

# *KOSCIUSZKO HUTS ASSOCIATION INC.*

*NEWSLETTER* [WWW.KHUTS.ORG](http://WWW.KHUTS.ORG)

*WINTER NO: 198*

## Huts in the Landscape 10-12 March 2023



< KHA WOODSKILLS

22 April 2023



**Dear Members**

About 20 years ago my collection of history and photographs relating to the huts, ruins, sites and photographs of Namadgi National Park, with much assistance from Deidre Shaw, was deposited in the archives of the ACT Heritage Library.

To view the lists of these sites etc. follow this link:

[www.library.act.gov.au/find/history/search/.../Namadgi-Sites-Research-Files](http://www.library.act.gov.au/find/history/search/.../Namadgi-Sites-Research-Files)

If you think you could help out by a visit to the Library for a couple of hours please give me a call on 0478609917 or [scully.graham183@gmail.com](mailto:scully.graham183@gmail.com)

Graham Scully

## HMSS 0257 Namadgi Sites Research Files

Graham Scully has been active in the Kosciuszko Huts Association (KHA) since 1988. At that time KHA was very concerned that the ACT Parks and Conservation Service was neglecting Namadgi National Park's cultural heritage and allowing the remaining huts and homesteads to fall into disrepair and ruin.

This series of files was begun in 1988 to collect historical information and raise public awareness of the value of Namadgi's huts and heritage.

By 1995 Graham's focus switched to Kosciuszko National Park with only occasional additions to these files since then.

This collection has four series.

**Series 1: Namadgi Sites research files**

**Series 2: Namadgi Huts research files**

**Series 3: Namadgi History research files**

**Series 4: Early correspondence on Kosciuszko Huts Association involvement in hut conservation**

**IMPORTANT:**  
**Membership Renewals**  
**Membership Fees are due July 1st**

Please assist your volunteer membership team by renewing your membership by one of our preferred methods below.

Our preferred method is to have all members renew by Visa/Mastercard throughout website. You can use either a credit card or debit card. This method is fully automatic, secure and requires zero volunteer effort.

Card payment, online please go to: [www.khuts.org](http://www.khuts.org) and LOGIN, then click on RENEW. If you cannot pay by card then please make a direct deposit into the KHA

**BEYOND BANK ACCOUNT**

**Account Name: KHA Inc**

**BSB 325185**

**Account: 03848796**

*If you have paid by bank transfer, please register your payment on our website. LOGIN then click RENEW, click Renew for one year, click REGISTER a Direct Deposit Payment.*

**Bob Anderson Treasurer**

---

**KHA (formed 1971)** provides volunteer support to the NSW and ACT Government to preserve the 'settlement era' vernacular architecture of the northern Australian Alps as part of the continuum of total landscape management.

We are one of only a few organisations in Australia dedicated to the preservation of traditional Australian bush building skills.

We research and document history associated with these vernacular structures and conduct public information sessions in conjunction with the various park services and other bodies to raise awareness of this history.

We are acknowledged on both the NSW NPWS and ACT PCCS Volunteering websites and we have a demonstrated track record of performance.

**COMMITTEE 2023 – 2024**

<b>President</b>	<b>0431 956 426</b>
<i>Pip Brown</i>	<a href="mailto:president@khuts.org">president@khuts.org</a>
<b>Vice President</b>	-
<i>Jonathan Wills</i>	<a href="mailto:vicepresident@khuts.org">vicepresident@khuts.org</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	-
<i>Jodie Lane</i>	<a href="mailto:secretary@khuts.org">secretary@khuts.org</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>0412 020 150</b>
<i>Bob Anderson</i>	<a href="mailto:treasurer@khuts.org">treasurer@khuts.org</a>
<b>Membership</b>	-
<b>To be confirmed</b>	<a href="mailto:membership@khuts.org">membership@khuts.org</a>
<b>HMO Jagungal</b>	<b>0415 159 910</b>
<i>Simon Plum</i>	<a href="mailto:hmojaqungal@khuts.org">hmojaqungal@khuts.org</a>
<b>HMO Tantangara</b>	<b>044 966 3769</b>
<i>Peter Charker</i>	<a href="mailto:hmotantangara@khuts.org">hmotantangara@khuts.org</a>
<b>HMO Snowy</b>	<b>0411 407 441</b>
<i>Marion Plum</i>	<a href="mailto:hmosnowy@khuts.org">hmosnowy@khuts.org</a>
<b>HMO Namadgi</b>	<b>0413 372 476</b>
<i>Jean Hammond</i>	<a href="mailto:hmonamadgi@khuts.org">hmonamadgi@khuts.org</a>
<b>HMO SUPPORT</b>	-
<i>Alan Pottie</i>	<a href="mailto:hmosupport@khuts.org">hmosupport@khuts.org</a>
<b>HUTS HISTORY</b>	-
<i>Stephan de Montis</i>	<a href="mailto:history@khuts.org">history@khuts.org</a>

**Newsletter Editor 02 4655 3622**

*Pauline Downing*

[downingpauline@gmail.com](mailto:downingpauline@gmail.com)

*Snail Mail: P.O. Box 525 CAMDEN 2570*

**GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

*Graham Cummings, Robert Croll,  
Tony Grimmer, Colin Howie*

---

**HAVE YOU checked your MEMBERSHIP STATUS??**

Contact:

[membership@khuts.org](mailto:membership@khuts.org)

**FOR OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT KHA  
CHECK THESE SITES:**

*Website KHuts.org.*

<https://www.facebook.com/>

[www.instagram.com/p/BvkV3MphnSZ/?hl=en](https://www.instagram.com/p/BvkV3MphnSZ/?hl=en)

## **Letters to the Editor:**

Hi KHA, Just made a donation. Long time beneficiary of the huts, and have yet to donate. Just got back from a 4 day walk, which included Oldfield's and Pryor's huts. Thanks for all the work you guys do!  
Kind regards, Hut User (name withheld)

Hello,  
I have just come back from spending 6 days hiking around Jagungal Wilderness Area. It was my first time exploring the area and I was very appreciative of the lovely huts which provided some respite to the wet, windy, cold weather. As a token of my appreciation I just made a donation of \$50. I hope this helps in keeping the huts in order.  
Cheers, Hut User (name withheld)

Kosciuszko Huts Association, I have just donated \$150 to the association. Back in March I stayed at 3 different huts. 27th White River, 28th Grey Mare & 29th O'Keefes.

