

NEWSLETTER



www.thredboalpinemuseum.org.au

Issue 71 February 2020

PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

NATIONAL PARK FIRE EMERGENCY: Unfortunately this report opens with sad news for the skiing fraternity following the bushfires that have plagued the Kosciuszko National Park. Thredbo and Perisher villages were evacuated on January 1st with the public only allowed back in on 14 January.

I am sure many of our members will have followed the spread and the outcome of these fires. Of particular concern to those with an interest in Australia's skiing history, is the destruction by fire of the recently restored Kiandra Courthouse and adjoining Chalet. As I understand it, all of the four remaining buildings at Kiandra were destroyed as was a significant part of nearby Mt Selwyn ski field's infrastructure.

The Kiandra Courthouse /Chalet is special to me as my wife, Kate, and I stayed overnight in the Chalet in 1972 following our honeymoon in Thredbo on our return to Young, where we were living at the time. A short piece on the Courthouse and its history follows in this newsletter.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: Saturday 30 November saw 20 members attending our Annual General Meeting held at the Denman Hotel in Thredbo. Apologies were received from another 15 members.

The President's report noted the ISHA Skade Award for our book – "Thredbo: Pioneers, Legends, Community" by Chas Keys and that we were fortunate to have Randy Wieman in Park City, USA in March to receive the award on our behalf.

At a function in Thredbo in June we launched the current Museum exhibition, featuring Thredbo's staging of the 1989 Ski World Cup and
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THS CALENDAR OF EVENTS – 2020

Saturday 4 APRIL: Falls Creek, Victoria
 Australian Alpine Ski History Association (AASHA) Annual Conference

April/May: (to be advised)
 Sydney Cocktails

Saturday 13 June: Thredbo Cocktails & Museum Exhibition Launch

Wednesday 22 July: Mid Winter Dinner



THS Secretary Maureen Roberts with Frank Prihoda at the AGM, 30 November 2019

Photo: Chrissi Webb

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PRESIDENT'S UPDATE continued

with former Kosciuszko Thredbo Pty Ltd General Manager Wayne Kirkpatrick present, to recount that event.

Faces of Thredbo for 2019, Ludwig Rabina and Wayne Kirkpatrick were acknowledged in the report and some clarification provided on the selection process.

Financial Report: At 30 June our Profit and Loss report showed a loss of \$2300 – after allowing for the one off repayment of \$20,000 to K T Pty Ltd for their initial “underwriting” of some of the costs of our Thredbo book. Our Balance Sheet showed Assets at Bank \$55,732 – Current Assets at \$13,162 – Fixed Assets at \$11,161 with Liabilities at Nil, making a total Net Assets of \$80,055.

ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE & COMMITTEE

Vice President, Trevor Harrison and Committee member Victoria Incani, did not seek renomination. I would like to take the opportunity to convey my thanks to both of them for their time and effort whilst on the Committee. Trevor **helped** in a number of roles by: assisting with the Museums electronic programs, volunteering in the Museum and assistance with organising our Sydney function over recent years. Victoria's efforts in helping establish our team of Thredbo Local volunteers for the Museum and her valuable assistance in the organisation of our 2 Thredbo social events have been most beneficial.

The following were elected unopposed: President Alan Fredericks, Vice Presidents Ed Denny and Wayne Kirkpatrick, Secretary Maureen Roberts, Treasurer Raylene Jarvis, Committee Members: Chrissi Webb (Museum Administrator & Public Officer), Anne Collet (Membership Officer), Jerry Krejzar (Oral Histories), Randy Wieman, Kerri Koczanowski, Errol Hanlon – leaving one committee casual vacancy.

At this point I would like to welcome Wayne and Raylene to our committee and look forward to working with them for the benefit of the society. Also a thanks to outgoing Treasurer Peta Strong-Henley for her most valuable 2 years as Treasurer in providing excellent community service for us in that role.

The Museum Report was presented by Chrissi Webb and the report on Oral History by Jerry Krejzar. I would again like to take the opportunity to thank Vice President Ed Denny for his hosting the AGM at the Denman Hotel which was followed by a light lunch enjoyed by all.

MERRITS CHAIR AUCTION AND DONATION TO THS:

We wish to make special mention of the kind donation by Kosciuszko Thredbo Pty Ltd of \$12300 to the Society, a portion of the proceeds from the “silent auction” of the 112 chairs from the now defunct Merritts Chairlift. This is being replaced by an 8 seater “Gondola” style lift for the 2020 season. We can only say THANK YOU!



