

# **THREDBO HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

## **ANNETTE (SZELOCZKY) ROBERTS – AN ORAL HISTORY**

**Conducted by Christina Webb  
Thredbo Alpine Museum, Thredbo, April 21<sup>st</sup> 2017**



**Annette (Szeloczky) Roberts, 2017**

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*This is Chrissi Webb and I am interviewing Annette Roberts in the Ski Museum in Thredbo. The date is Good Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017.*

This is quite an honour to be here. Neil, my husband and I are here in Thredbo for an Easter work party. We are members of Talara Ski Club. You have asked me to give you an oral history about growing up in Thredbo. It was a unique time. It was the early sixties and I was one of seven children including my sister Fiona, who lived in the village. I guess the memories from that time are quite unique.

*Can I take a step back please? To place you in history, who were your grandparents?*

My grand-parents were William Grant and Winifred Grant nee Crane. They lived at Pymble. My grandfather was a well known builder, Grant and Sons, and he built a lot of the now, iconic buildings in Sydney – David Jones as an example. My grandparents are part of the equation of growing up in Thredbo. My grandmother was forty four when my mother was born in 1931, ten years after the other four siblings.

My mother was Helen Jeanette Grant. She had to get married because she was pregnant with me and this was quite a shock to my grandmother but they soldiered on. My father, Ian Simpson was a skier. My mother was already a skier and she used to go to the Chalet when she was about eighteen years of age. Coming from a well-to-do family, there were finances available, so they used to go to the Chalet.

I was born on the 1<sup>st</sup> June, 1951 (the first day of winter). That marriage lasted until I was about the age of seven and in that time, my mother and Ian had talked about building a lodge in Thredbo and my grandmother came on board to fund that lodge. My grandfather died when I was eight years old. So in the time of making plans to build a ski lodge, the marriage actually came to an end. My mother met Steve Szelocsky in Thredbo. Because of their meeting up, that actually mobilised the completion of the building of the lodge.

*Who was Steve Szelocsky?*

Steve was a Hungarian refugee sent to the Russian Front as a nineteen year old, when Hungary entered world War 11. Later he became trapped behind the Iron Curtain when Hungary was taken over by the communists. His escape and eventual migration to Australia is an exciting story that my sister Fiona has chronicled in detail in her Family History Book.



*Steve Szeloczky c. 1950 in Hungary, Rowing champion 1955*

*Do you know when your step father was born?*

Steve was born in Budapest in 1922

*Why did he come to Thredbo?*

He and Bela Racsko, friend and later business partner, escaped together from Hungary. They came to Thredbo after winning a tender to build Roslyn Lodge. I think like a lot of Europeans, Steve was drawn to the mountains and the available work. It was towards the end of the construction phase of the Snowy Mountains Scheme. He ended up doing a lot of plumbing but he wasn't actually a plumber.

*Did he get his qualifications in Europe?*

We have no family history on his qualification but we believe he was a qualified welding engineer.

*Was it actually during the building of the lodge that your parents separated?*

Yes, it was. My father Ian said that he actually introduced my mother to Steve. I don't know how true that is. I think the marriage was actually failing at that stage. Without the financial backing of my grandmother particularly, the lodge would have never been built. So it was quite a legacy my grandparents gave my mother. My mother was at that stage running a newsagency and haberdashery in Turrumurra. She leased that business and moved to Thredbo with my sister Fiona and I.

What is remarkable to me is that my mother was only 30 years old when she married Steve. So here she was in her second marriage, living in Thredbo after building a lodge. She possessed the same vision and tenacity that my grandfather had.

*When you lived in Turrumurra, did you go to school in Turrumurra?*

Yes, I attended Pymble Public up until about Grade 3 or 4 then came to Thredbo and started with Blackfriars Distance Correspondence School. I was eight and Fiona was



four when we arrived in Thredbo. Fiona has led a remarkable life, marrying Kjell Ellingsen whom she met in Canberra and returning with Kjell to their now family home in the Arctic Circle in Norway, when their first child Paul was about 2 ½ years old. Inger their daughter born 3 years later now lives in Australia and is an Officer in the Australian Navy and Paul a PHD Scientist in Norway.