The huts proved to be a great place to dry out & warm up while it was quite wet on our walk from Dead Horse Gap to Kiandra. The efforts to maintain & provide shelter like this presently & into the future is much appreciated. Thanks.  
Kind regards, Hut User (name withheld)

Hi, The donation was a personal donation from me and my walking partners. We had a wonderful five days visiting Cesjacks, Mackeys and Boobee Huts with walks towards Mt Jagungal, down Doubtful Creek and up Tibeaud Creek  
All huts were in clean and well-kept condition - thanks KHA - Best wishes, Hut User (name withheld)

## ***Thank You!!***

**Total donations for the quarter: \$4969**

## **Donors**

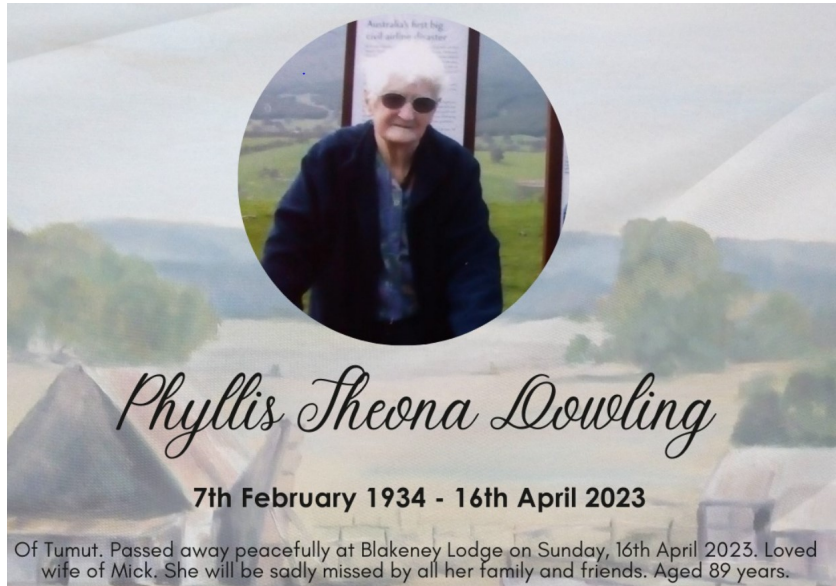
T. Hewitson  
Stephen Marchant  
Robert Clifton  
Valentines Hut On behalf of hut users  
(donation box)  
Mark Regan  
Geoff Giles  
Thomas Stranger  
Yolanda Lovie-Toon  
Douglas Toyne  
Future Generation Joint Venture  
(on behalf of Snowy 2.0 workforce)

## **New Members**

### ***Welcome!***

Robert Hauner  
Andrew Peters  
Gavin Holmes  
Hayden Lindley  
Matthias Scheiter  
Kirk Hone  
Joshua Maloof  
Peter Rorke  
Chanelle Abdipranoto  
Stacey Webster  
Warwick Chate  
Varvara Efremova  
Brenna McAuley  
James Wilmot  
Stephen Beer  
Kenton Madsen  
John Blankenstein  
Peter Knight  
Dianne Fielding  
Conrad Korten  
John Woodward  
Timothy Hanigan  
Ken Watt  
Chloe Symons  
Susan Fielding  
Lucy Law  
Oliver Medd  
Vivienne Schweizer  
Wendy Arnott  
Sonja Valenta  
Alexander Heathers  
Dean Johnson  
Darryl Green  
Brett Thornton  
Deidre Slattery  
Christopher McPhie  
Emma Martin  
Roger Anderson  
Jack Ogilvie  
Oliver Sumner-Potts  
Mary Coe  
Melinda Perrottet

## Vale Phyllis Dowling



**DAVID EISENHAUER:** I love talking to a lady who lives not too far from Joy in that beautiful lodge there, of course, Phyllis Dowling, our regular guest on a Wednesday each month who talks about stories. She grew up at Blue Waterholes up at the Snowy Mountains there when it was all farming land, and amazing stories. The history of our region is terrific, isn't it? **Interview with David Eisenhauer 10/11/2022.**

Phyllis Dowling lived at Harris' Hut

*My father worked as a stockman in the summer, looking after between two and four separate lots of stock, both sheep and cattle from 'down country' which were brought here each year for summer grazing. The stock usually arrived in November and were (by regulation) supposed to be out of the area by 24th of May. However our own stock, consisting of between 10 and 20 horses, enough sheep for 'killers', a few head of cattle and a couple of milking cows all wintered here. Two or three horses and one milking cow were kept here in the small paddock at the house and rugged and hand fed. The others survived on their own in the large paddock that runs from here to the Blue Water Hole (there is only one hole).*

*In winter, (when their fur was thickest, worth more money, and took less pelts to the pound) my father trapped rabbits. Because he suffered ill health my mother always worked with him and I always went along too, irrespective of weather conditions, and when my sister Shirley was old enough she went too, but she was only three years old when we left here so was not fortunate enough to have had the enjoyable early life that I did. My mother was unable to sew, but we all had hand knitted jumpers, cardigans and socks and balaclava caps, and my sister and I had knitted dresses and trousers.*

*Besides my mother and father, Shirley and myself, my mother's parents, William and Sarah Taylor, also lived here with us for a time. At another time, before the outbreak of World War 2, Harold Walsh also lived here, he did stock work, broke in horses, and trapped rabbits.*

*Despite by what today's standards, would appear to be a very primitive and hard life, we lived a very happy and rewarding life. While the work was hard, it was easy going without the stress and hassle of modern day occupations. We were warm, well fed and no water rates, electricity bills, no noise, and most of all, no rush to get anywhere. In fact it was a very relaxing life. For my education I had correspondence for a year but it really wasn't a success as I was used to being busy all the time 'out on the job'. It wasn't much fun staying home doing lessons. My mind was usually elsewhere, so in desperation I was sent to my grandmother Harris in Tumut to attend school. I didn't really dislike school, but as the "kid from the bush" the others really gave me HELL for a while, but I survived.*

*I have now had a most enjoyable weekend with members of the K.H.A and the Canberra Speleological Society and others in the restoration of 'Harris Hut'. They have done a grand job. On behalf of my mother, my sister Shirley and myself I say a big "THANK YOU". And I hope and pray that the users of this hut just stop and think for a moment of its pioneering past and treat it with the respect it deserves. (Khuts.com)*

THANK YOU Phyllis Dowling (formerly Harris)



## Huts in the landscape....

*a practical workshop about hut maintenance and maintenance planning in the Australian Alps*

10-12<sup>th</sup> March 2023 Currango Homestead- Kosciuszko National Park

### Australian Alps National Parks Co-operative Management Program in conjunction with

A huge thank you and congratulations to Rob Gibbs and Megan Bowden for the recent Australian Alps workshops held at Currango. The weekend was built on the welcoming and inclusive qualities of Megan, Rob and Thomas, well organised yet with incredible flexibility to fit in with the varying demands of people and presenters. A mixture of new and old participants who will greatly enhance future relationships and support the ongoing need to plan for the volunteer succession. Those new to the system left with contacts to become more involved and we all left with contacts to pass on; years of skills and experience. We gained stories from across NSW, ACT and Victoria and knowledge to share.