L-R: Errol & Elsa Hanlon, Stuart Diver and Victoria Incani with a copy of the donated cheque

MUSEUM TOUCH SCREEN:

We can also report that the new Museum Touch Screen has been delivered, assembled and loaded with film in time for the opening of the museum on Boxing Day. Short films will continue to be selected for loading, all of which will enhance the visitation experience of the public to the museum. Firstly we must thank The Honourable Don Harwin MLC, NSW Minister for the Arts for the Grant of \$1970 towards the project and also THS member Andrew Koczanowski for his expertise in “constructing” the Touch screen and loading the films.

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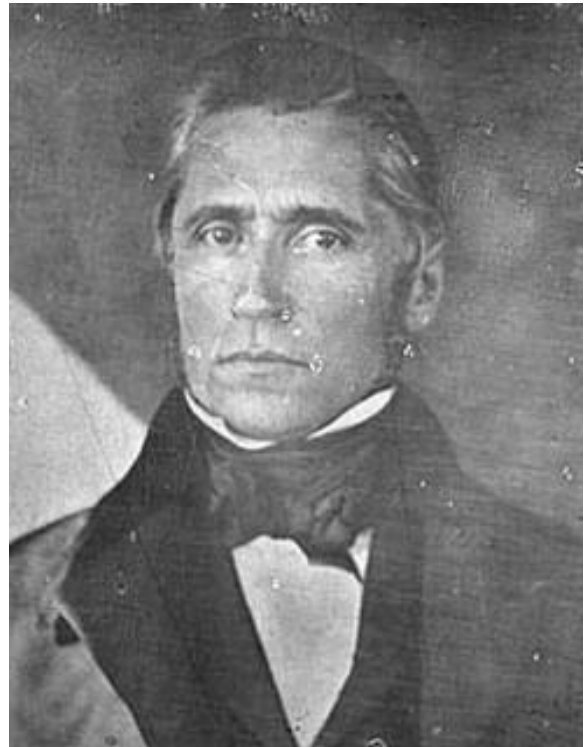
PRESIDENT'S UPDATE continued

MT KOSCIUSZKO – 180TH ANNIVERSARY OF 1840 ASCENT

2020 MARKS THE 180TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST European ascent of Mt Kosciuszko by Count Paul de Strzelecki in 1840. Our museum will in a small way mark that anniversary in 2020-21. Our 3 Newsletters this year will also include edited articles on that ascent. Our first piece contains excerpts from an article by Marian Kaluski published in 1999 and provides background on Strzelecki before reaching Australia, and on his activities here before embarking on his trip to Southern Australia. The remainder of the Strzelecki story comes from the account of the ascent by a Lt. Col. H P G Clews, (1890-1980) widely known as "The Major" – living in a cottage he had built at Indi, near Khancoban – now called "Clews Hut".

These documents came into the possession of the Society through a donation from a Mr John Purves of Brookfield Qld. He had met "The Major" during his time as Commonwealth Bank Manager at Khancoban in the 1960s. He had fallen in love there with that "frontier town" and its accessibility to the Snowy Mountains. He and his wife Patty have been active members of the Southern Alps Ski Club and the Kosciuszko Huts Association. We wish to acknowledge and thank all of the above for their contributions. The full unedited reports are all available to the public at the Thredbo Alpine Museum.

Alan Fredericks



Paul Strzelecki

Photo State Library of NSW



**Alan Fredericks, Maureen Roberts & Ed Denny
at the 2020 THS AGM**



**Lyn Macdonald, Ray Temperley, Rachel Haydon, Kate Fredericks, Margaret & Bruce Piggott
Marion Murri, Andrew & Kerri Koczanowski, Frank Prihoda, Penny & Jerry Krejzar at the 2020 AGM**



SIR PAUL E. DE STRZELECKI (1797-1873)

From an article by Marian Kaluski – Published by the Australian Polish Cultural Foundation Pty Ltd and the M. Greinert Family – Sydney 1999

“Paul (Pawel) Edmund de Strzelecki was born on 20 July 1797, at Gluszyna in the Prussian occupied Poznan region of Poland (today it is a part of Poland) . He was the son of a Francis and Anna Strzelecki both of whom were from the gentry. His father’s family were descendants from a very old family of Polish knights.