Helen our youngest sister was born to Steve and my mother in 1966, growing up in Thredbo in her early days with a nanny employed to care for her as they managed Lantern Lodge together. Helen a talented Horticulturist, lives in Leura with her builder husband Shane and two sons Brendan and Hayden, both now at University.

*Jennette and Steven Szeloczky  
Fiona and Annette Szeloczky (Simpson)*



My mother married Steve when I was nine. I don't remember Ian very much in that equation. Ian was a tradesman. He was an electrician. They were very young when they met – they were nineteen and I was born when they were twenty. My grandparents sponsored Ian during his electrician apprenticeship and my mother was running the shop in Pymble after they got married. I don't remember Ian coming to Thredbo very much. It was more my mother. So Steve must have been on the scene when I was eight.

*Was Steve working on Lantern Lodge?*

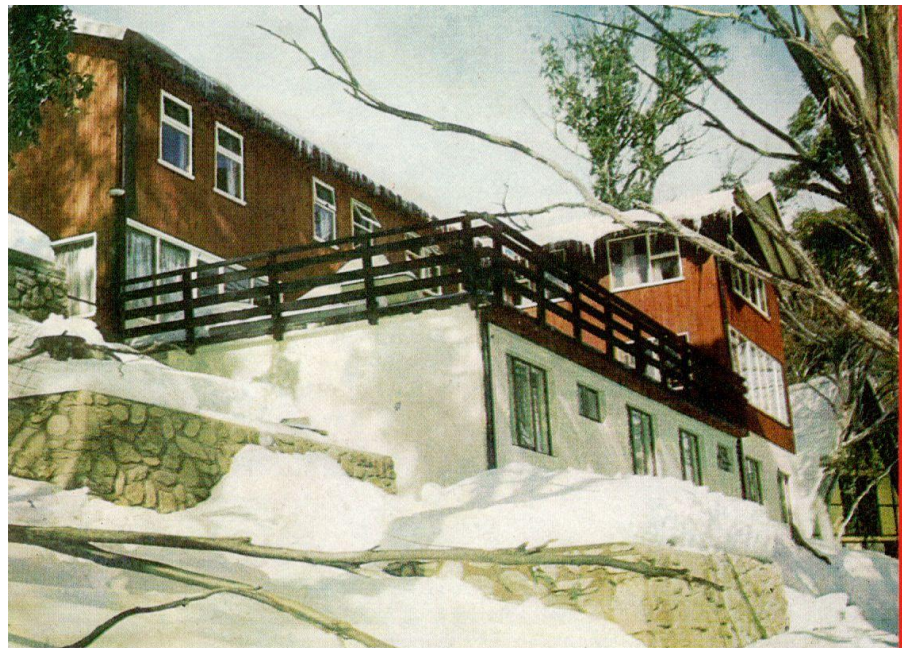
He would have been.

*Do you know who actually designed Lantern Lodge?*

Steve and Bela were business partners and friends as I have already mentioned, I am not aware of who designed the original Lantern Lodge, but it seems likely Bela was involved in some way

*Bela was a builder, he was also an architect. Steve was the plumber?*

Yes, Steve was a "Jack of all trades". Going back to my growing up, when Steve and my mother married in Sydney, from the age of eight until I went to boarding school when I was twelve and a half, we lived in Thredbo continually.



***Lantern Lodge***

In that time the lodge was expanded from a twenty six bed lodge to a sixty bed lodge. It became a huge undertaking. It was a twenty six bed lodge initially built and then Steve and my mother expanded the lodge – it tripled its size in that time as well, so there was a lot of activity.