*Peter Charker, "Barbary" PO Box 333 Cootamundra.*

### REPORT: Pauline Downing

In February this year, the caretakers of Daveys Hut received notification that we were chuffed to receive, an email from NPWS as follows: **Confirmation for attending the Australian Alps Heritage Huts - 'Huts in the Landscape' Workshop - Currango Homestead - 10th -12th March, 2023 -**

[www.theaustralianalpsnationalparks.org](http://www.theaustralianalpsnationalparks.org)

*Congratulations, Your attendance is confirmed to participate in the Australian Alps Heritage Huts – 'Huts in the Landscape' Workshop at Currango Homestead - Kosciuszko National Park on 10-12<sup>th</sup> March, 2023. Please refer to the following information and joining instructions for all participants including; those using a bed in roofed accommodation; and those that are camping. You have been allocated a bed in shared accommodation. Please be prepared that you may be required to share a room with others...*

As caretakers of Daveys Hut, (myself and Colin Howie live in Camden and Graham Cummings in Springwood), it was necessary to leave a day earlier to get us into Currango situated on the eastern side of Tantangara Plains, once part of the Currango (formerly Currangorambla) Pastoral Company. I booked into a motel on the outskirts of Cooma where, after passing through Cooma a zillion times in the past 30+ years of our KHA membership, we never aware that the Nanny Goat Hill Lookout existed (established in 1985 with the goat created by a local artist). The lookout is set on a hill west of the town and overlooks the earlier parts of Cooma with it's interesting old homes. Usually we just rushed through, maybe stopping for a coffee, or chai in later years. I had received texts from the motel on the drive down and then on arrival found that it was un-staffed or whatever the terminology is, all contact made through my phone's text. It's a first for us!

At Currango it was a 'step back in time' to sleep in weatherboard buildings with wooden linings and no insulation. We had flush toilets ... but cold showers.

We arrived just prior to NPWS staff Megan, Rob and Thom who worked as a well co-ordinated team welcoming members from many different places followed by an indigenous Welcome to Country.

Throughout Saturday and Sunday there were interesting speakers and practical hands-on demonstrations from craftsmen and field workers employed by NPWS. We learnt easier ways or removing putty from windows something we need next workparty to Daveys Hut, fire prevention, tool sharpening and maintenance, skills to replace rotten timber in the ways and style in which the hut was originally built.

Breakfast, morning and afternoon teas and dinner ('all you can eat' country style) was provided by a local caterer on the spot ... with leftovers offered around the chatting participants. The live-in caretakers have a snug cabin attached to the main homestead with electricity and water piped in and warm fires.

The homestead and several other accommodations are set among snow gums and majestic pines.

*Continued >>>*

**How to get there**  
 Located in northern Kosciuszko National Park, Currango is approximately 3 hours drive from Canberra, 1 1/2 hours from Tumut and 2 hours from Cooma.  
 If coming from Cooma/Adaminaby, turn off the Snowy Mountains Highway, take the Tantangara Road and Pockets Saddle Road and turn left onto Port Phillip Fire Trail.  
 From Tumut, turn off the Snowy Mountains Highway and Long Plain Road and then right on to Port Phillip Fire Trail.

**Things to see and do**

Explore Blue Waterholes and Coleman Plain

Walk to the many historic huts in this area

Learn about this ancient landscape

Mountain bike ride the management trails

Visit Yarrangobilly Caves for a guided or self guided tour.

**HISTORIC  
CURRANGO  
HOMESTEAD**

Kosciuszko National Park

The main homestead is registered on the National Estate and was built around 1895. Currango consists of 29 buildings - built over a long period. The three main within the group are - Daffodil Cottage, the main homestead and The Pines, initially constructed in 1851 for grazing, with particular periods from 1893-1908, 1915-1919 and 1925-1926. (KHuts.com). Walking among the craftsmen from NPWS where skills were demonstrated (from 6 pane window repairs to Tom Yan's sliprails - see article from Matthew, page 13) was a fascinating experience.

I must admit it was very, very, cold with a mega frost the night before we arrived and a magical, mystical fog the next. Days were clear and the landscape dotted with gentle kangaroo families.

On Sunday most of us packed up and joined the tour of the huts listed below.

**Field visits – tag along tour**

(inspection/maintenance report)

1. Cooinbil Management of the hut site
2. Coolamine Past use and restoration
3. Long Plain Management for conflicting uses
4. Oldfields Past use and restoration
5. Pockets Management of the hut site
6. Delany's Rebuilding hut

**The weekend was absolutely memorable. A workshop set in a magical heritage area, well maintained and so very different to the homestead that we had visited last century, prior to its revamp to recovery.**

**100% credit to NPWS, its workers and staff!**



Photos: G. Cummings, C. Howie



# WOODSKILLS 22 April 2023

Marion Plum

Many people arrived the day before to set up camp in the well organised campsites on Nathan Kellett's family property at Wee Jasper.

The weather was brilliant with warm autumn days and no wind or rain. The site was well laid out with several large marquees providing for a number of activities and demonstrations. Many opted for making their own mauls or bush furniture.

Demonstrations were given using traditional tools and showing skills and techniques of old that were needed to prepare timber used in the building of many of the old huts and homesteads of the mountains. Other skills were displayed where members could participate or watch, such as spoon carving, rope and cord making, cloth dying and pottery.

There were also 4WD demos on site as well as offsite visits to an old slab cabin close to Wee Jasper. The restored cabin was furnished and had been lived in until the 1980's.

The event was well attended with more than 150 visitors and around 100 people for the Saturday night dinner. Many old friends, and new, gathered together for the dinner and then chats around the fireplaces to finish off the day, all while listening to live traditional music.

The event was a great success thanks to the many KHA and local volunteers. A special thanks to all of the instructors for sharing their skills and donating their time.

## Trip Report: Kosciuszko Huts Association Woodskills Weekend

April 22-23, 2023

### Introduction

Woodskills is a weekend KHA camping event run once every two years, demonstrating colonial timbercraft and carpentry. Held at the Kellett family's property in Wee Jasper, it's run by volunteers for members, interested staff from NSW NPWS and ACT Parks and Conservation Service, and for Wee Jasper locals. Like many social activities, Covid had seen this event suspended, and this was its first chance to run it again since conditions eased. For this year and for the first time, the KHA was able to offer both the event and a catered dinner free to members and volunteer contributors.

