

FROZEN ACRES

January/February
2023



Issue 1 / 2023

FROZEN ACRES

Journal of the Canberra Alpine Club Inc.
GPO Box 27, Canberra, 2601
www.cac.org.au - password for protected areas 'franklin'
(maintained by Mirabel Wilson)

Editor: Judy Lejins

editor@cac.org.au. – 0400-786-324

Admin. Officer: Vicki Hughes

Please ensure you send all emails to office@cac.org.au, 0499-257-463

2022 – 23 Office Bearers

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| President | Caroline Walker | 0402-319-030 <i>president@cac.org.au</i> |
| Immediate past President | Jon Wilson (Bookings / Governance) | 0481-011-863 |
| Vice Presidents | Amanda East | 0412-546-680 |
| | Jeremy Lucas | 0409-375-385 |
| Secretary | Jenny McLeod (Membership / PR) | 0414-403-398 <i>secretary@cac.org.au</i> |
| Treasurer | Will Comensoli (Finance / Strategic Planning) | 0403-582-799 |
| Committee Members | Alan Booth | 0403-074-837 |
| | Peter Cunningham (Lodges / WH&S) | 0477-356-835 |
| | Yvette Lejins | 0416-299-675 |
| | Miriam Rihani (Snowsports) | 0414-339-761 |
| | Cheryl Taylor (Social) | 0406-375-751 |
| | Chrissie Young | 0401-953-420 |
| Club Captain | Sarah Brake | 0412-929-798 |
| Public Officer | Lindy Down | 0408-233-424 |
| Perisher Officer | Peter Richards | 0418-637-984 |
| Jindabyne Officer | Peter Cunningham | 0477-356-835 |
| Franklin Officer | Jenny McLeod | 0414-403-398 |
| O'Keefes Officer | Paul Oboohov | 0417-048-217 |

Perisher Telephone Number: 6457-5225

Editorial

With the easing of restrictions on overseas travel, a number of our members have been heading to Northern Hemisphere ski resorts during our summer. Many others have spent time at our lodges attending work parties, or going hiking or mountain biking on the many trails around the Snowy Mountains.

Members planning to go up to Perisher between Friday 17 and Monday 20 February need to be aware that as ariel pest control will be taking place, many walking tracks will be closed during that period. For further information refer to: nationalparks.nsw.au/visit-a-park/parks/kosciuszko-national-park/local-alerts.

The Club is very proud of 16-year old Valentino Guseli on his maiden World Cup Gold Medal in the Big Air snowboard event in Edmonton, Canada, and too of Laura Peel who won the Le Relais Women Ariels in Canada. We wish them well for their remaining events, and so too, our other elite club members, Bentley Walker-Broose and Tuva Bygrave who are also competing in the Northern Hemisphere this winter. ▣

Contents

2. Club Calendar
3. President's Precis *by Caroline Walker, President*
4. Vale - Christine McLennan
5. 2023 Annual General Meeting
6. Bern Brent turns 100
7. Mt Franklin Work Party 5 - 6 November *by Gavin Hearn*
12. O'Keefes Hut Work Party *by Amanda East*
17. My Injuries Snowboarding *by Noah Shepherd*
18. The Interschool Experience *by Asher Shepherd*
19. Alpine Trivia Quiz
20. Mt Townsend and Beyond: *by Monika Binder*
23. Answers to Alpine Trivia Quiz
24. Summer in the Snowy Mountains *by Mateo Campus Pascal*
27. Kosciuszko National Park / Ngarigo Country *by Jenny and Andrew Cupit*

Copy deadline for the next issue: Friday 24 March 2023

Please email your articles, letters, photos etc to editor@cac.org.au.

Frozen Acres is published online 5 to 8 days after each deadline and distributed by post a few days later.

Club Calendar

| 2023 | | | |
|-------------|-----------|----------------------------|--------------|
| February | 4-5 | Work Party | Jindabyne |
| | 11-12 | Work Party | Mt Franklin |
| | 18-19 | Work Party | Perisher |
| March | 11-13 | Work Party | Perisher |
| | 18-19 | Work Party* | O'Keefes Hut |
| | 22 | Annual General Meeting | Canberra |
| April | 15 | Work Party | Mt Franklin |
| | 16 | Heritage Festival Open Day | Mt Franklin |
| | 22-23 | Work Party | Perisher |
| May | 6-7 | Work Party | Jindabyne |
| | 13-14 tbc | Work & Weed Party | Perisher |

Note: Work Party dates are not confirmed and can be subject to change.

**Alternate dates for the O'Keefes Hut work Party, if the March date not possible: Easter Friday to Monday 7-10 April.*

Work Party bookings need to be made with the following members:

Perisher: Peter Richards, 0418-637-984

If you require a Park Entry Fee waiver, contact Judy Lejins, judylejins@ozemail.com.au or 0400-786-324, at least three weeks in advance with your car rego number.

Jindabyne: Peter Cunningham, 0477-356-835

Mt Franklin: Jenny McLeod, 0414-403-398

O'Keefes Hut: Paul Oboohov, 0417-048-217

Admin Officer's Hours

The Admin Officer Vicki Hughes, only works part-time for the Club, therefore the best way to contact her is by email.