For many of those growing up years Fiona and I spent a lot of time outdoors. My sister has chronicled so many memories in her book. Just recalling the memories now, I would like to just focus on the skiing aspects

*Before we talk about skiing, I want to ask you about the running of the lodge. Your mother was a haberdasher - would she have done a lot of the decorating?*

She did a lot of the decorating. She leased her business and she was able to obtain a lot of materials.

*Did she choose a particular style for the furnishing of the lodge?*

I think she chose the Tyrolean style because there were hearts cut out in the back of the chairs in the dining room area but it wasn't all Tyrolean. I can remember the eiderdowns that were that rich sort of style of the '60s. There were eiderdowns on every bed. She did make a lot of the furnishings. I can't remember where the curtain furnishings were made. I think they were just normal curtains, plain colours. Yes, the lodge did have a Tyrolean theme

*Did she employ a chef?*

Yes, she did. We had a number of chefs actually but the most famous one was Louie. He was Hungarian and he taught my mum to cook, so when he departed she took over all the cooking.

*For sixty people?*

Yes. It was bed, breakfast and dinner but not lunch, not what we call "full board". A lot of activity happened around the kitchen area.

*Did any guests climb up the hill to have lunch with your mother?*

Not that I recall. I just remember the dinner and I remember breakfast being self serve - a Continental breakfast. There was a lounge up the top of the lodge, where people sat around the fire.

*Did they have entertainment there?*

Yes occasionally. I can just remember a procession of people coming to the lodge. There were parties. There were a lot of young people employed and different characters there. When I look back on it, I think the feel of the whole of the lodge was a bit like "Fawlty Towers". I didn't realise that as a child, but when we went to England for 2 years and we came back to Australia "Fawlty Towers" was all the rage on TV. For a time I couldn't look at it, because it was so reminiscent of my childhood with similar moments of black humour and less than ideal guest interactions

Steve was quite a character, quite a moral character in many ways. Ladies and gentlemen were not allowed to sleep together unless they were married, and he used to do patrols at night and check the bedrooms. He didn't take any nonsense. My mum was fairly fiery as well. She didn't take any nonsense. I remember one day she said to a couple, a European couple: "Well goodbye Mr and Mrs 'Jonathan', we won't be seeing you again." They were very fierce hoteliers, really. You wouldn't find that now but it was a bit of the "wild, wild west".

Even as children, we were amazed at some of things that happened in the lodge in the early sixties. Steve maintained vigilance over the guests, ensuring that they didn't get into any mischief: that they followed the rules and people slept in their own beds. He used to check the luggage of departing guests to make sure no cutlery was stolen.

*Which year did Lantern open?*

I think it was in 1960. So you asked me about growing up in the lodge: I have so many memories. There was one incident in the earlier twenty six bed lodge when the guests were complaining bitterly about the snow conditions. They were Hungarians. In those days not many people spoke Hungarian and my step-dad was in the small kitchen and he was getting more and more furious, so he went out and spilt milk over the lady and then went rushing back into the kitchen and got this really grotty sort of tea towel thing and started patting her down and apologising profusely in Hungarian. I am amazed that those people ever came back.

There was another time I saw him throwing out a young man when Steve discovered he (not a paying guest) was in bed with a woman. He literally opened the door and threw the man out through the door on to the snow. Thank goodness it was a soft landing for him. Really you just didn't mess with Steve. My mum could be a bit fierce too. I guess, in terms of patience, she really didn't have much time.

*Who taught you to ski?*

My most vivid memories of growing up in Thredbo, is the skiing. The first time I skied, my mother took us up on the slopes to the right of the lifts now. I became really upset because I couldn't walk straight up the hill. So she taught us how to herringbone, not sideways. You know, I became really exhausted very quickly, so I took the skis off and threw them down the hill and I said "I'm never going to do this again!" And she said "Well, if you do that, then you are never going to ski again!" Because I was eight, I really believed her. I think my little sister was a lot more patient than me – she still has a lot more patience than me. So I put the skis back on and I persevered. I never looked back after that, because she put me in a class with Leonhard Erharter, a well known instructor in early Thredbo days.