Having joined the KHA last year, this was also the first opportunity Ela and I'd had to meet anyone. We were keen to attend, and I offered to contribute some live music. The organisers warmly accepted and slotted me in for a lunchtime performance, with another muso Daniel already scheduled for the evening.

As members who've visited it can attest, the Wee Jasper area is amazing: an Irish shepherd's dream of what the northern tip of the Brindabellas should look like. Once grazing land, the Kellett property is now being turned to eco-tourism with plenty of new trees planted, but is not yet open to the public so camping there itself is a rare treat.

With some eighty attendees expected, after setting up camp on Friday Ela and I helped out with marshalling early arrivals, against skies that promised stunning weekend weather (I'm indebted to Ela for her help in my prep, and also for most of the pics that follow). That night we were lulled to sleep with the distant sounds of *bodhrán* and pennywhistle from an impromptu music session in the shed. >>>





From the music technical side, I sing and play a range of instruments but for this event I'd dusted off a couple of acoustic-electric guitars and filled the back of my fourby with an amp and a looper (so you can play against your own music), two PAs, some stands, a mixing desk and a portable table, as I'd been told there was power available and that the music would be performed outside in fine weather.

Thoughtfully, property coordinator Nathan and Simon the KHA President had laid out booths under the shed verandah. As you faced the shed, the music was off to the right, parked next to a pottery demonstration by a former ANU Professor of Ceramics, and past her were locals selling coffee, making waffles and offering samples of locally-made gin. Meanwhile, the verandah faced uphill where, under marquees, were the demonstrations and hands-on stuff. The event couldn't have asked for better weather: after months of grey skies, Saturday bordered on gorgeous. >>>



I thought the set-up worked brilliantly: sheltering the music while the amplification carried up the hill to the action under the marquees. At lunch, people could stop and sit on the hill, eat lunch and listen to the music, or just wander around the demos with music in the background.

### Wood Skills Demonstrations

But the main focus of this jamboree was of course colonial wood skill demos. These dying skills are needed to conserve and restore the regional huts, and Ela and I were astounded to see how many like-minded people this event had attracted who like us, loved camping, the bush, old bush huts and were willing to get their hands on an amazing array of 19th century bush carpentry techniques.



Demonstrated were the use of the froe, adze, shave horse, broadaxe, crosscut saw and treadle lathe. With such tools, guests were encouraged to make mallets and mauls, milk maid stools and four legged stools, benches and tables – or even parts of these things, to help furnish the huts. Also demonstrated were tool maintenance and knife sharpening.

>>>



## Conclusions and Lessons Learned

Although Nathan had initially estimated 80 attendants, after registrations were tallied more than 150 had come. As a newcomer to KHA I personally found the range of skills and knowledge on display to be breathtaking. With every conversation you struck, you ended up talking to a bush historian, an artist, a geologist, a bushcrafter, a bush schoolteacher, or a Wee Jasper local with extensive local knowledge. It was impossible to be bored and you'd had to have slept through the whole weekend not to have learned something. The generosity of Nathan and his mother (it's actually her property) in putting up with so many people over the weekend was a tribute to their care for both the region and the community, while the involvement of neighbours (Wee Jasper is a hamlet of 75 people) was delightful to see.

Despite being a volunteer event it was amazingly well-organised and preparing it must have exhausted a lot of people. Even in a peripheral role I found myself needing to rest for several days afterward, and it took all that time to begin to digest what had just occurred.

In offering a musical contribution to an event that had previously been unknown to me, my thoughts were that after years of bushfires, Covid and *La Niña* rains, people might want to reconnect, to recommit, rekindle enthusiasms and start making constructive and forward-looking plans again. I wanted to meet the KHA and contribute, wanted the music to help lubricate that, and according to passing comments it did. While the event has music every time it's run, this was the first time it had had 'official' music, with its own space, amplification and prepared material.

*Mark Grundy*



(Neville Locker, Guest Speaker and his partner)

## AGM REPORT

The 2023 KHA AGM was held on Saturday 20th May at the Adaminaby Bowling Club with 20 members in attendance.

Simon Buckpitt chaired his last AGM as he decided to stand down after 3 years as President.

The new KHA committee wish to thank Simon for his tireless work in leading the association over this time, his dedication to the role and the energy in which he has carried out his duties. Special mention must be made of the countless hours spent advocating for the ACT huts rebuild, along with HMO Namadgi Jean Hammond.

The new committee was elected and Pip Brown was welcomed into the role of President. Pip brings with her a wealth of experience and enthusiasm, stemming from her roles with membership and as a leading member of the NSW Hut rebuild sub committee. The majority of the remaining committee positions are unchanged with the full details contained within the minutes of the AGM which will be uploaded to the members section of the website in the coming days.

At the conclusion of the AGM, attending members were treated to a talk by local Adaminaby historian Neville Locker, who spoke to the history of the area using local stories passed down through multiple generations. His genuine warmth, engaging character and humour made it a highlight of the afternoon and was only matched by the amazing culinary spread put on by the local volunteers. Thanks must be given to Marion Plum, HMO Snowy who led the organisation of the AGM and many people took advantage of the occasion to stay for dinner at the Bowling Club and also to stay the night in the beautiful township.

**Photos: Deidre Shaw**

## **REVIEW REPORT**

Year ending 28 February 2023

**TO MEMBERS OF KOSCIUSZKO HUTS ASSOCIATION INC.**

**(ABN 49 836 809 355)**

In accordance with Sections 74 and 75 of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991 (The Act), I have reviewed the financial statements, comprising the Income and Expense Statement and Balance Sheet of Kosciuszko Huts Association Incorporated (the Association) for the year ending 28 February 2023.

I am not a member or officer of the Association, nor have I prepared or assisted with the preparation of the accounts for the Association.

I have examined the banking statements and working accounts covering credit card and Gateway transactions to assess the accuracy and relevance of the information disclosed in the financial statements.

Nothing has come to my attention that causes me to believe that the accounting records do not satisfy the requirements of Part 5 of the Act.

I believe that the review evidence I examined was sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

It is my opinion that the financial statements for the year ending 28 February 2023 present fairly in all material respects and reflect a true and fair view of the financial position of the Association.