Her summer hours are:

Monday -Friday: 9.00am – 1.00pm

On weekends she will check for anything urgent if she is in range and will respond as appropriate.

President's Précis

By Caroline Walker

Happy New Year! I hope everyone was able to enjoy some relaxing time with family and friends over the festive season. I know many members have been venturing overseas for the northern hemisphere winter while others have taken the opportunity to enjoy an Australian summer in the mountains.

Work parties held to date this season have been very well attended with much being achieved. Thorough cleaning of the lodges has been undertaken and necessary repairs made. There have also been outdoor activities such as weeding and cutting back of grass and trees. A stairlift has been installed in the Jindabyne lodge to assist members and guests to access the upstairs area. Removal of the old curtains and blinds in the Perisher bedrooms has occurred in readiness for installation of new window furnishings in coming weeks. And a number of worn out items in the Perisher kitchen have been replaced. Many thanks to Peter Cunningham, Peter Richards, Amanda East, Jenny McCleod and Paul Obohov for their efforts in coordinating the work parties. Thanks also to everyone who has attended. If you are yet to attend a work party this season, please consider signing up for some of the remaining ones – I understand limited spots are still available in most.

Bookings for Winter 2023 are already very strong. Almost all Tier 1 (member only) bookings received prior to the cut-off date of 20 November 2022 were able to be accommodated, with one night requiring a ballot. A reminder that the cut-off date for Tier 2 bookings (an equal number of guests as members, persons on the waiting list

and persons on the Associated Ex-Member list) is 19 February 2023. We hope to be able to confirm Tier 2 bookings within 14 days of the cut-off date. Please remember if your booking is unable to be satisfied in full, Vicki is available to discuss alternative options around dates and lodges.

Huge congratulations to Valentino Guseli on his maiden World Cup Gold Medal, in the Big Air snowboard event in Edmonton, Canada in late 2022. Following other strong results in the Big Air series, Valentino has now also won the season's World Cup Crystal Globe as the highest scoring athlete overall in Big Air. He is the first Australian to win the Big Air Crystal Globe and the youngest Australian to win a Crystal Globe. Amazingly, Val is also competing in halfpipe and slopestyle events this season (the only open age level athlete competing in all three disciplines) and performing very strongly. Best wishes to Val and our other elite athletes Laura Peel, Bentley Walker-Broose and Tuva Bygrave for the remainder of the season.

A reminder that the Club's AGM will be held on Wednesday 22 March 2023 at the Canberra Bridge Club, Deakin with remote attendance also being facilitated. The Committee will be supporting a number of motions to amend the Constitution dealing with remote attendance at meetings; raising the upper age of Youth Members; increasing the limit on the costs the Committee can commit the Club to without AGM approval; broadening the scope of the Club's objectives to include all snow sports rather than just skiing, updating the logo, and assorted other changes. There will also be updates on the Perisher lodge redevelopment and much more. I'd encourage all members to attend and have their say on issues important for the Club.

As always, if there is anything you would like to bring to my attention, please give me a call or email me at president@cac.org.au. ▣

Vale - Christine McLennan

14.06.1945 - 1.01.2023

Members will be saddened to learn of the death on 1 January of Chris McLennan. She was an active member of the Club from 1970 - 2021 and served on the Committee from 1989 - 1990 and again from 2012 - 2017.

Chris was a keen skier, many members will remember times spent with her on the slopes and while staying at Perisher Lodge.

We extend our deepest sympathy to her family, including her daughter Linda who is a Club Member.

2023 Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Canberra Alpine Club Inc. will be held at **7.30 pm**, on **Wednesday 22 March 2023** at the Canberra Bridge Club, 6 Duff Place Deakin ACT

Remote attendance will also be an option – details to be confirmed. New members and those on the waiting list are encouraged to attend. Snacks, coffee and tea will be provided after the meeting.

Nominations for the Committee

Nominations are called for the following Committee positions, which will become vacant at the 2023 Annual General Meeting:

President
Vice President (1)
Ordinary Committee Members (3)

Nominations for the Committee must be in writing, seconded in writing, and contain the signed consent of the nominee.

Only financial full adult members* are eligible to nominate or be nominated for the Committee or Public Officer.

Motions For AGM

Financial full adult members* are invited to propose or second a formal motion for consideration at the AGM. Each motion must be in writing and be signed by the proposer and seconder.

Nominations and Motions must be delivered to the Secretary (or received in the Club's post office box) no later than Wednesday 1 March 2023.

A draft agenda, including any motions of which notice has been given, will be distributed at least two weeks before the meeting.

** Includes Youth Members, but does not include Provisional or Junior Members.
Note that members are unfinancial where their subscription remains unpaid after 1st January.*

Bern Brent turns 100!

Associate club member, Bern Brent turned 100 in December last year. Zagreb, Berlin, Sussex in the UK, Hay, Tatura, Melbourne, Cooma, Saigon, Borneo, Sydney, Canberra, Bern's century has taken in much of the world, most of the 20th century and made a good dent in the 21st century. Bern arrived in Australia on the HMS Dunera (with fellow club member, Mike Brent, who was a lifelong friend but not a relation) as a young refugee from Nazi Germany. He is now the last known of the 'Dunera Boys' in Australia still living. Bern joined the Club in 1960s when he moved to Canberra and kept skiing well into his 80s. Bern's daughter, Jo, has recently re-joined the Club after a 25-year break and Bern had a wonderful time visiting the Perisher lodge with her last summer remembering old times.

