

Andrew Thyne Reid

Thyne Reid is far from being the best known of the many people who have contributed to Thredbo's evolution these last several decades. His association with this place was relatively brief – only about six years, from 1955 to 1961, as leader of the founding syndicate and as the first chairman of the Kosciusko Thredbo Pty Ltd – and he was not a particularly notable person in terms of skiing itself. But he has a claim to fame that is both unique and highly important: he saved Thredbo from commercial oblivion – not once, but twice.

The first occasion was in 1957, when he became the chairman of the new company that we know as KT. His money constituted most of what the infant Kosciusko Thredbo could call upon to develop the resort. It was that money which paid, largely, for the access road from the Alpine Way, the original chairlift to Kareela, the first hotel and the early infrastructure of the village. In terms of financial investment, Reid kick-started Thredbo. The other directors had few financial resources to contribute, and the share float of 1958 was badly under-subscribed. Reid's money was vital. His years in charge also saw the beginnings of the Ski School and the Ski Patrol, both of which were supported by the company. Infrastructure and institutions developed together on his watch.

The second occasion came four years later when it became apparent that even Reid's considerable wealth would not be sufficient to allow the company to meet its contractual obligations, agreed with the Kosciusko State Part Trust, to complete the hotel and other elements of the resort. He thus sought a white knight with sufficient resources to allow Thredbo's development to continue. In fact he found two – Coach House Inns and Lend Lease – and he played them off against each other. Lend Lease won, and a quarter of a century's development of Thredbo under that company's leadership was ushered in.

Reid was a businessman, a philanthropist and a sports enthusiast: golf, rowing, flying and skiing were among his interests and he was a member of one of the most venerable alpine clubs in the nation – the Ski Club of Australia. Until now he has been recognised only in the name of Thyne Reid Drive, but his induction as a Face of Thredbo will help to solidify his place as a significant figure in the development of Australia's premier winter sports resort.