindabinian" in 1969. He has a reputation for "getting things done". His contribution to the Snowy Mountains community is outstanding through his service many organisations including amongst others, the volunteer Bush and NSW Fire Brigades, 1st Kosciusko Scout Group and the Jindabyne Lions Club.

Indeed, TAM is privileged to have Judy and Brian on the committee.

NEW MEMBER

Tony Lloyd, Hunters Hill

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS

Randy Wieman, Alan Fredericks, Jerry Krejzar, Michael Nekvapil, Kris Laird, Chrissi Webb

If you have a story for the newsletter, please email it to Alan @ alanf@bigpond.com or Chrissi chrissi.wikner@outlook.com

Object in our Collection

SNOW SHOES

Snow shoes are a practical mode of winter transportation, and they are also a symbol of practical ingenuity representing thousands of years of cultural history and adaptation to snowy winters. The Snow Shoe looked very much like a tennis racquet and the wearer needed only to strap them on to their boots and walk with a very wide stance over snow. The imported Canadian Snow Shoes on display in the Museum were issued in the 1950's to linesmen employed by the Monaro County Council for use in deep snow.

Snow Shoes of a very similar design were brought to Australia during the gold rush era of the mid 1800s by people emigrating from north America to seek their fortune at Kiandra in the 1860's. It is believed that snowshoes arrived in Canada during ancient migrations at least 10,000 years ago from eastern Siberia over the Bering Strait. In 1608, the first written account appeared, of the Canadian indigenous people using snowshoes to walk across the deep winter snow.

Recognizing their value, Europeans used snowshoes for hunting and trapping, and for exploring the rugged landscape. In the 1970s lightweight metal alloy snowshoes were introduced and enabled swifter movement. The evolution has not stopped with modern improvements such as built-in crampons being added over the recent



In the Museum

The next special feature display will focus on youth snow sports development programs in Thredbo. Incorporated with it will be the 50 anniversary of the Thredbo Club, the Thredbo St Moritz Club now nudging 40 years since its beginning and 30 years since the introduction of the Thredbo Freestyle Club, which ran for about 5 years before moving to Perisher.

Relatively new on the scene is the Thredbo Mountain Academy squad facilitated by Kosciusko Thredbo Ski School.

This year the TAM collection of over 4 thousand items increased by 50 items – one of the highlights being the donation by Simone Arnott of Bob Arnott’s 1953 Winter Olympic alpine team blazer. The large clothing collection is being reduced, with duplicate garments and items not related to Thredbo looking for new homes. The Mosaic data program is being reviewed and the number of item categories reduced although the number of sub-categories increase

Comments from our visitors

Coleena McCarthy, 2627

“Love it! So much history. Thank you for sharing it”

Sheree Fleming, 4218: “Excellent! Well done! Great to see history preserved for generations to come”.

Jacqui Neijens, 2627: “Interesting. Wow, real Olympic medals”.

Stephanie Newmen, 2607: “Awesome little museum”

Louise Bromhead, 2612: “A treasure 😊.”

Paul, Linda & Lowien, 4350: “Double thumbs up”.