**Peter Clarke**  
Unit 25/9 Jardine Street  
KINGSTON ACT 2604  
3 May 2023



*Photos and text by Matthew Higgins*

### **Tom Yan's Sliprails**



Tom Yan's sliprails on the Tabletop Trail south of Kiandra were known to many cross-country skiers and walkers until their near complete destruction by the 2003 bush-fires. Happily, NPWS has decided to reconstruct the sliprails concurrently with the rebuild of nearby Four Mile Hut.

At the Australian Alps National Parks Hut Conservation Workshop at Currango in March, participants worked on various tasks, including slabs for Four Mile (and the posts and rails for Tom Yan's site - below). A highlight was the arrival at Currango of Tom's grandson Gavin from Tumut.

Gavin brought along Tom's adze, and a photo of Tom (left). Tom died in 1972 and Gavin estimated the sliprails might have been built by Tom in the 1950s or so.



.Hi,

Herewith is an endearing story from John about Alec and growing black sallies on the coast. He ends it with a flourish that I could not improve upon: 'a true gentleman, a friend, a high country lover and protector'.

Allan, John says he's happy to share so please quote from it for your piece in the NPA Bulletin if you wish.

I too am a fan of black sallies, that sparkling dark olive green bark, especially when it's wet or snowing, knocks me for six every time. And they have that special place, just under the snow gums but above the grassland or frost plain. A marker, an ecotone, a place where you sort of know at what elevation you are unless there's a trickster like John planting new things in the undergrowth. **Klaus**

Hi Klaus

Just a short story about Alec to share. As you know he was my neighbour 2 farms down from Hidden Valley (us ) at Widget for over 20 years until he moved to Narooma.

My favourite tree of all is the Eucalyptus Stellulata (Black Sallee ) snow gum. Not just in the high country but in the entire botanical world. The reasons are fairly obvious. I have taken so many

photos of them over the years, but never tire of new angles and colours. Some years ago I decided to look for seedlings and grow a couple, but after some enquiries at a couple of nurseries in the area was informed it was impossible to grow them anywhere else but at certain altitudes.

My thinking was that gum trees are essentially tough and adaptable and it might be possible. One day in Jindabyne I actually saw some in pots for sale in the nursery area of their hardware store but was met with a level of derision when I let slip where I intended to grow them. This resulted in me leaving empty handed, a decision I regretted for a bit until I vowed that on my next trip that way I would buy a couple and try regardless. Just because it was 'impossible' or 'a waste of money ' would not deter me.

You know how sometimes the answer is right under your nose and you don't realise it. One day I was on the dirt road between the properties when Alec drove up for a yarn. At some point (mid yarn) it occurred to me I was chatting to one of the foremost experts on alpine flora in this country. How did I not think of this earlier? I nervously put the proposal to him 'could it be done?' Alec answered that he could see no reason why not!

Of course I followed through and obtained 3 black sallee seedlings and planted them. This was about 12 years ago. 1 deceased after a short period but the other 2 thrived, one a lot larger than the other. One would have been about 10 feet high, the other about 15 feet. And yes I speak in the past tense as in March this year we had here a wind event that went through a narrow line of property and bush near Bodalla which reached its peak vortex right here! 'It' blew over 8 large trees including spotted gum, oaks and cyprus - you know where the root ball is lifted out of the ground. A further 6 large trees and 6 smaller (20-30 foot) high were snapped off mid - mast, just like you would snap a matchstick. On a positive note, only 10 percent of our trees were damaged and only 2 very small ones. But, of all the smaller trees to claim it had to be my favourite 2. One slowly died over a few months, but thankfully, the larger one survives still despite being very beaten up. I think it will be ok as it has new spring growth. I recently bought a small (3 foot ) Pauciflora snow gum to replace the smaller sallee. When I can I will obtain several more Stellulata and plant them in honour of Alec. A true gentleman, a friend, a high country lover and protector.

I don't know if I showed you my snow gums when you were here recently Klaus? Maybe you can recall. But with encouragement and help from my favourite retired C.S.I.R.O scientist we have proven snow gums CAN be developed on the coast here at almost sea level, albeit 9 klms inland.



Regards John Morrow

*NEWCASTLE RAMBLERS  
BUSHWALKING CLUB  
NEWSLETTER  
MARCH 2023*

**CONGRATULATIONS TO NEWCASTLE  
RAMBLERS BUSHWALKING CLUB**

**60 years young - Editor: Bob Clifton sent  
along the club's 60th birthday issue...**



**Cooking in the  
1970s and  
1980s was not  
as simple as it is  
today (left) a  
Shellite stove  
and (right) a  
small Trangia  
metho stove  
(brings back  
memories?)**

*Chris Paterson's early back packs dating back to the 1970s to show how designs have changed and are now lighter and more comfortable. The 'Flinders Ranges' packs came and then disappeared. The Karrimor seemed like a gift because of the weight, but they dug into the lower back something awful -  
Chris*



**Our KHA members have enjoyed reading previous reports of the trips made by  
the Newcastle Ramblers.**

## Work party held at Glendale on the 25th March 2023

**Text and photos: Jean Hamilton**

A work party was organised to clean the area surrounding the KHA containers and the shed to reduce the fire fuel load which has grown out of control.

Since the fires the weeds have infiltrated the grounds and together with burnt materials from the fires it has become a fire risk once again. It was upsetting that we only had one member, Lukas from Canberra, myself and David to complete the work. David and I travelled down the day before and were allowed to stay at the depot for the night. We quickly unpacked and drove up to the containers to commence work given the weather report stated rain for the next day. We were surprised that Hazel, a Ranger, came out to help us that afternoon with a brush cutter. We accomplished a fair bit of work between all of us. When Hazel was about to leave we were shocked to see the number of European wasps flying around and all over the vehicles. Not knowing where the nests were, we were cautious when moving around.

Overnight it rained fairly heavily and we were unsure if we would be able to continue with the day's work but with luck the rain held off. We met Lukas at the gate and within a short time we were all into clearing the back of the KHA containers and the shed. There was a lot of fallen timber and one dead, burnt trunk which had rotted inside had to be removed. Whilst Lukas was using my grass trimmer and David preparing poles for the stockyards I mowed the front area as much as possible.

Right: **Hazel : Namadgi Ranger**

Nathan and Jake (ACT Parks) came down to assist us but we had covered as much as my equipment would allow. I requested they bring down the thrasher to cut the remaining areas but not sure if or when that will be. Jake informed me that a lot of the St Johns Wort weeds have been sprayed which I have never seen here before. I also mentioned the wasps, so traps will be set. Nathan also said they would clear up all the rubbish around the shed and in the grounds out front. They went down to the Glendale Depot to do some of the cutting down and around the complex to save me from doing it.

