

Kosciusko Ramblings

By Don Richardson

Snow Poles on the Range

THIS is a matter with which the Safety Sub-Committee has concerned itself for some years, the latest recommendations, after consultation with the Ski Tourers' Association, being for the erection of three lines:

- (a) Lake Albina Lodge to head of Snowy Gorge, connecting with line between Chalet and the Summit;
- (b) Kunama Hutte and Charlotte Pass, with connection between Albina and Kunama;
- (c) Tate East Ridge to Consett Stephen Pass.

Although it is known that Ray Ainsworth, the Trust's representative at Waste Point, has had a comprehensive scheme in mind for years, it looked as if any poling on the main range was still a long way off. It was therefore pleasing to learn that work has already commenced, a line of stout poles having been erected between Seaman's Hut and Lake Albina and poles lying along the route from Albina to Kunama.

These areas, and Mount Tate, are potentially dangerous in bad weather. The presence of poles will lessen considerably the chances of parties becoming lost, and skiers generally will be appreciative of the Trust's action.

White's River Hut

The snow lease of the area in which this hut is situated will not be renewed after the expiry of the present term, 30th June, 1953. The object is to exclude grazing with a view to minimising siltation of Guthega Reservoir.

K.A.C. is negotiating for the assumption of full ownership to preserve the hut for the use of skiers and others. S.M.H.E.A. Commissioner (Mr. W. Hudson), ever happy to assist skiers, has indicated that work in the Munyang Valley will be downstream from the hut and consequently the hut is unlikely to interfere with the Authority's project.

This is good news, for White's River Hut (for years a haven for the mainranger) is becoming more and more popular. Incident-

ally, it has been subjected to much less abuse this last year or two; indeed, it is pleasing and encouraging to receive letters of appreciation from users and to note that many find time to tidy up, replenish wood supplies, etc. The Club, unfortunately, is not in a position to renew those heavy down sleeping bags, reduced in number from eight to one by theft and destruction.

K.A.C. Lodge

Operated last season in conjunction with the Tourist Bureau, the outcome was successful from all points of view. Working parties still have much to do and the Club will again for the 1953 season be relying on the Bureau for meals and other services.

Leasing of Chalet at Charlotte Pass

I think it safe to say that 1953 will not see any signing on the dotted line. If, perchance, the following year finds it controlled by private enterprise it will be interesting to note developments.

Alpine Hut

While on the subject of leasing, the Directors of Alpine Hut Club Pty. Limited are not happy with the trend in that area. The 1951 season showed a loss and the Directors decided against the operation of the hut for 1952, but their recommendation was not accepted by the General Meeting.

So staff was engaged, the hut stocked and bookings placed in the hands of a Travel Agency. The outcome was a steep loss, so much so that it will not be possible to operate the hut this year. Of a possible 160 man-weeks for the season, guests totalled only 44 man-weeks.

Alpine Hut opens up such a delightful area of our fields, which are crying out for development, that it would be little short of a tragedy to see the hut go. The Youth Hostel Association is apparently very interested, but it appears also that the time is not yet ripe for that body to extend so far afield.

There are several probable factors contributing to the falling-off in popularity, e.g., lack of easy access; provision of alternative hut accommodation at easy striking distance on the Perisher; the attraction of areas opened up by the erection of Albina Lodge

(and now Kunama); the "growing old" of the earlier supporters who, if not of tougher mould, were not so accustomed to getting things the easy way as are their present day counterparts. (Have I said something out of place?)

It is likely that the for 1953 the Hut will be made available to approved parties on the "look - after - yourself - and - arrange - your - own - transport" principle. There were ample stocks of food remaining at the end of last season.

Leases to Hut Builders?

An amendment to Kosciusko State Park Act brought down towards the end of 1952 is of major importance to those who have built, and to those who intend building, on the snowfields.