*So he actually taught children?*

Yes. There weren't many village children to be honest – it was a rarity to have a child on the slopes. So he took us as special local children.

*Who else was in your class? Do you remember?*

I remember myself, and my sister.

*Anyone else?*

No, I just remember him teaching me. Apparently he told my mother I was a natural – an absolute natural at skiing. It was "kind of" already in me. I learnt to ski in a week and from then on, I was on the top of it. I have seen it in the second of our three sons

Martin. He was an immediate natural on skis. And I have seen it in my grand children. Florence the eldest daughter of our youngest son Nathan was skiing in St Moritz at the age of 2 years—she is just a natural on the video we saw. There is something in us about skiing. I learnt to ski in a week and I never looked back under Leonhard's guidance. I am told that to learn to ski in a week is really, really quick. I am really glad that I put those skis back on.

*When you were a child, did you roller skate?*

I think I roller skated, I can't remember.

*It would have helped your balance and the feel of sliding.*

And the feeling of balance when it comes to skiing:

*Did you do ballet?*

Yes, I did do ballet as a young child. Skiing on the mountain was a glorious experience. We spent all those years, as young ones just skiing in winter. In the morning we did correspondence school and then we would be let loose in the afternoon to go skiing. So it was an ideal childhood in that respect.

Of course, if the weather was foul, you had to be actually pretty tough because you know you got 'chucked' onto the lift. I remember one time being on the lift on my own, and coming into Kareela Station which was the top station then and the chair was swinging wildly and I was on my own and I was really scared. So when I got off there I was crying and the lift operator said "What's wrong with you, it's only wind." Our ski gear wasn't that warm. We had woollen mittens, leather boots and probably not wind-proof jackets. So you spent a lot of time cold. You had to be really tough to get up there in the blizzard to go skiing. When you look at the equipment now, it is a miracle we didn't injure ourselves more.

The T-bar was just a whole experience in its own. On the T-bar in the Basin you got lifted off the ground and if the snow cover wasn't so deep, you spent the whole time twisting all the way up, around in the air. Being so little and the T's were very tight, you were lucky if you could get your feet on the ground. You learned to balance really well because you were twirling all the way up – you were lucky if your feet actually hit the ground. Even today at my age, at sixty five, it is very hard to tip me off a T-bar. My sister was worse off because she was younger than me: You had to be tough to ski at Thredbo.

*When you started school in Jindabyne, how did you get there? Was there a school bus?*

A very good question. On the way down here I was saying to my husband that I have been driving this road for fifty eight years from Sydney to Thredbo and I think in those days it could take up to ten hours and now if you don't stop, you can do it in five and a half hours. It is really amazing. So I have done a lot of road travel.



In the sixties we had the old Pioneer buses. After correspondence school, we went to Jindabyne Public School for my last two years of primary school; we were bussed from Thredbo to Jindabyne. Initially we had the old Pioneer buses – they were always breaking down. There are a lot of stories surrounding these trips.

**Gus Grayson's school bus**

**Front row: Jeffrey ?, Tony Hughes Julia Hughes, Kim Middleton, Fiona Szeloczky (Simpson),  
Middle row: Don, Mark, Lesley. Annette Szeloczky (Simpson), Eileen Rankin  
Back row: Colin Rankin, Gus Grayson (driver)**

Many times we never made it to school. But the first Thredbo little school bus, which was a mini-bus, nothing like the ones they have now, was driven by Mick Grayson. We picked up children from farm houses along the Alpine Way.

*Talking of Mick Grayson, what about his dog?*



**Fiona and Annette Szeloczky with Newfoundland Nanook (photo Daily Mirror)**



You have a photo of us with the dog in the Museum's collection. (Sunday Mirror front page spread) Nanook was huge. I remember him towing us along. When he barked, he was so loud. He was a very sweet dog and we loved him. Jindabyne was a whole other story but I won't go into that now.