Right: Storage Shed

I was pleased with what we had accomplished between us. Once the remaining area is cut I will be able to manage the site much better and keep the fuel level down as I did before. I have enclosed some photos to show the areas we tackled. I would like to thank Lukas, David, Hazel, Nathan and Jake for all their assistance. I would



also like to thank Nathan for allowing us to stay at the Depot for the night. Hopefully, if the weather is kind to us our next work party will be at waterholes and the stockyards.

**Photos:**

**Left: Nathan and David / Nathan weed trimming**



# National Volunteer Week - We want to say Thank You.

NSW national parks benefit enormously from the 4,000 registered volunteers who contribute to programs such as bush regeneration, habitat restoration, animal conservation, historic and cultural heritage guiding and supporting our campground host program.

National Volunteer Week, celebrated from 15-21 May, gives NPWS the chance to recognise the impact of our volunteers and to acknowledge the NPWS staff who support them.

To celebrate their hard work, NPWS volunteers will be offered special events, including tours of Bare Island, Barrenjoey Lighthouse and South Head tunnels. Other local events will be held across the state to acknowledge and recognise their efforts. From 15 May 2023, discounts will be offered to active volunteers at NPWS Visitor Centres as an ongoing recognition of their efforts.

“NPWS is supported by dedicated volunteers across NSW who, through their commitment and skills, contribute to meeting visitors’ experiences, cultural heritage, and environmental conservation goals,” said the NPWS Policy and Engagement Branch’s Volunteer Team. “Volunteers are recognised and appreciated for their time, skills, ideas and enthusiasm, and for the benefits they bring to the agency.”

“The positive benefits of volunteering for individuals and the broader community are well documented,” said the Team.

“National Volunteer Week is also a time to acknowledge and thank the NPWS staff who support this vital program.”

**New NPWS Volunteer ID** Check out the new NPWS Volunteer ID badge in your VIP profile confirming your status as an active NPWS volunteer. Log into your VIP account at [www.myimpactpage.com](http://www.myimpactpage.com) Use the username and password you created at registration. Click the yellow **Menu** button in the top left corner. Go to the **My Profile** tab and then select **Badges**. **10% discount on selected NPWS Visitor Centre retail purchases** We are pleased to announce that as a valued NPWS volunteer we would like you to enjoy 10% discount off selected retail purchases\* at participating NPWS Visitor Centres. This ongoing opportunity is being launched on 15 May 2023 as part of our 2023 National Volunteer Week celebrations. To receive the discount, just show your NPWS Volunteer ID to our fabulous NPWS Visitor Centre staff who will look after you! (\*conditions apply)

## Participating NPWS locations

See list below of participating locations (opening times provided are standard and subject to change.

National Park entry fees apply):

[Blue Mountains Heritage Centre, Blackheath](#) - 270 Govetts Leap Road, Blackheath

[Bobbin Head Information Centre](#) - 688 Ku-ring-gai Chase Road, Mount Colah

[Cape Byron Information Centre](#) - 199 Lighthouse Road, Byron Bay

[Dorrigo Rainforest Centre](#) - 142 Dome Road, Dorrigo Mountain

[Fitzroy Falls Visitor Centre](#) - 1301 Nowra Road, Fitzroy Falls

[Hartley Historic Site Visitor Centre](#) - 51 Old Great Western Highway, Hartley

[Khancoban Visitor Centre](#) - 2 Scammel Street, Khancoban

[Kurnell Visitor Centre](#) - 21 Cape Solander Drive, Kurnell (temporarily closed)

[Minnamurra Rainforest Centre](#) - 345 Minnamurra Falls Road, Jamberoo

[Mungo Visitor Centre](#) - 3046 Turlee Leaghur Road, Mungo

[Perisher Valley Office](#) - 9914 Kosciuszko Road, Perisher Valley

[Pilliga Forest Discovery Centre](#) - 50-58 Wellington St, Baradine (?)

[Royal National Park Visitor Centre](#) - 2 Lady Carrington Drive, Audley

[Sea Acres Rainforest Centre](#) - 159 Pacific Drive, Port Macquarie

[Snowy Region Visitor Centre](#) - 49 Kosciuszko Road, Jindabyne

[Tumut Visitor Centre](#) - The Old Butter Factory, 5 Adelong Road, Tumut

[Warrumbungle National Park Visitor Centre](#) - 4261 John Renshaw Parkway, Warrumbungle

[Yarrangobilly Caves Visitor Centre](#) - 50 Yarrangobilly Caves Road, Yarrangobilly

Ask your volunteer coordinator for help to log your hours into VIP.

---

## Volunteering with the Kosciuszko Huts Rebuilding Program

This webinar can now be viewed on-demand. Use the link below to enter the event at any time.

**EVENTLINK:** <https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/4038389/494658446DF57F6F7FF09FAEABF1767A?>

**Why is tracking volunteer hours is so important?** Tracking your volunteer hours may seem like an unnecessary and thankless task but it is a vital measure to recognise the enormous contribution you make to NSW's environment and cultural heritage. It helps NPWS determine how best to support existing programs and grow volunteering opportunities across the state. Tracking volunteer hours also allows us to - track how engaged we are in the community and show the valuable community support we have. Sharing the number of NPWS volunteer programs, the number of volunteers and the collective volunteer hours confirms to others that our volunteers believe and trust our NPWS goals of achieving environmental and heritage outcomes



- Creates a personal record capturing all of your hard work (for your resume or your wall) to demonstrate your passion, commitment and sense of civic duty
- Allows us to acknowledge and recognise our volunteers' service and commitments
- Shows how collectively your volunteering efforts have made a difference and provides a snapshot of the importance of volunteers to NPWS
- Helps us to calculate the value of your volunteering contribution (at the fair market value) and determine true program costs.
- Provides data to help measure outcomes so we can better plan for, communicate needs and allocate funding for training, support and resources.

Provides leverage to attract community support and other potential volunteers as we share and promote stories about the impact of your volunteering efforts

## Just a short note on our recent trip to Pretty Plain Hut

There was a slight miscommunication in our start destination, the track was cleared to where the National Parks park and go in on their 4 wheeler at the head of Pretty Plain Creek. We normally go further where the track stops at the head of Bulls Head Creek. There were still large fallen trees in this section obstructing our access and very overgrown. (last 1km or so of track). We left our vehicles at the head of Pretty Plain Creek and hiked in the 4km to the hut.

The track behind Pretty Plain Hut has overgrown but there was still pink ribbon markers to help us find the way. **The hut is in good condition.**

### Summary of completed tasks:

We had a general clean up including the fire place and wood box which did have a lot of leaf litter.