Bern is still in very good shape, living in the family home in Farrer, playing chess and the piano accordion and still bossing everyone around! He looks forward to every issue of *Frozen Acres* with relish.

Bern's Birthday bash at Fox & Bow, Farrer shops, was a great success with friends from around Australia helping him celebrate this milestone!



Left - right: Bern, Dr Quang Lui (former Colombo Plan student of Bern's) and John Bremer (former Snowy Hydro colleague).



Mt Franklin Work Party 5 - 6 November

By Gavin Hearn

Before Smiggin Holes became a destination for skiers in 1939; before the first lodges at Perisher were completed in 1952; before Sverre Kaaten's North Perisher sophisticated tow rope in 1958; well before Blue Cow opened in 1987; and over 60 years before Mt Perisher (as we know it today) was established in 1995, there was the Canberra Alpine Club's Chalet at Mt Franklin.

We are up early to drive the two hours along the ACT's highest road to reach the Mt Franklin Hut. Officially the Mt Franklin Road was built to generate employment during the post war depression. But its inspiration came from Club President C E Lane Poole, a forester and head of the Forestry School, who, as a frequent visitor to the area, described the journey to the ski fields as more ordeal than pleasure trip. Following the road's completion in 1937, the Mt Franklin Chalet was built in 1938.

That Chalet, with walls so thin 'you could someone in the next room roll over', is gone now: lost in the 2003 bushfires. In its place is Hut - designed as a refuge for bushwalkers and as a tangible reminder of the Club's antecedents.

Jenny McLeod calls us together to distribute work party tasks and give us our safety briefing.

“You’re in the bush now. Be careful. It’s a bit early in the season, but watch out for snakes. Probably a bit high and a bit cold for Tigers and Browns. Red bellies are very rare. Maybe some White-lipped snakes or Copperheads are around”.

I’m on wood cutting duty with Tony Simkins, Paul Argent and his son Max. We spend the morning sawing through fallen gums, clearing the walking trails around the hut and replenishing the firewood supply.

Before lunch we spend some time exploring the site. There’s a fire damaged tree with twists and turns along its trunk. If I didn’t know better I’d swear they were made by the tree itself, as it pulled away from flames that tried to raze it, but didn’t. This tree is so famous it’s got its own postage stamp, (see photo on page 9).

Even the toilets at Mt Franklin have a story to tell. Say what you like about water catchments and planning zones: there is a funnier story to tell about the loo’s location: just over the border into NSW.

After lunch we head off to find the Wombat Trail, the original traverse from the Chalet to the Slalom Run. Falling into single file behind Jenny we tramp along the contour line of Mt Franklin, pulling weeds, debating scat (“Are you sure that’s from a wombat, it looks horse sized?”), clearing fallen trees and branches as we go.

Jenny and Kathryn Wingett are encyclopaedic in their knowledge of the trails, the flora and fauna and Club’s history at Mt Franklin. The day is turning into more field trip than work party.

Somewhere along Wombat Trail we stop to admire Ginnini Falls. It’s such a clear, still day. And there has been much water in the last weeks. We can hear the Falls in the distance. Jenny tells us it’s been a long time since she’s seen them with two forks cascading down.

Then we hear Kathryn, who’s been at the rear of our single file, assigned to keep us all safe. “The Falls are great and all, but perhaps we can admire them from a little way up the Trail. Somewhere not quite so near the snake!”

Sure enough, not a foot off the path, coiled up on a flat warm rock, a Copperhead snake is at our feet.

We move off, nervously laughing at our good fortune (to have seen, been so close and remained safe) and talking about Steve Irwin.

We reach the Slalom Run and turn up hill, stopping at the old Day Hut. Once upon a time it would have served as a warm spot for skiers to rest over a cuppa. An industrious Club member had even run a phone line from the hut back to the Chalet. Back in the day, less energetic members could call ahead (“What’s the snow like on Slalom Run?”) The Day Hut is just sheets of jumbled corrugated iron now, held in place by a fallen gum. The marker tells its story.

At the top of the Slalom Run is the skeleton of an Austin A40. It’s the same colour as the iron of the day hut. This old car was driven in and mounted on blocks to make a tow row. Club members had to take turns skiing the run and keep the old Austin motor ticking over, the back wheel, set up as a pulley, turning. I can’t help but wonder if the person who drove the Austin in, knew Sverre Kaaten.

Maybe it’s the snake’s fault, maybe it’s the wild landscape and rusted traces of the Club’s history here, but as we turn and head downhill back to the Hut, young Max and I spend our walk debating the predatory merits of sharks and bears and tigers. And somewhere else someone is imagining fresh turns on the slopes of Mt Franklin before there was a Mt Perisher.

Photographs by Kristine Cook



Fire damaged tree



The Austin Ski-tow



Caroline Walker, Max Argent and Tony Simkins on the Summit of Mt Franklin.