*When did you go to boarding school?*

When I was twelve, both my sister and I went to boarding school in Sydney. We went to a school called Ravenswood in Gordon. We were there until the end of our schooling.

*Did you stay with your grandparents?*

No, we were boarders. The house in Turramurra where we grew up was rented. I used to have dreams at school of being back in Thredbo. I used to get homesick.

In those days, we used to fly on the DC-3s to Sydney. My mum never left enough time for anything. We were always running late because she always did two things at once. She would drop us off at the airport but not before she had done the lodge shopping. So she was always late. But those pilots always knew she would be late so they would be waiting on the tarmac, waiting for our car to come down and then load us girls up on to the plane. We would be about ten or fifteen minutes late. I remember being totally embarrassed, creeping into this plane because we were late. My aunt would meet us and take us back to boarding school. It was quite something. We always went home for holidays.

*When did you start ski racing?*

Almost right from the outset - from the age of nine - I remember going in Sasha's Cup. From the very first time, I just won races. I just about won every race I went in as a child and many into my young teenage/adult years. I have a record of those cups at home. I just took off. I was just a natural skier at racing as well. So I started with Sasha's Cup and then progressed to the Junior NSW Championships, and then to the Open NSW and Nationals. I think you had to be sixteen to be in the adult races but I remember that in my case they made a special exemption because I was so progressed in terms of skiing and racing, and how I was racing.

*Had the race club or development squad started then?*

No it hadn't. So it was the school holiday program which they ran. We did become amongst the first members of the Thredbo Ski Racing Club. We were certainly part of that. But we started our racing with Sasha's Cup. Without Sasha, we wouldn't have had that opportunity.

*Did Sasha teach you?*

No. I don't remember anyone teaching me how to race. I just remember being told to get close to the poles. I think later during the NSW Championships we were part of the squad, but it wasn't like it is now. From then on I went in the Open Australian and NSW

Championships. They made an exception for me because I was fourteen and allowed to compete in those races.

*Did you have a race coach then?*

I don't recall a race coach. I really don't remember any clear memories of being taught.

*Who were your colleagues when you were ski racing? What about Christine Smith?*

I remember Christine Smith but she was a few years older than me. But I remember her clearly because I was invited to be a member of the Australian Ski Team when I was fourteen and part of the Inter Dominion Team that went to New Zealand, and I was so young that I needed a chaperone.

*In which year did you go to New Zealand?*

I was fourteen so it would have been 1965.

*At which resort in New Zealand were you racing?*

In Queenstown, that was something special. Then I was taken to Mt Hotham, again with a chaperone, for the Australian Ski Championships, I think I was about sixteen at that time. I was competing in the Open Championships against adults.

*Were you seeded?*

I really don't know, the only rating you got was a number on your bib, but if you got #1 or #2, you knew you were placed in a higher category and I often did have #1 or #2. I am not boasting but it was just a way of life - in those days, there weren't a lot of us. My husband thinks I am very competitive and I am not sure where that came from but I was very competitive. However there was something in me, that I did have that edge, that pushing myself to win. So I was quite focussed when I was racing.

*Did you ski with the boys?*

Yes, we skied with the Clifford children a lot.

*Did you compete with the boys?*

*Annette Szeloczky (Simpson) at sixteen years of age*



No, it was more that I enjoyed the exhilaration of the speed. I recall that my sister and I just loved the exhilaration of the speed and I still love that. That there were times when my sister and I would ski to the bottom of the Basin - in those days that was the area

where the beginners were - we would snow plough up to them and pretend we were beginners and then get ahead of them and speed off – just to show off. We just loved showing off. Yes, it was the exhilaration and the movement

*How long did you continue to race?*



**Annette Szeloczky (Simpson)  
1970 Australian National Champion**

Until I was nineteen: In 1970 I won the Australian Women's Open Championships. I retired after that – that was the same year I joined the Thredbo Ski Patrol. I wanted something to do. I wanted to continue to ski and be part of the community.