Paul Strzelecki was educated at schools in Warsaw and Cracow and apparently studied science. When he was twenty one Strzelecki joined the Prussian army, the 16th Prussian Regiment of Uhlans, called the Polish Regiment because of the number of Poles in it.

He did not like the strict discipline and after 3 years gave up. In 1825 he left his Prussian dominated homeland and for a few years he was manager of Prince Francis Sapieha’s large estate in Russian annexed Poland. He was forced to leave Poland in 1831, after taking an active part in the Polish insurrection of 1830-31 against the Russian occupying forces.

In the years 1831–34, Strzelecki travelled and studied in Europe, visiting Italy, France and Germany where he attended lectures on geology at Heidelberg University. He also spent some time in Scotland where he explored the northern part of the country. In Great Britain he chose as his profession the earth sciences- geography, geology and mineralogy. He made his living from the specimens he collected and sold.

In June 1834 Strzelecki left England for America. He visited and explored many parts of North and South America, the South Sea Islands and visited New Zealand at about the beginning of 1839. These travels provided him with valuable information for his scientific writings

and brought him a reputation as a famous scientist.

From New Zealand Strzelecki booked a passage to Sydney. His main purpose in visiting New South Wales was to carry out mineralogical investigations. He arrived in Sydney on 25 April 1839. Soon after arriving in Sydney, Strzelecki was received at Government House by Governor George Gipps. From the first meeting they formed a friendship. Sir George Gipps suggested that he should undertake a scientific expedition into the mountainous regions of south- east Australia.

Strzelecki agreed with Gipps’ suggestion and his first expedition set off in August 1839 into the Blue Mountains and to Bathurst. His way led through the wild and little known country of the Grose Valley which was crossed by George Cayley in 1805, but which was still practically unknown and certainly unsurveyed. Strzelecki’s mineralogical research in the Wellington and Hartley regions near Bathurst included the discovery of gold and silver.

When Strzelecki returned to Sydney, Governor Gipps asked him to keep the news about the discovery of gold secret. Gipps feared the effect of this discovery on the colony. It is to the credit and honour of Strzelecki that that he kept the promise he had given, despite a big material sacrifice. However Strzelecki’s promise caused a dispute over who had first discovered gold in the Bathurst district when Edward Hargraves’ discovery of gold” in 1851 was not suppressed and led to the gold-rush.

Strzelecki’s second journey started on 21 December 1839, when he left Sydney to explore the Australian Alps. James Macarthur, James Riley, two convicts and an aboriginal guide called Charlie Tara made up the expedition.

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SIR PAUL E. DE STRZELECKI (1797-1873)

Strzelecki's journey to Kosciusko and beyond

by Lt Col H P G Clewes (1890 - 1990)

Strzelecki left Sydney on 21st December 1839. This is attested by a letter written by him on that date to his friend Donaldson in Melbourne, "I am off for the Snowy Mountains this very moment – from thence for Port Phillip and Launceston – Hobart Town – Sydney again".

He was at Camden on 26th December, and on the 20th January at Bagalong (midway between Yass and Jugiong) – according to a letter by Philip Gidley King to John Hay of Welaregang, recommending Strzelecki to him. He arrived at Ellerslie – Hannibal MacArthur's station on 5th February, 1840, with a pack horse and convict servant. Strzelecki's movements between 5th February, when he arrived at Ellerslie Station, and 2nd of March when he left it with Macarthur require some guesswork.

It is thought that Strzelecki after a few days rest at Ellerslie, left for Welaregang to deliver the letter of recommendation, given him by Philip Gidley King at Bagalong on 20th January to Mr.(afterwards Sir) John Hay. Also he probably took bearings to Dargal, Tumbarumba and possibly Kosciusko which can be seen from Welaregang.

THE DOCUMENTATION

The documentation of the climb was extremely weak depending solely on Strzelecki's reports, until portion of MacArthur's diary covering the detour trip to the top of Kosciusko became available 1942, when a few pages came into possession of the Mitchell Library. Strzelecki scarcely ever recorded a date for any of his travels and of the three he did record for the whole of the Gippsland episode, the day he left Sydney and the day he arrived at Westernport appear correct, but the date for the ascent of Kosciusko is wrong.

