

TOMMY TOMASI (1926 -) is well known for his contribution to Thredbo and the Thredbo ski patrol

Tommy Tomasi sailed from Italy in early 1949 bound for Western Australia where he found a job in a gold mine north of Kalgoorlie. There he demonstrated his use of gelignite – a skill he acquired as an Italian partisan.

It was not long before he learnt about snow in Australia and headed east in 1952 where he gained employment with the Snowy Mountains Authority as a linesman. Having been a junior racer in Italy, he soon had a job as a ski instructor at Charlotte Pass. It was there he married Joyce Sloane in 1953 and rejoined the SMA as a hydrographer.

In 1957 with the Thredbo ski resort opening, Tommy and Danny Collman saw the need for a rescue service for injured skiers, and Tommy was seen as the driving force in the establishment of the Voluntary Patrol. The Thredbo Volunteer Ski Patrol became official on the June long weekend in 1958 with Tommy, Danny and Doug Thatcher as the first patrollers and by early July there were about a dozen volunteer patrollers. 1971 saw the formation of ASPA (Australian Ski Patrol Association), of which Tommy was a founding member together with George Freuden.

Once Tommy and his family moved to Sydney in 1963 to take up work with F J Palmer, owner of a Sydney department store, and then Fleets for nine years, and finally with Spalding, Tommy had become a very well known identity within the ski industry as a manager and ski importer. Always regarded as a highly sociable and experienced tour-leader, having escorted ski groups to the US and Europe over 35 years, is it any wonder that throughout his career Tommy had acquired such a multitude of skiing friends? Without a doubt Tommy would be one of the most widely recognised ski identities in our Snowy Mountains.

In 1990 once he retired Tommy and the household returned to Jindabyne where he lives today. His interest in volunteering with the Thredbo Ski Patrol has never ceased, and to this day he is recognised as ‘the face and patron of TSPA’. In 1983 he was made a life member for 25 years of service. In 1985, Kosciuszko Thredbo awarded him a Lift Pass for Life; and in 2001 The National Museum of Australia included Tommy as one of the 101 Australians chosen to represent Australia in the permanent Eternity Exhibition. For many years now Tommy takes a ride to the top of Crackenback for a walk in summer and in winter he can be found drinking a morning coffee with the Ski Patrol, still ‘helping out’ wearing his uniform.

Tommy Tomasi - a well respected Face of Thredbo.