*How old were you when you finished school?*

I was eighteen after completing the High School Certificate.

*Did you come back to live in Thredbo then?*

No, I was still living in Sydney and I trained to be an occupational therapist at university. There was a point in my life after I won the Australian Championships when I thought about whether I wanted skiing as a career but I remember looking at my results and it was quite clear that Australians on the world stage were not yet at the level we now are. It is a decision I have never regretted – choosing an academic, professional career.

I graduated from Sydney University Cumberland College. I used to joke with my children that I could have been on the back of a cereal box. In those days if you were a sporting hero, you were featured on the back of a cereal box. Occupational therapy gave me an absolutely wonderful career.

*Where did you work as an occupational therapist?*

I started off in hospital based outpatient paediatrics moving to working at Mt Wilga Private Rehab Hospital in Sydney for about 10 years. I then went back to university to do post graduate studies graduating in 2003 and moved into insurance rehabilitation industry.

*What was the effect of occupational therapy on your involvement with the ski patrol?*

Ski patrolling was a natural progression from occupational therapy. We were trained under the Red Cross. I was really surprised with the level of expertise required. I had a lot of fun patrolling. It required a lot of focus and fitness. It was quite stressful ski racing and I liked it but when I stepped into ski patrolling, the sense of community and sense of fun just blew my mind away. It was a wonderful thing to be in.

George Freuden was wonderfully kind to me. He took me for my ski proficiency test – and I love this story and I know he loved the story – soon after I won the Australian Championship – he had to take me for the ski test so I could join the ski patrol, as that was part of the procedure. He was really apologetic. So we set off from Crackenback and we came down Merritt's Falls, which was a beautiful glorious run then, all the way down to the Cat Walk.

We arrived at the bottom of the run and maybe it was not such a good thing but there were holes opening up where the river is and as he skied across he actually disappeared down into a hole. It was a ski patrol test and he took me down there – and I can remember looking down and saying "Are you alright?" He was fine but we needed help to get him out and I can't remember all those details. I just remember we were all laughing: It was my ski test and here I was rescuing him. Of course I passed it. It was really funny. That was my introduction to ski patrolling.

George Freuden was a close part of my growing up. He and George Weiss were young lads in their twenties. My mother took to them and she actually made a special room down the bottom of the lodge and that was their room when they came down and could stay there for a while.

*Was ASPA formed then?*

No. Not that I recall but I believe in its early days of formation?

*Who was the doctor in the village or were there alternating doctors?*

I cannot recall. I was commuting from Sydney. I was studying and part ski patrol when I could get away so that was my life then – studying and being part of the ski patrol.

*How long did you remain a member of the ski patrol?*

That is part of my ski story: Yes I was a member through the birth of my first two sons. I was married in 1976. I had our first son Simon in 1978 and second son Martin in 1981. My last day on ski patrol was in 1983 at 8 months pregnant, up at Merritts station Ski Patrol room on radio duty. They slowed the lift down to get me on and off. After that we were not to return to skiing as a family for another 7 years

*Was your husband a skier?*

Yes. He had discovered skiing a year before we met and we met quite independently of skiing but he was already 'hooked' by a love of skiing. So when he met me, I felt so sorry for him because he had only just started. When at Thredbo together as a couple for the



first time, we were skiing Crackenback at that stage and he was having all sorts of problems. It wasn't long after I had won the Australian Ski Championships. I was thinking "you've met an Australian Ski Champion and you are trying to keep up with me." One time he told me to go away as he recovered from yet another a fall.

*Did he go to ski school?*

Yes. He did take lessons after we were married in 1976, we moved here and became lift operators for a season. It was the first season they actually put women on the lifts, so that would have been around about 1976. I was on ski patrol then. So I worked in Thredbo for a year and that was fun – before children.