This is surprising because every time he used the sextant to obtain position he must have referred to the Nautical Almanac under the correct date for the sun or star coordinates. It is surprising that the date was not queried before

MacArthur's diary became available, because in Strzelecki's book, "Physical Description", on pages 209/211 there is a table showing that he was at Ellerslie on 26th, 28th, and 29th February reading the Thermometer at hourly intervals. The sun declinations in this table verify the dates. In his own account, after descending from Kosciusko, he went straight on down to Omeo, and did not return to Ellerslie.

He was at McAlister's out-station on the Tambo River on the 27th March. Allowing for "several days" at Omeo this would concur with MacArthur's date for the Kosciusko ascent of March 12th. Strzelecki's date for climbing Kosciusko, namely February 15th would make this interval 6 weeks instead of 2.

The chief difficulty in verifying any of Strzelecki's findings arises from the loss of his field book and perhaps his computation sheets. It is against all survey ethics for such a book to be destroyed. But it must be remembered that Strzelecki was a gifted amateur and not a professional in any of the disciplines which he practiced. In his last will, in London, he left instructions for all his papers to be destroyed.

It is to be noted that Strzelecki never mentions that anybody accompanied him on the Kosciusko trip, and judging solely on his written description he made the trip entirely on his own. But the "Port Phillip Herald" June 2nd reported "Count and Mr Macarthur ascended the Australian Alps on the 12th February, about noon, they found themselves sitting on the most elevated peak of Australia.....". It can be assumed that this information (not very accurate but mentioned Macarthur) was given to the press by Strzelecki himself.

Next newsletter: Part One of the Ascent of Mt Kosciuszko.

NEWSLETTER

IN THE ALPINE MUSEUM

Issue # 71 February 2020 Page 6

With the closure of the Museum from 1st January to 17 January 2020 due to bushfire activity to the west and south of Thredbo, visitation figures were down however for the period 26-31 December 2019 the daily average was 48 each day. The Museum was open 15 days in the December-January months with a total of 391 visitors. The previous summer holidays (2018/19) we were open 29 days with a total of 1036 visitors.

There is always something new in the Museum and this summer is the addition of a touch screen for visitors to enable them to have a personalised viewing of footage of images relating to Australia's alpine history.



Visitors explore the Museum's touch screen

The display on the Museum back wall of prints of photos taken by Charles Kerry at Kiandra between 1896 and 1910, is all the more

important following the loss of the Kiandra courthouse and its treasured display

The major feature display for 2020/21 will be "Transport in the Snowy Mountains – 1861 to 1980" with a selection of images and stories contained in the collection. Beside it will be a tribute to the first ascent of Mt Kosciuszko by Paul Strzelecki 180 years ago.

Information on the Mosaic data base is continually being expanded and now includes material on over 100 personalities who contributed to Australian skiing and/or Thredbo, in addition to member ski clubs and voluntary associations which form the foundation of the Thredbo community.

Chrissi Webb



This young lady was the first visitor to the Alpine Museum following the re-opening after the recent bush fire crisis. Here she is welcomed by Chrissi Webb

COMMENTS FROM VISITORS

A. Beaconhill, Pakenham VIC: Very fun, really funny when we got in the old chairlift seat

Marty & Esti Coughlin, Keilor VIC: Photographs great, love to read everything

Lana & Gordon Crotty, Dundas NSW: Wonderful – glad we were told it was here.

Adi Anjis, Franklin ACT: Lovely displays. The lady volunteer was really helpful

Lachlan and friends, Frankston South VIC: Such a sick place filled with awesome stuff

Stead Family, Stanthorpe QLD: Loved being here – had to leave early due to fires (31.12.19)

Greg Bayliss, Canberra ACT: Thredbo is beautiful and generously hospitable.

ORAL HISTORY 2019 REVIEW

A number of personal issues to do with bushfires, drought and a death all relate to the lack of progress on the remaining three 'legendary' Oral Histories prior to their finalization. Although recent information suggests that two of these could well be completed by year end.

Once these OH are finally completed the time will be ripe to phase in the second generation of individual Thredbo 'legends' into the OH program. Though should the offspring of a first generation pioneer be willing to contribute with an interview about a family member we will be happy to oblige. Rod Collman, the son of Danny Collman is one such example.