- Trimmed the grass back around the outside of the hut.
- Cleaned windows.
- Applied remaining oil to outside of logs. (most of the hut has now had 3 coats in the last 4 or so years. There is no more oil left at the hut)
- Cleaned up the tack room, removing lots of leafy branches which had been stored in there.
- Restocked wood box with emergency wood.
- Tensioned tie-down bolts to entire hut.
- Carried out all rubbish including empty oil tins.
- On-going maintenance concerns. Floor to toilet is springy and may have some structural damage under.
- Front door to hut is in poor repair and will need replacing in the next few years.
- Log on south/west corner adjacent to fireplace has rotted away. It was noted during heavy rain that water pooled in this area and appears to be contributing to the rot (photo attached).

### Request for items/improvements:

- Tube of silicon to seal small holes in roof sheeting.
- Dust pan and broom. (happy to take with us next time).
- Locked box for work party materials/tools, could be kept in tack room with ladder.
- Pretty Plain Hut sign for door (happy to organise with input and approval from NP).
- Washing up tub. Old one has a hole in it (happy to take in next time).
- Maybe a little awning over front door and washing up bench. This was suggested by many in the log book.

In conclusion our friendly copperheads seem to be doing very well with up to half a dozen making their home under or around the hut. A great couple of days camping!

>>>

Regards

Emma and Andrew Perrin  
Pretty Plain Hut Caretakers





**Emma and Andrew Perrin**

**Pretty Plain Hut  
Caretakers**

*There were still large fallen trees in this section obstructing our access and very overgrown. (last 1km or so of track).*



*Log on south/west corner adjacent to fireplace has rotted away. It was noted during heavy rain that water pooled in this area and appears to be contributing to the rot.*

**Below:** *Our friendly copperheads seem to be doing very well with up to half a dozen making their home under or around the hut.*





Pryors Hut, May 2005

KHA web site: The hut is just on the NSW side of the border with ACT which runs along the ridge. Also known as Botanic Gardens Hut or the Annex Hut. Consisting of three rooms, with substantial stone footings, the hut is built of sawn timber, set vertically for the walls. There are three rooms, an ante room at the entrance, living room and bedroom. The floor is timber, with some covering. The roof and porch are covered with corrugated iron. There is an outside toilet. The hut is the best built in Namadgi, as it needs to survive vigorous weather conditions in winter. It has been a saviour for a number of parties. The hut was built in 1952, by Lindsay Pryor and party, as a shelter for those working in the Alpine Botanic Gardens, an annex to the National Botanic Gardens (nearby). Professor Pryor was a prominent member of the Board of the Botanic Gardens and one time Professor of Forestry at ANU. At the time the hut was built, he was Superintendent of Parks and Gardens for the ACT. It was built to provide shelter for those planting and tending the alpine plants. Originally only the ante-room was open, but now all three rooms are available to visitors. Strictly speaking, it is a few metres over the border into NSW, so as not to cause issues with the Cotter Catchment.

Signage at Hut: The hut was built as Alpine Botanic Hut in the early 1950s. As the sign on the door indicates, it was built for personnel tending the alpine annexe of the National Botanic Gardens. This was established in the Mt Gingera area under the supervision of Lindsay Pryor, the Superintendent of Parks and Gardens. A coastal annexe was established at Jervis Bay.

In the late 1950s, Pryor was appointed Professor of Botany at Canberra University College (later ANU). Emphasis was then placed on the development of the present Gardens site at Black Mountain and the coastal annexe. The alpine annexe fell into disuse. The only traces of it now are this hut, remains of the old horse paddock nearby and some plant markers made of huon pine on a metal stand.

The pines below the hut were planted in the 1950s by members of the Snowy Mountains Authority Landscape Section. They are Scotts Pine (*Pinus silvestris*).

The hut became known as Pryors Hut in recognition of Professor Pryor's contribution to the development of the Botanic Gardens, the study of and horticultural development of native plant species, the landscape development of Canberra and the evolution of the Australian forestry school and industry. This hut straddles the Australian Capital Territory – New South Wales border and lies partially within Namadgi National Park and partly within Bimberi Nature Reserve.

<https://www.johnevans.id.au/wp/other-resources/points-of-interest/pryors-hut/>

## I never tire of looking at huts...

**From John Morrow ...** For every feature that may be similar in many huts, there is at least one point of difference that makes them quite unique. The enjoyment I derive does not come about from just exploring a hut itself, but also from the anticipation of finding it. Will it be found beside a stream, cocooned by a forest, hidden in the shadow of a valley or perched on the top of a mountain.

The search never starts at the trailhead. It begins with a combination of careful planning, scrutinising maps and pouring over information and photographs before the journey, that builds the excitement. Then there are the stories about the hut itself. Those who built them, those who lived in them and those who have visited them, that adds another layer to the overall thrill of finally finding them.

Walking in the footsteps of those who, thankfully, time has not forgotten, leads not only to their huts that proudly still stand, but lead us on our own journeys and to create our own stories. There is a sense of connection that I think all hut lovers feel. A connection that the passage of time cannot break. There are so many facets to exploring and experiencing these historical reminders that dot the land, that I never tire of seeking them out nor of learning about their secrets or sharing their stories.

Having exhausted the treasure trove of huts here in the Kosciuszko and Namadgi National Parks, plus most in Victoria and many other States, I decided to journey a little further afield and travel overseas - that is, across the mountainous seas of Bass Strait to Tasmania. My inspiration arose from reading Klaus' book, "*Mountain Landscapes and Historic Huts*", which contains not only pictures of many of New South Wales and Victorian huts, but also a large section containing Tassie huts. These photos captured the sheer beauty of some of the most interesting huts you will ever see anywhere.

Over the years, I had perused these photos many times and several things became obvious. Firstly, quite a few Tasmanian huts are built of stone, which is a rarity on the mainland. Also, many Tassie huts have shingle roofs and even shingled walls, also a rarity on the mainland. The Tasmanian pine used for shingles and split timbers is not only long lasting but very pleasing to the eye. One can but marvel not only at the effort needed but also the workmanship required to cut these shingles.

Finally, the huts' purposes differ in another aspect. Whilst many were used for the same purposes as on the mainland, (being built as Homesteads or as hiking, fishing, mining and also stockmen's huts), perhaps a little unique in Tasmania are a number of skin drying huts.