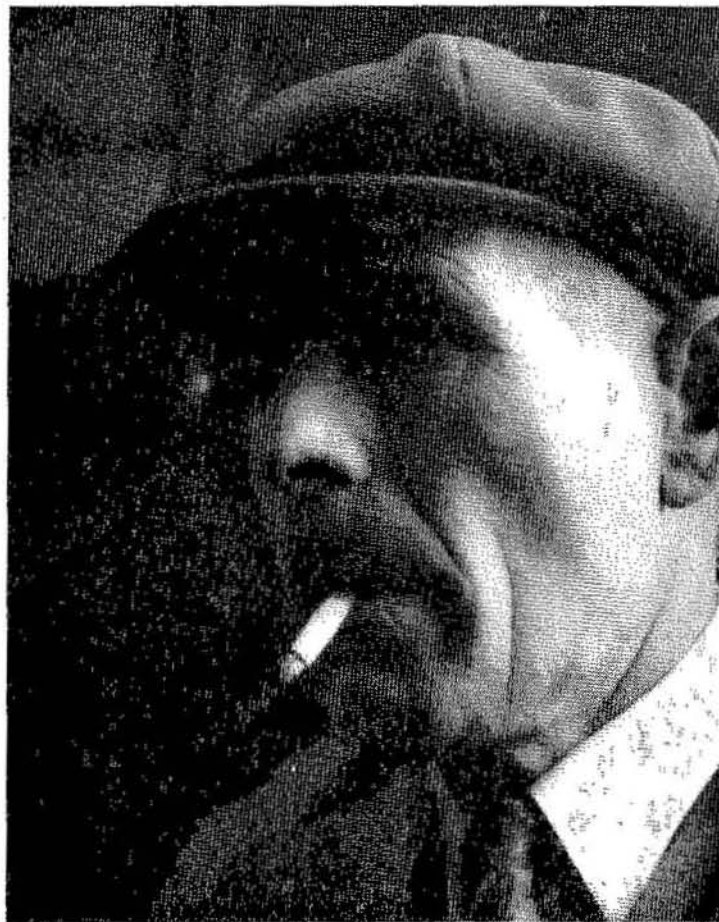
Whereas previously the best tenure that could be expected was a Permissive Occupancy, the Act as amended now provides:

The Minister may—

- (a) grant leases of land within the Kosciusko State Park for the purpose of—
 - (i) the erection thereon of accommodation hotels or accommodation houses;
 - (ii) the provision thereon of facilities and amenities for tourists and visitors;
- (b) grant leases of land within the Kosciusko State Park on which accommodation hotels or accommodation houses have been erected or facilities and amenities for tourists and visitors have been provided.

The Smiggin Holes

Or should it be "Smiggin's Holes"? There is some authority both ways, but whichever is correct, the name does not drop from the tongue with the mellifluous roll that is so pleasing in many Alpine names. I had a letter some years ago from one who had completed a glaciological survey of Munyang Valley, in which he sought permission to name a creek Richardson Creek, but while I felt honoured, I did not like the sound of the name. "The Richo Rapids" might sound well enough, or perchance "McCallum Mudhole" (my mother's surname—McCallum, not Mudhole)? But Richardson does not flow sweetly as Gungarten, Jagungal (liquid pronunciation please) or Munyang, nor has it the association and romance we attach to names such as Bogong. Nor does "Smiggin" roll more sweetly. Indeed, the dictionary tells



This year his 9000th trip to Kosciusko—
Driver Bill Caldwell. Photo. G. Petersen.

us it is the name of some sort of hashed goo, and that association doesn't help me to like it the better.

And the place itself? Had some whimsical magistrate sentenced me to 14 days to be served at The Smiggin Holes, I'm sure I would have appealed against the severity of the sentence. That is, before last season, when I spent two weeks there—in a tent erected inside a non-weatherproof shepherd's hut with my three kiddies. It was Johnny Abbottsmith's idea and he, with his wife, really became our host and hostess. The original plan was a week there with the nippers, and then heigh ho for Lake Albina; but the kids were having such a happy time, and I, too, was enjoying it so much, that we spent the whole time at The Holes.

Soon I seemed to merge into the place;