I feel that the time has come to recruit one of our members, or perhaps the son or daughter of a member. Hopefully within the

next winter season, or the latest by the 2021 season; whereby it would be timely for me to step aside.

This allows us quite a lengthy time-span which should give us ample opportunity to introduce and mentor a younger member to our ranks, to take on the Oral History Program. One who is more familiar with the next generation of Thredbo identities, someone keenly motivated to document their contribution. Ideally we seek to recruit a candidate from the world of media, journalism or marketing to take on the position. Should you or anybody you know be interested in such a role please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

Jerry Kretzgar

PROFILE: RAYLENE JARVIS

Born and bred in Sydney, but my family spent many Easter holidays camping/caravanning along the river around Jindabyne in 1950 and 1960s.

I married in 1970 and my former husband's family came from the Corryong/Cudgewa area, we spent holidays etc in the area.

From 1989 to 2003 I joined the Sydney North Alpine Team, my job was to take the Cub Scouts to Jindabyne for the weekend to see and play in the snow, many of whom had never seen snow. Such a lot of fun.

In 2004, I was employed by Kosciusko Alpine Club as their book keeper, my role was to do all the accounting for three lodges and their membership. I retired in 2018.

I have four children and seven grandchildren, some of whom are learning to ski.

In 2000, I started my bookkeeping business which continues to this day.



Raylene Jarvis

Today there is nothing left of the township of Kiandra which housed up to 10,000 during the gold rush in the 1860s. Although the gold rush was short lived, community survived with a declining number of inhabitants into the 1970s.

The Courthouse, built as a police station in 1890, was the only significant building of historical interest left standing until it was tragically destroyed in the January 2020 bushfires.

After it closed as a police station in 1937, it was used as a private residence for a time, before becoming the Kiandra Chalet (until 1943) and later the Kiandra Chalet Hotel. Kurt Lance slept in what used to be the police cell, when he competed in the "Back to Kiandra" ski races in the early 1960s.

The Chalet closed in 1973 and the building was then used as a Main Roads depot. As the last resident left in 1974, the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) took over the area and demolished most of the other buildings in the township.

In 2008, the NPWS and volunteers from Tumut began restoring the historical building. The Thredbo Historical Society members visited the Courthouse and were privileged to see treasured memorabilia on display in 2012

By 2019 volunteers were opening the Courthouse to the public during peak tourism times.

The destruction by bushfire of the historic Courthouse is a tragedy in the story of Australia's alpine history.

References:

- 1) *Perisher Historical Society Newsletter* 2019-20 – perisherhistory.org.au
- 2) *Thredbo Historical Society, 2020*



Kiandra Police Station 1896

Photo: Charles Kerry



Kiandra Courthouse 2019

Photo: NPWS



**Destruction by bushfire of Kiandra Courthouse
in January 2020**

Photo: Phyllis Dowling, Tumut.

THS MEMBER RECEIVES AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD

Julie Kantor, a THS member since 2013 has received the following award announced in the Australia Day Honours 2020. Officer (AO) in the General Division of the Order of Australia.

“Julie Kantor South Yarra Vic.

For distinguished service to the community through philanthropy, to indigenous governance initiatives and to the visual and performing arts. “

The press release reported that Kantor follows in the steps of her famous grandmother Dame Elizabeth Murdoch who received an AO in 1989 for her public service and philanthropy. It was further reported that “a love of music runs through Kantors work, inspired by her Czech father Milan who trained as a concert pianist”.

Julie is the god daughter of Frank Prihoda, she owns a property in Thredbo and is a regular attendee at our Mid Winter Dinner. Congratulations.



Julie Kantor with Simon and Susie Lang at the Mid Winter Dinner 2017

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Kellie Meehan, Thredbo
Leah Foster, Thredbo
Marcus Hanlon, Thredbo

THS MEMBERSHIP FEES 2020/21

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: \$1000/yr
Bronze: \$500/yr

THS OFFICE BEARERS: 2020/2021

Patron: Alan Rydge
President: Alan Fredericks alanf@bigpond.net.au
02 9449 7610 / 0417401403
Vice President: Ed Denny 6457 6222
Vice President: Wayne Kirkpatrick 0418 766 484
Secretary: Maureen Roberts 6456 1289
Treasurer: Raylene Jarvis 0414 679 409
Committee:
Public Officer: Christina Webb 6456 2279
Membership: Anne Collet 5100 3823
Oral History: Jerry Krejzar 0411 224 356
Randy Wieman, Kerri Koczanowski, Errol Hanlon.