Sign marking location of the old hut

AUSTIN A40 SKI TOW


In keeping with the spirit of resourcefulness and ingenuity, club members used a car to power a ski tow.

In 1965 this vehicle had been involved in a robbery and the ensuing police chase resulted in the car rolling. Minus its entire roof and windows it now had potential as a ski tow!

With the rope running around one of the back wheels and with the pulley wheel attached to the lift poles, the A40 commenced operation. However, due to problems of gearing and power, together with vandalism, it soon fell into disuse.


Today, nature is slowly reclaiming the Slalom Run. Through the process of ecological succession, pioneer species such as mountain wattles are revegetating the disturbed subalpine woodland.


In time, the slow growing snow gums will emerge from the protection of the short-lived mountain wattles.



Bruce Bray & Karl Erert installing the Austin A40 in June 1965. Today, the rusting car body is an integral part of the story of Franklin, reflecting the 'do-it-yourself' period of Australian skiing.
 Sharley Gumber photo, Minnie Franklin Collection.

T H E R E ' S L I F E A T F R A N K L I N



Close up of the ski tow notice 

O'Keefes Hut Work Party

By Amanda East

In March last year, I had the very great pleasure of attending the O'Keefes work party, my second visit to the hut, and without having to carry a heavy backpack. I joined Paul Oboohov, who on behalf of the Club has been organising the maintenance of the building for many years. He does a wonderful job of coordinating the work parties, providing detailed trip notes and instructions.

The workparty weekend was well supported by volunteers, but due to the poor road condition, we had to limit access to only two vehicles, which sadly saw our numbers reduced to a fortunate five, Paul, Arthur Hitchcock, Mike Griffiths, my friend Shelley Cooper, and me.

Paul collected Shelley and me in Canberra, travelling in 'Car One'. At Cooma, we meet up with the occupants of 'Car Two', the drivers, Arthur and Mike. We stopped for a leisurely breakfast, there being no rush to get the hut at any particular time. From Cooma, we travelled cross county to the hamlet of Eucumbene at the dam wall, past the Gaden Trout Hatchery. The weather was cool but thankfully not wet. We followed Happy Jacks Road, entering the Kosciusko National Park through a locked gate high above the lake, and traversed the ridge that runs along the lake's western side. We stopped to marvel at the vista of the lake from what was once a large viewing platform with public toilet, built for the Queen's visit. The gravel road was in good condition.

Further along the ridge were views of Mount Jagungal to the west and the obvious, Tabletop Mountain to the north. We took a left fork onto the Grey Mare trail and stopped at a grassy saddle to let down the tyres before commencing the super slow, mega bumpy section of our journey. Paul facilitated my first official 4WD lesson. Slowly up the hills, along the overgrown grassy track, giving the vehicle a little extra power on the steep bits, not too much to make the wheels spin on the rocky bits. I took it very slowly down over the water diversion berms, to stop about 45 mins later at Doubtful Creek.

The job of driver is to assess the crossing, by wading the creek to pick a line through or over the boulders. Course set, it was a simple, slow and steady crossing, and all was well. Phew! Next, we contoured round the hills to the hut, stopping briefly to inspect the ruins Farm Ridge Homestead, and remnant fencing. Car Two, with Arthur and Mike who already familiar with the history, continued ahead, eager to

set up camp, lunch and start work. One more simple creek crossing, and we arrived at 2pm. No doubt other more experienced would have done the drive in half the time. Paul is an excellent instructor and a patient tutor.

Tents quickly set, the afternoon job was paint the woodwork, windows, doors and barges with and oil sealant. I did the high bits and Shelley the low bits, somewhat reflecting our inches. The boys did the carpentry repairs.

As evening light faded, we put away our tools and got the chairs from the inside the hut and formed a circle of knowledge, and shared tall tales and treats. The hut has three small rooms, set up as living, dining and a spare, all lined with newspaper dating from the 1930-60s, which provides a good read. There is a separate outhouse with a good view, 50 metres up the hill from the hut. We lit the new, slow combustion fire to warm the shelter and had our dinner inside the dining room, sharing our provisions before disappearing into to our tents for the night.



*Sunset Drinks: Shelley Cooper, Arthur Hitchcock,
Paul Oboohov and Michael Griffiths*



New slow combustion fire,

We managed to sleep through the first rays of the sun and keeping warm in our tents until a civilized hour, 7ish. Breakfasts of oats and cups of tea. We were joined by other campers and arranged to watch out for each other on the trail to the top of Jagungal. Weather predictions were not favourable, and we were fortunate to have the choice to drive to the start of the walk. Arthur volunteered to manage the hut, mind the camp and replenish the firewood stocks, the supply much depleted over the summer months. We took Paul's car to the start of the walk, some five kms to the south of the hut, at the base of the mountain spine. The road was very damaged and the creek crossings badly eroded. The National Parks and Wildlife Service edict to limit vehicles is well justified.