*You didn't bring them down at all?*

No, we didn't have the money, a young family; my husband was studying at that stage. I wasn't working when my children were very young.

*Did you mother still own Lantern Lodge?*

No, she had sold it a long time ago.

*Do you remember when?*

She sold the lodge in 1972 to Bela and Val Thurzay, gifting Steve with most of the sale as part of their separation and end of marriage to enable him to set himself up for the future. She remained the owner of Lantern Lodge until its sale. The marriage to Steve lasted about ten years. The marriage ended in 1974. The marriage had broken down already around the time the lodge was sold. That is perhaps what triggered the sale.

*Did your mother go back to the family home?*

Yes, she went back to our family home in Turrumurra. She set up a catering business called Pymble Plate which generated a modest income for many long years. She retired when she was 60yrs of age.

*Did Steve go back to Sydney?*

Yes he bought a house in Sydney close to our family home eventually selling up and returning to the outskirts of Cooma where he lived until the end of his life. Their marriage really was not a happy relationship. Towards the end it wasn't such a good marriage at all. Unfortunately I didn't have a close relationship with Steve.

*But he adopted you?*

No. He never adopted us. We took on his surname but we were not formally adopted. I actually didn't find that out until I tried to apply for a passport. In fact I wasn't legally adopted. I was still a Simpson by birth. We took on his name when my mother married him.

*Do you know when he died?*

Steve died in 2004 and is buried in Cooma. My mother then went on to marry again in 1976. She married Gus Almgren - her third marriage and he was the love of her life. They were very happy living in Sydney moving to Wahroonga area after selling our family home in Turrumurra. My mother died in January 2017 age 85 years.

*What was it like when you came back to skiing?*

After seven years it was quite an emotional experience. It wasn't like the old days. It was a bit like the children's story of our era "Rip van Winkle" experience for me. In that seven years gap Thredbo underwent a massive commercial change in facilities and ambience as now one of Australia's premier ski resorts. The year we came back was 1988.

*Did you join a ski lodge?*

Yes we did. We stayed at Talara: Our kids, Simon, Martin and Nathan took to skiing like ducks to water. Simon was eleven Martin was nine, and the youngest was seven when they started skiing. 'Daddy' was earning money as a Director of Nursing Hospital Manager. 'Mummy' was back at work – that is exactly why we could do it. We were living in Asquith in Sydney.

The first year we were not members of Talara but because my sister had married Kjell and she had gone back to Norway with him: she so kindly transferred her membership to me because you could transfer between family members and that 'opened a door' which has never been shut. Some years later Talara opened their waiting list pool of potential members and my husband was pulled out as number one in the membership ballot and he became a member. And now our son Martin is a member and currently on the board of directors of Talara.

*How many beds are there at Talara?*

Twenty four beds, there are about two hundred and fifty members. The lodge is right next to the landslide site. We had geo-tech investigations following the landslide and remedial works after that. So we keep coming back to Talara. We come back two or three times a year to Thredbo for working parties, in August and another time when my husband can get away.

*Did your boys go into the development squad?*

Oh no, they never went in to racing. They just went skiing and snowboarding.

*Do they all come down at the same time?*

No. Martin and his family come when they can, as he is an international airline pilot, so holidays need to be planned well ahead. Nathan and his family live in Alice Springs and

ski at Falls Creek as his wife has close family connections at Falls Creek. Simon and his wife no longer ski. Our 4 grandkids at this point in time will all be skiers.

*How are you holding up to the snow plough?*

My knees are holding up. I don't have any arthritis in any of my body except my right foot.