“It’s always great visiting”: Zoe Inches, 2627

“Better than ever”: Rick Walkom, 2320

Museum Visitors

2021 TOTAL 4624

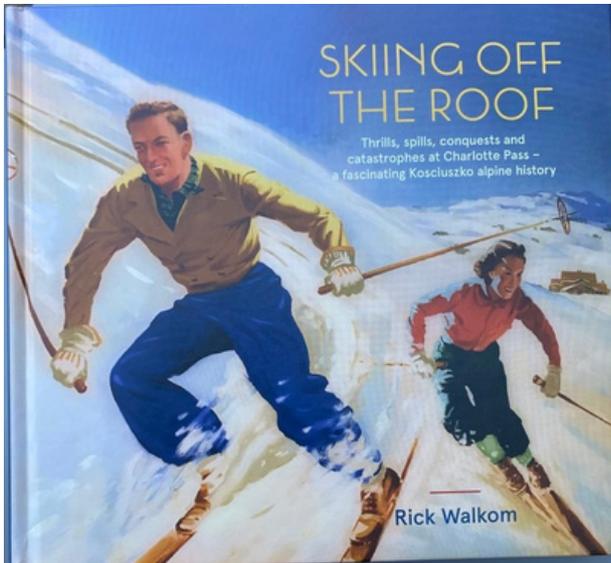
2022 TOTAL 6689



TSRC uniforms 1980s-2020s

We thank our team of community volunteers that have enabled the doors to be open throughout this busy winter season.

Book Review - SKIING OFF THE ROOF



SKIING OFF THE ROOF

Thrills, spills, conquests and catastrophes at Charlotte Pass – a fascinating Kosciuszko alpine history.

The newly released book by Rick Walkom (2022) is a celebration of the history of snow sports in our magnificent Snowy Mountains - about the legendary pioneer skiers, back country adventurers, snowboarders, summer stockmen, nature lovers, Monaro locals, environmental warriors, ski club members, and mountain staff — the colourful denizens who have carved deep tracks on Kosciuszko's slopes around Charlotte Pass over the past century.

This very enlarged, fully updated, 4th edition includes 450 wonderful photos, many in colour. Over 150 people have generously shared stories and photos.

Amongst other topics, he discusses the fascinating history of snowboarding, mountain biking, National Park and government policy, the fragile environment and the unfathomable challenges of climate change and COVID.

This entertaining coffee table edition of 'Skiing Off The Roof' is truly a "collector's piece". The book alone, is a valuable resource document with an extensive index of names, places and topics relating to the history of skiing in NSW.

It can be purchased in the Thredbo Alpine Museum or online through the author at: www.skiingoffthefoof.com.

This very enlarged, fully updated, 320 pages, 4th edition includes 450 wonderful photos, many in colour. Retail price \$95 plus postage \$16.65

Membership & Opening Times

Become a TAM member today

Individual, Family, Lodge & Corporate memberships available.

TAM MEMBERSHIP FEES 2022/23

Individuals

1 year \$45
5 years \$225
10 years \$450

Family

1 year \$60
5 years \$300

Group/Club Lodge

Annual \$220/year

Corporate

Gold: \$1500/yr
Silver: \$1000/yr
Bronze: \$500/yr

Membership payments direct deposit

Thredbo Alpine Museum

BSB 032 728 Acc. 106314



THREDBO ALPINE MUSEUM

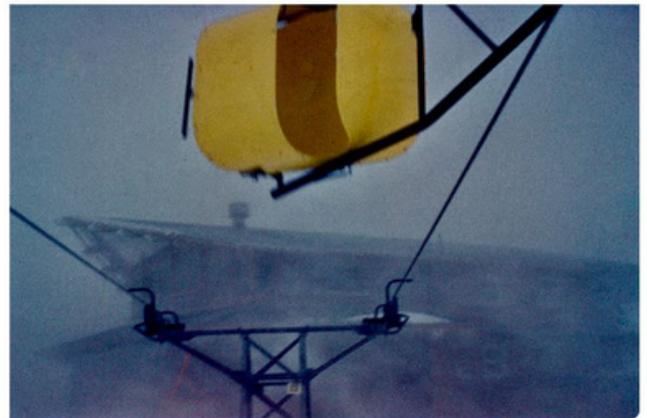
PASSIONATE ABOUT ALPINE HERITAGE

<https://www.thredboalpinemuseum.org.au/membership-payment>

Summer Opening Times

12 - 4 pm

OPEN DAILY subject to volunteer availability



The infamous Chalet to Alpine to Way Chairlift on a windy day in 1964 (Author collection)

One of many pictures included in our Book Review -
SKIING OFF THE ROOF

INVITATION

Contributions for the newsletter from the TAM membership are very welcome.

Please forward them by email to Alan Fredericks: alanf@bigpond.com