THREDBO ALPINE MUSEUM

Opening Hours: 1 – 5 pm
Peak: July – September 2018
December 26 – January 27
(closed Mondays)
Other: Weekends only
Spring: October, November
Autumn: Feb March April, June
Plus public holidays and special events

GLIMPSES OF TRANSPORT IN THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS



Visitors to Hotel Kosciuszko – 1910

Photo: Charles Kerry



Hotel Kosciuszko circa 1928

Photo: Lindsay Sidwell

GLIMPSES OF TRANSPORT IN THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS



Leaving for Charlotte Pass from Hotel Kosciusko

Photo: THS Collection



Charlotte Pass Dog Team

Photo: THS Collection

THREDBO HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOOK ORDER FORM (2020/21)

Order Details: Name: _____
 Address: _____
 _____ Postcode _____

**ALL THESE BOOKS CAN BE
 PURCHASED ON LINE @**

www.thredboalpinemuseum.org.au

QUANTITY	PUBLICATION DESCRIPTION	PAYMENT
	Andrew, Roger: Thredbo – My Story Soft Cover, 156 pages, 29.5x21cm. colour photos Cost \$40 Postage & packaging \$13.40	
	Clarke, Norman W Clarke (2006): Kiandra – Gold Fields to Snow Fields Hard cover, 178 pages 22x29cm, b&w photos Cost \$30 Postage & packaging \$13.40	
	Darby, Jim (2006): Thredbo 50 – a commemorative book Hard cover, 123 pages, 22x28cm, colour photos Cost \$20 Postage & packaging \$13.40	
	Freuden, George: Off Piste – My Way: A Memoir 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>	
	Sonia Howard (2013): Flame of Leviticus – a biography of Kurt Lance Soft cover, 302 pages 30 colour plates Cost \$20 Postage & packaging \$8.25	
	Helen Malcher/Philip Lewis: Charles Anton, the Main Range & Thredbo 1950-1962 DVD, PG rating, Duration 32 minutes Cost \$25 Postage & packing \$3.20	
	Hughes, Geoffrey (one of the founders of Thredbo) (2007): Starting Thredbo Soft cover, 44 pages, 21x31cm, colour & b&w photos Cost \$20 Postage & packaging \$8.25	
	Keys, Charles (2017): Thredbo: Pioneers, Legends, Community Hard cover: 29 cm x 21 cm, 176 pages, b&w and colour photos. Cost \$50 Postage and packing \$13.40	
	Southwell-Keely, Peter (2009) Out on the Tops – The Centenary of Kosciuszko Alpine Club Hard cover 28 cm x 21 cm, 320 pages colour & b&w photos. Cost \$30, Postage & packaging \$13.40	
	Southwell-Keely, Peter (2012): Highway to Heaven: A History of Perisher and Ski Resorts Along the Kosciuszko Road Hard Cover, 256 pages, b&w & colour photos. Cost \$50 Postage & packaging \$13.40	
	Sponar, Tony (1995): Snow in Australia – that's news to me Hard cover, 362 pages, 15.5x23.5cm, photos Cost \$20 Postage & packaging \$13.40	
	Russell, Rebel Penfold: Tommy Tomasi – a life well travelled DVD, PG rating, Duration 44 minutes Cost \$25 Postage & packing \$3.20	
	Russell, Rebel Penfold: Thredbo 50 Years DVD, PG rating, Duration 32 minutes Cost \$25 Postage & packing \$3.20	
	Wieman, Randy: One Man Alone – Malcolm Milne Val d'Isere 1969 DVD, Cost \$25 Postage & packing \$3.20	
	Wieman, Randy: Kurt Lance - Last time on the Main Range DVD, Cost \$10 Postage & packing \$3.20	
	TOTAL AMOUNT	

Ordering & enquiries Mail: Thredbo Alpine Museum, Thredbo Historical Society Inc, PO Box 6, THREDBO 2625
 Phone/Fax: 02 6456 2279 (Museum Administrator), Email: chrisi.wikner@outlook.com

Cheques payable to: Thredbo Historical Society Inc.

Direct Payment: Thredbo Historical Society Westpac Bank BSB 032- 728 Acct 106314 with details: surname & Book