*Have you ever had an injury?*

Yes, I had an injury when I was an adult but never has a child: and it was an interesting injury to my shoulder ending up by being brought down in a ski patrol akja. I had just fallen on it lightly. It wasn't a bad fall but an end of the day kind of thing. I am quite careful. I have never lost my ski patrol awareness so I never do that last run. It was on High Noon and I just fell lightly and my right shoulder felt a little bit sore. There was a ski patroller doing speed patrol down at the bottom and I skied down to him and stopped. He said "Are you alright?" and I said "I think so." He must have picked up something and said "I am going to put you in an akja." He took me to the surgery and straight away the doctor said: "I think you have done something there. There is something and I am going to take an X-ray." But nothing showed up. He sent me to a shoulder specialist.

About four weeks later I walked into the specialist's rooms and he must have thought another aging 'shoulder lady' as he appeared almost bored and sombre. He arranged for an MRI and I returned for another visit. He was totally animated because I had a fractured acetabulum – the ball in the shoulder joint. It was a hairline fracture with swelling. He commented: "This will take a number of months to get over because I had the same thing from a skiing accident!"

*Were you working at the time?*

Yes, well I had a desk job and I thought "No wonder this shoulder of mine is a bit troublesome." So that was my only concession to my injury.

*Skiing now?*

So we come back every year now. I got to the point in skiing where I didn't want to continue, and my cousin Robbie Grant – (as a child he used to come and stay with us at Lantern Lodge) introduced me to shorter skis and I have never looked back after that. So the old Austrian style of skiing was not suitable and I had to go and have lessons to ski on them.

Robbie said "Why don't you join the veteran ski racing?" So he took me up there one day and I probably have too much rehab knowledge, as I really don't want to wreck my back. I want to have a long life and I don't want to put my body under that stress. The day he took me to the races I was 'absolutely horrified' at all these ex-racers in their Lycra and I thought "Some of you really should not be in Lycra now. When you were younger, you looked wonderful but not now." So I said to Robbie "No Thank you I am not going down in that direction. I'll just be a recreational skier and just enjoy the social part of skiing now."

We ski with our mates and our friends from the ski club, do our half day skiing. My husband wants to ski as long as Tommy Tomasi but I don't know how long I will ski for, but as long as I enjoy it. Now I am 65 and I have half price lift tickets.

It is fun, just social and we are probably fitter than we have ever been. We go to the gym twice a week and we have a personal trainer.

*Well I would like to say thank you very much for sharing your history. Are you happy for this to be transcribed and to be shared with others doing research? And you are willing to share the copyright with Thredbo Historical Society?*

Yes, I would like to say "thank you very much" and I am happy to share the copyright with the Society.



## Oral History Interview Agreement

In this agreement, the interviewee assigns copyright to Thredbo Historical Society Incorporated. Your recorded interview will become part of Thredbo Historical Society's collection, where it will be preserved for future researchers. The Thredbo Winter Sports Museum is grateful for your participation in this oral history project.

This is an agreement between the **INTERVIEWEE** and the **Thredbo Historical Society Incorporated** (please fill in your details):

**Interviewee**            Annette Roberts

**Name:**                    Annette Roberts

**Parent/guardian:**  
(if applicable):

**Address:**                41 Amor St

Hornsby

NSW

**Postcode:** 2077

**Telephone:**            0409 811 410

**Fax:**

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netnotes@bigpond.com

I have been asked and have agreed to be interviewed by Thredbo Historical Society Incorporated, subject to this agreement and as part of the Museum's programs. The Museum has advised me that it wishes to preserve the Interview as part of Thredbo Historical Society Incorporated's collection. Once the Interview is preserved at Thredbo Historical Society Incorporated, I understand that it can be used by the Museum for a variety of purposes including, but not limited to, exhibition, research, education material, public presentations, publication, website, broadcast and transmission unless I place restrictions hereunder on any of those uses.

**Name:** Annette Roberts                    And            **Thredbo Historical Society Inc** trading as

A. R. Roberts

**Thredbo Historical Society**

**Contact:**

**Address:**

**Postcode:**

**Telephone:**

**Email:**                    [annetteroberts@gmail.com](mailto:annetteroberts@gmail.com) see above