The first kilometre of the walk, across the moor was boggy and required heath jumping. Up the flank of the mountain, we wove our way through head high bushes mostly tea tree, with some mountain pepper and grevillea. We kept losing sight of Paul, who after careful deliberation about fitness decided to follow us on the walk. We popped out again at the base of the steep rocky rim below the plateau of the mountain, a grassy alpine meadow. The area was green and lush, still a carpet of flowers despite being early autumn. Lots of yellow everlasting daisies, white alpine

bulbs and purple heath. It was a pleasant walk, stopping repeatedly to take photos, before the last scrambling up the well-defined rocky path to the summit. Lunch and photos at the summit cairn, sheltering from the cold wind in the columnar boulders.



Paul on the summit of Mt Jagungal

Dark black clouds were gathering to the north, so we scarpred at our best pace, back to the car at the base of the mountain. Thunder clapped and big dollops of rain started to fall, and regrouped to the safety of our Faraday cage. We felt for the other walkers, all coming and going on foot to the mountain, approaching from different

camp sites. Huts in the area are Derschkos and Wheelers to the west, Mackeys and Cesjacks to the east, Valentines and Mawsons to the south.

A slow return drive back to camp, the rain cleared and foraging for firewood timber could begin in earnest. The chain saw had not made it into Paul's incredibly well provisioned vehicle, so it was the hut bow saw, deftly wielded by Mike, that cut fallen timbers, some 200 metres from the hut. Shelley and I managed to drag enough back to create a large pile for many good fires. Another work party was planned to cut the timbers into smaller pieces for the winter. Early snows last May made this impossible, so it may have been a cold hut through the winter. Arthur had tripped early in the day and had to take a forced rest to be able to drive out the following morning. A reminder that it is best to travel in company in our superficially benign wilderness.

A close investigation of the collapsed back step, showed the problem was beyond a simple repair and details were taken for a professional fix. Tools were tidied away and we appeared all alone at the hut on Sunday evening. The wet weather kept us indoors for dinner and it was a hasty dash to the tents, between showers for the night.

We were up early, checked out the creek for yabbies, and ate a leisurely breakfast while waiting for our tents to dry in the fresh breeze, then commenced the slow, return journey out of the National Park. Shelley graciously declined to have a 4WD lesson as we were all eager to get home, due to our damp, delayed departure for camp. Apart from a brief farewell to Arthur at Cooma, it was a non-stop trip back to Canberra, so Mike could make his bus connection home to Sydney. The hut is a minimum, four hour drive from Canberra.

O'Keefe's work party is a marvellous experience, which I recommend to others. Hopefully the road conditions will allow more people to attend the next working bee weekend at O'Keefes. The other option is to travel the long way, drive to Round Mountain via Cabramurra, walk or mountain bike in along the Farm Ridge Trail, and send the food and camping gear in one of the cars driving from Eucumbene. From the Round Mountain car park, it is a 16km walk with some steep hills.

Dates for 2023 are 11-13 March, a Canberra Day long weekend with a fallback date of Easter. Please contact Paul Obohov on 0417-048-217 if you would like to join the next adventure to O'Keefes. ▣

Food and Ski Lockers required.

As there is a waiting list of members wanting to rent food and ski lockers, if you have a locker you no longer require, please contact Vicki so that it can be re-allocated and you can obtain a refund.

My Injuries Snowboarding

By Noah Shepherd (age 15)

Last year, I broke my leg at Perisher on the last day of the school holiday after getting too much air off the last front valley jump. I was trying to demonstrate how to do the jump to my friend, and accidentally rode in way too fast and landed on the flat snow instead of the landing. It was the worst pain I have ever been in. My dad and I had to drive all the way to Canberra to get surgery, and I ended up with 10 weeks in a moon boot, six of those on crutches. I was really annoyed at the time, but when I look back on it, I didn't miss much since it was during COVID lockdown. I made a full recovery a couple months later, but I still have the titanium pins in my foot today.

Eight weeks before the snow season started, I dislocated my shoulder in my first game of rugby of the season. This was horrible, because if it was a bad injury, I might have missed some or all the snow season for recovery time as dislocated shoulders can take ages to heal and get back into full shape. Luckily, it wasn't too bad as dislocated shoulders go and, through some intense training, I was able to return to the ski slopes in a shoulder brace. I landed on it a couple of times after falling on jumps and rails, but luckily, I was ok. Even though it is still more unstable than the other shoulder, it is pretty much back to normal.

Getting back on the slopes for snowboarding was pretty nerve racking, as I missed some of last season with the broken foot and still had an unstable dislocated shoulder, so I was unsure if I still had the ability to snowboard as well as I used to. The first couple days I was a bit rusty (as expected) and I took a couple hits to the shoulder which really hurt, but it ended out to be fine and I started to land new tricks by the end of the holidays such as backflips and 180s on and off the rails. I progressed steadily throughout the season without an issue, and even went back to hitting the front valley jumps.

I am so happy with my progress, and I can't wait to go to Canada at the end of this year. I am excited that I will be able to try out my new board and gear in Canada and to try a rodeo 540 if I get good conditions. I hope next year I don't get injured, and that next season can be as good as this one. ▣

The Interschools Experience

By Asher Shepherd (age 12)

This year my brother Noah, and I both competed in the snowboarding Interschools for Boarder X, Giant Slalom, and Slopestyle. In Boarder X the track was very fast and unpredictable because the berms (turns) were positioned in places in which I had never really rode on before. Overall, I finished in 14th place in the region – just making it into the State. I had the same result in the Giant Slalom finishing 14th in the region.

In Slopestyle, I finished 12th on a very tricky course as the speed and turning was very unpredictable. The jumps on the slopestyle course were made and set up in a very unusual way which resulted in a lot of people not clearing the jump and doing their trick. In the State Championship, the Boardercross course was very slightly altered and the Giant Slalom course was a very flat, slow course. For both events I missed out on qualification for the National Championship. However, in Slopestyle I put down a run that took my score high enough to compete in the National Championship! This news made me very happy as it was my first time, and this had been my goal for quite a while.

Sadly, in the days leading up to the event I had gotten a bit sick and was having some trouble breathing, my parents were starting to question if I should go down or not but eventually, they let me. But only 10 minutes into the drive down we stopped for petrol, I felt like I had to throw up and I felt hot. I fainted off to the side of the petrol station and when my dad came to see me, he told me that I should just stay at home and not go. I was crushed – everything I had worked so hard for was all going to waste. I was sad but then I remembered there will always be next year.

As for Noah, he did great getting into nationals for both Giant Slalom and Slopestyle. Noah put down an amazing run which resulted in him receiving a gold first place medal for the school. Despite the ups and downs of this year's Interschools, I still overall enjoyed it. I know I did my best but that I can improve and ready myself for next year. ▣

Alpine Trivia Quiz

1. In which country is the snow resort of Zurs?
2. If you were skiing or boarding in Dalvik, which country would you be in?
3. How many points does an adult waitlister need to become a provisional member?
4. Who was Charlotte Pass named after?
5. Who was Rennix Gap named after?
6. In the Club Championships which members had the fastest times in the men's and the women's?
7. In the Balmain Cup who was the fastest CAC member in the cross-country?
8. If you were skiing down Funnelweb where would you be?
9. Who was awarded this year's Womens' Jump Trophy?
10. How long is the circular Cascade walk (Sawpit Creek)?
11. What is the Club's limit on the number of members?
12. Where is Parachute run?
13. How many points does a waiter receive for sending in an article to *Frozen Acres*?
14. On which Japanese island is the Hakuba Ski Resort?
15. What is the date of the 2023 AGM?

Mt Townsend and Beyond

A Backcountry Ski Adventure

By Monika Binder

Back in October 2022, the mountains kept on receiving snowfalls. As our final trip for the season, Bruce Barnett and I decided on a three-day trip to Mt Townsend. This is the second highest mountain in Australia.

We planned to start from Thredbo, catching the Kosciuszko Chair to the top. However, just as we were about to get to the front of the queue to purchase our backcountry access tickets, we had to deal with some unexpected bureaucracy. Due to a few recent search and rescue incidents (including, sadly the search for a solo backcountry skier who died out near Watsons Crags), the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) required Thredbo Ski Resort to sight a trip intention form before allowing backcountry skiers on to their chairlift. We weren't quite prepared for this, as this was not mandatory in the early part of the season. I spent a hasty 15 minutes filling out an online form on my smartphone with lots of details such as the number of my emergency contact, car registration number, and the serial number of my PLB. Not an easy thing to do on a small device. Next time, I'll make sure to do this before leaving home!

Once the form filling was cleared away, and we purchased our tickets, we were on the chair and off, skiing towards the beautiful Wilkinson's Valley where we were going to camp. This valley lies beneath Mount Townsend. Within three hours, we reached our camp spot near an open waterhole. We set up our tent, had lunch, and then headed off again on an afternoon tour around the Abbotts ridge. This undulating ridge has great views all around, including to the green of Tom Groggin and Khancoban below and out to Victoria's Mount Bogong. As there was swirling cloud and fog, which intermittently interrupted our view, we did not stay long on the ridge and descended towards the lower Wilkinson's Creek, into sunshine and skied leisurely back to camp.

The next day was a bluebird day. We decided to approach the summit of Mount Townsend from its southern flank. As it was a bit icy, I put on my ski skins and ski crampons. The lower section was fairly moderate in gradient, but the upper section was quite steep. Once at the top, the swirling clouds had started to move in once more. However after waiting a bit, they dispersed to reveal a beautiful 360 degree view. After a snack we headed north along the Alice Rawson ridge, as far as we could go. This ridge gives great views of Little Austria, the Sentinel, and the

southern Watsons Crags. While having lunch we spied the debris of an avalanche that had sheered its way off the Sentinel. After lunch we headed down towards Lady Northcotes Creek. We then skied up the creek towards Lake Albina and around the lake for an afternoon tea stop in the snow, before heading back to camp via Mullers Pass.

On our final day, we broke camp and skied the west side of Mount Kosciuszko towards Cootapatamba hut. We knew there was rain forecast in the late afternoon so we were keen to avoid getting caught. The terrain here is reasonably gentle with lots of little rocky knolls and little creeks and waterholes. Arriving at the hut, we met up with two NPWS rangers who were doing some work on the hut. After a very lengthy chat, we parted ways – the rangers in their snowmobiles, and us on skis. We headed up towards the Ramsheads where we had lunch, with a view of Mount Kosciuszko and its precarious cornice, watching the grey clouds rolling in from the distant north west. We returned to the top of Thredbo chair just as it began to rain.



Bruce at Cootapatamba Hut.



Lake Albina covered in snow, Monika's boots in the foreground



Lunchtime view of Mt Kosciuszko



View of Wilkinson's Valley and Mt Townsend □

Answers to Alpine Trivia Quiz.

1. Austria
2. Iceland
3. 12 points
4. Charlotte Adams for first woman to ascend the summit of Mt Kosciuszco.
5. Rennix, an engineer in charge of the summit road construction 1906-09.
6. Will Brake & Sarah Brake
7. Tim Greville
8. Thredbo
9. Jenny McLeod
10. 6 klms
11. 600
12. Guthega
13. One point
14. Honshu
15. Wednesday 22 March

Summer in the Snowy Mountains

By Mateo Campos Pascall (age 10)

I have been coming to stay at the Canberra Alpine Club Lodges in Winter since I was a baby, but this summer, my mum, sister and I came and stayed at the Jindabyne lodge for the first time. We had a terrific time. I didn't realise there was so much to do in the Snowy Mountains in the summertime!

I went for a swim in the lake – wow it was cold! It was also a bit sludgy under my feet as I walked down into the water. My sister, Natalia suggested that we should build a jetty or pier at the front of the lodge, as well as a proper path down to the lake to make getting in and out of the water easier. I thought that was a great idea!



Mateo going for a swim in the lake.

On one of the days, mum said we were going on a small bushwalk. But what Natalia and I didn't realise was that she was making us walk 6.5km all the way to the top of Australia (and 6.5km back)! We drove to Thredbo and caught the chairlift through the mist (it was cold and wet that day) up to the top and then started on our walk to Mount Kosciuszko. It was so much fun, even if the walk felt like it went on forever. We saw beautiful wildflowers and met some nice people on the way. We had to take a few stops along the boardwalk because mum couldn't keep up with me. We played in the snowdrifts along the path and when we finally made it to the top, I

stood on top of the stone marker and was the tallest person in Australia (for a few minutes!).



Mateo (right) with his mother and sister.



Standing on top of the stone marker - Mt Kosciuszko

On another day, we went horse riding. We drove along the Barry Way, and then on a very windy and potholed dirt track until we came to the Snowy Mountains Wilderness Horse Riding centre. We were each allocated a horse, mine was called Music. The ride took us out onto their property of 7,000 acres and we rode through the bush, crossed streams and even saw a wild brumby stallion with three mares and their foals (the guide told us one of the foals was only two days old). We all had the best time! When we got home afterwards, mum made us watch an old movie called 'The Man from Snowy River'. It was such an old movie, but it was still great and I had loved being so close to nature.



Music

Mum also drove us up past the Canberra Alpine Club Perisher Lodge, to show us what the lodge and Perisher ski fields looked like in the Summer. I could not believe how different everything looked and how many plants and rocks there were all around the lodge!

On the morning of the day we were driving back home, we went to the Crackenback Lake Resort to try mountain bike riding. That was so much fun too! My sister hated it, but I loved the adventure, excitement and thrill of riding down the narrow and muddy paths. I've asked mum for a mountain bike as a present for my next birthday.



Mountain Biking

I never knew that there was so much to do in the Snowy Mountains in summer. It was fantastic! I want to come back again next summer to try kayaking on the lake, trout fishing and do more mountain bike riding (but I think my sister might sit that one out!).

If you haven't been to the Snowy Mountains in the summer yet (or in a long while), I really recommend it as a great holiday and something to. ▣

Kosciuszko National Park / Ngarigo Country

A week of walking in the mountains

By Jenny and Andrew Cupit

We recently spent a very pleasant week at the Perisher lodge in summer with our 'other' club – the Brindabella Bushwalking Club (BBC). The BBC often links in with other bushwalking clubs from Canberra and surrounding areas when conducting walking activities. This multiday, walking club activity involved the Canberra Bushwalking Club as well as members from the Shoalhaven Bushwalking Club. In all, 22 walkers spent the week in Perisher walking, painting and photographing the mountains in a variety of weather that only the mountains can

provide. The Perisher lodge in particular offers hikers a very comfortable stay in the heart of some of the best alpine areas of Australia.

Our walks organiser, Janet D, arranged a short walk as a ‘meet-n-greet’ activity on the first day. At high noon, we gathered at the small car park near the Rainbow Lake track. The walk to the lake was indeed short – only 3km return through gently rolling hills. We had a picnic lunch at the lake then walked clockwise around the lake to stretch our hiking legs and increase the week’s km count. We all then headed up to the Perisher lodge to meet up with Vicki, our lodge booking officer to get a run down on the lodge. Although we are members of the lodge and we know how the lodge operates and its various rules, having Vicki greet the group was an especially welcoming thing to do. She was able to clarify some of the lodge rules for the group and give some tips on what to do or not do to make sure everyone was safe and happy in the lodge (e.g. turn on the cooking fans whenever using the stoves so that you don’t set off the back-to-base fire alarm when heating up our dinners). We’re not sure if this is something listed in Vicki’s work description but it was definitely worthwhile for the bigger groups using the lodge in summer.

Our second day involved a walk to Mt Stilwell, followed by some off-track walking up to the old Stilwell Restaurant and the old Stilwell ski fields. We have walked to Mt Stilwell a few times but never off track south of the trig point. We ended up covering about 10km with 280m elevation gain as we scrambled over the Kangaroo Ridge on our return to Charlottes Pass.

Our third day’s walk was something we called ‘the 3 huts walk’ – the Munyang huts walk. We started at the Guthega Power Station and immediately crossed the Munyang River. The old suspension bridge was washed out a few years ago and the signage in that area ‘suggests’ not to cross the river but with water levels extremely low, we decided to rock hop across the river, scale the river bank and start our walk along Disappointment Spur Trail. We managed to get to Disappointment Spur Hut in time for morning tea, made it safely to White’s River hut by lunch, and got back to Horse Camp hut in time for afternoon tea – what luck! After lunch, rain started to fall and was heavy at times, but it did not dampen our groups spirits. The full walk took just under 6 hours to complete, covered almost 20km with a 680m elevation gain throughout the day.

On day 4, 11 walkers completed the ‘Mt Twynam loop’ starting at Charlottes Pass walking up towards Blue Lake (with a short stop here to show off the lake for those walkers that hadn’t seen it before), up towards Carruthers Peak but turning north before reaching the Carruthers steps, heading towards Mt Twynam, then down to Pounds Flat then linking up with the new Snowies Alpine track at the Illawong Suspension Bridge to take us back to Charlottes Pass. The walk took almost 8 hours to complete and covered about 20km with 760m elevation gain.

On day 5, four walkers completed another loop walk – starting at Guthega walking along the short section of the new Snowies Alpine track up to the Illawong Suspension Bridge, up to Pounds Flat, then off-track slightly to link up to Mt Anton, then along to Mt Tate, off-track again to get to the Guthega Trig track and back to Guthega dam. This 20km walk took us 8 ½ hours to complete.

Andrew comments:

On day 6, Jenny thought she needed a rest whilst I was still full of walking beans. I accompanied two other very strong walkers and completed the Main Range track walking in an anticlockwise direction. This 22km usually takes about 8 hours to complete but they did it in 6½ hours - their pace possibly assisted by the threat of a thunderstorm in the mountains overhead. The walk was worthwhile just to see the temporary staircase up Mt Kosciuszko that has been put in place while they redevelop the summit. You can't stop progress!

Almost 100km of walking was completed by a few hardy walkers during the week.

With the help of the completion of the new Snowies Alpine Track between Charlottes Pass and Guthega, we have now plotted out four fantastic loop walks in this area – Main Range track, Mt Twynum loop, Mt Tate loop, and Munyang loop. Loop walks mean that you don't have to arrange car shuffles or pick-ups to complete your walk.

Some of our walkers wanted to take it easy after one or two of these big days, so were able to take a shorter walks across flower-infested tracks including Porcupine Rock, Sawpit Creek, Pallaibo walking Track (from Sawpit Creek to Thredbo River carpark), and several walking tracks around Jindabyne Lake. At this time of the year, wildflowers are everywhere so the natural beauty of the area is on full display.

We also shared the lodge with a group of young National Parks Association (NPA) volunteers who were doing surveillance as part of the Hawkweed eradication program in the national park. They were a great group of enthusiastic uni students who were giving their time to environmental projects. The lodge has been rented out to these groups on a regular basis. They were very keen and helped clean and look after the lodge.

If you haven't walked these tracks during summer, we highly recommend it. Having our lodge with its hot showers and comfortable beds to stay in after doing a 20km day walk is an added benefit. Having access to the lodge when completing four loop walks and covering 100km of alpine walking is heaven!



Double Rainbow as seen from the south balcony, Perisher Lodge.



*Walkers looking out towards the Sentinel near the turnoff
between Caruthers Peak and track to Mt Twynam.*



Rainbow Lake



Looking towards Blue Lake



White's River Hut



Our favourite snow gum in KNP. A huge tree that stands in amongst several others in a little snow gum clump. ▣

CLUB PUBLICATIONS

Available free of charge on request:

- Club Constitution
 - Club By Laws
 - Membership Application Forms
 - Applicants' Information Sheet
 - Guides for lodge users during off-peak.
 - Bedding plans for the lodges
-
- *Check our website to obtain copies of these items.*
-

ALLIANCES

The Club is a corporate member of the following organisations:

- *Snowsports ACT*
- *SLOPES [Ski Lodges Organisation of Perisher, Smiggins and Guthega Inc.]*
- *The Kosciuszko Huts Association*

The Club is a regular sponsor of the *Perisher Ski Patrol*.

A copy of each issue of *Frozen Acres* is lodged with the *Australian Serials Collection of the National Library*. The collection, dating back to the 1960s, is available for examination on request.

Copy deadline for next issue: Friday 24 March 2023.

Please email your articles, letters and photographs or other material to: ***editor@cac.org.au***.

If undeliverable, return to

**Canberra Alpine Club
GPO Box 27,
CANBERRA ACT 2601**

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**

**PRINT
POST**
PP 100 001 280