These were used by roaming trappers who would gather their wallaby and possum skins and pin them around the internal walls to dry them to a saleable condition by the warmth of the fire. These huts are generally two roomed, one for living in and one for drying the skins. This hunting and skin gathering was an income and lifestyle well known from the earlier days of settlement up until around the late 1970s but is no longer pursued. Despite the ghastly background of these huts, they are part of history and nonetheless aesthetically pleasing and always found in the most spectacular places imaginable. However, they have also become prized for their photogenic qualities.

A long held desire from my days of longingly looking at the huts from the pages of Klaus' book, was finally realised when I got to see these idyllic huts for myself and capture their beauty through my own eyes and camera lens. Mentioned here are just a few that can be found scattered on and around the imposing Cradle Mountain.

My wife Tracy joined me on this mini "pilgrimage" of sorts and our journey of discovery began at the famous Cradle Mountain National Park. The Dove Lake Boatshed is probably the most iconic and well known structure throughout Australia and much of the world. You almost certainly would have seen pictures of this picturesque boatshed with its amazing backdrop of Cradle Mountain. To finally be standing there admiring this scene at first hand was surreal to say the least.

Built in 1940 from the local endemic pine, it's abundance of shingles, (roof and walls) only adds to its character and beauty. Restoration work was carried out in the early 1980s but the boatshed remains basically unaltered from the original design. There is another pine boatshed that sits on Crater Lake, however this one is a single bay version of its more famous cousin.

From here we diverted gently downward for several kilometres to Lake Rodway to inspect Scott/Kilvert. This hut was built in 1966 as a memorial to a teacher, Ewan Scott and a student, David Kilvert, who both sadly perished in a blizzard in 1965. It is a large, all iron A frame hut, very spacious with tables and plenty of chairs, with a huge sleeping platform upstairs. It even boasts a coal heater with a convenient supply of coal in large bins located out the front. We sat under the front veranda, privileged to visit such a lovely place. The hut is somewhat of a cross between those architecturally rich Victorian huts, Vallejo Gantner and the M.U.M.C. huts.

Apart from these huts, which need a bit of stamina and a head for heights to reach, there are huts located along the Overland Track, but they would require a Park's pass and a minimum of 5 or 6 nights on the track to reach them. One I was especially happy to get to visit when we did the overland track back in 2020, was Du Cane hut. But Pelion and Old Pelion huts can be reached by the Arm River track. It is doable in a day hike if you are fit and energetic but we decided to stay overnight, as we not only wanted to visit these huts, but also climb Mount Ossa, that sadly we had missed due to poor weather when we did the Overland hike.

There are 2 more easily accessible huts located in the vicinity of Ronny Creek. Our favorite would have to be the prized Waldheim Chalet that I have coveted visiting ever since I saw it gracing the pages of Klaus' book. This timber structure is an absolute masterpiece. It was the original home of Gustav Weindorfer, the man responsible for ensuring Cradle Mountain was preserved as a National Park.

He built it in 1912 and it is one amazing place. This large building mainly consists of King Billy pine, shingles, knotted beams and struts. I've never seen anything quite like it. There are several rooms plus a kitchen, each area having some furniture and accoutrements on display. Outside is a small veranda plus a free standing porch with upright pine trunks. Set on the edge of an Alpine forest complete with a short circuit walk that begins and ends at a small hut-like structure, believed to be the bath house. Nearby is Weindorfers Tomb and another small hut-like structure.



**Dove Lake Boatshed-  
Kitcheners Hut  
Trappers Hut,  
Du Cane Hut,  
Weindorfers Bath House**

Its surroundings are very peaceful and serene, the perfect place for reflection on the magnificence and grandeur of Cradle Mountain and the men and women who inspired others not only to visit, but also to protect and preserve it for generations to come. There is another somewhat hidden treasure near here, Mount Kate House, named in honour of Gustav's wife. This delightful building is in the style of a small home-stead (not too dissimilar to Daveys Hut) and has vertical board walls, iron roof, a spacious verandah, 2 small outbuildings and a rough picket fence around the yard. It too is very photo-genic, especially with Cradle Mountain peeking through the backdrop of trees that surround it.

It is difficult to pry oneself away from Cradle Mountain National Park but eventually we do and relocate approximately 70 kilometres east to our next area.

The small quaint town of Mole Creek in Tasmania is a great base for hiking and hut bagging. From Mole Creek you have access to Lake Parangana and Lake Rowallan, which are the starting points for many of the great walks in Tasmania, including the Walls of Jerusalem and the Arm River track which goes up into the midsection of the Overland track to Pelion Plains.

In the middle of Mole Creek sits Liena hut, a genuine skin drying hut. It is one of several built by mountains legend, Ray "Boy" Miles and after his passing was relocated to Mole Creek and restored in honour of Ray. This example is the usual 2 rooms, one is split boards the other is slab, with an external post frame. This is one of the easiest mountain huts to visit as it is smack bang in the middle of the town.

Looking south of Mole Creek, the view is filled with the Great Western Tiers (GWT) an almost vertical-faced, flat-topped length of mountain range. At three different but near to each other points at the base of the Tiers, are tracks leading to many of the huts. A few kilometres south of Mole Creek is an area called Weston Creek where we find the Higgs Track that leads us to Lady Lake Hut. We walked up a very well formed but steep track for about 2 kilometres up the GWT, then at the top you come over a rise and look straight across at this fantastic hut! It's a large iron fishing hut rebuilt in 2002/03. It has a north facing verandah, timber floorboards, ample furniture and a liquid fuel stove. It boasts expansive views of the area and the lake itself, so needless to say, it's in a very pleasant setting.

From here you can continue along to Ironstone Hut at Lake Nameless. Ironstone is another fishing hut made of stone and was fully rebuilt between 1993 and 1995. A different track at the nearby cave site leads to 2 very different and interesting huts. These are accessed from the Parsons Track. About 3 kilometres along the lower reaches of the Tiers is Hills Hut, a former logger's hut, built in 1960. It is weatherboard and was restored in 2020 and is in

pristine order.

After Hills, the track narrows and winds through the bush until it rises into a magnificent, moist and moss laden Myrtle Forest and a bit below the GWT summit sits Haberles Hut. It is a tiny hut made of vertical palings and was built by a local family in 1932 as a shelter when hunting in the area.

Another nearby track leads up to Whiteleys Hut, a rugged all-iron construction of "bits and pieces", built to support grazing in 1967. Yet another example of finding a Tasmanian hut that sits in a truly awesome and wild place.

On successive days we drove from Mole Creek along Mersey Forest Road past the caves towards Lake Paragana and took the left turn to the Devil's Gullet and Lake MacKenzie. The Gullet is a great short walk to an area akin to a mini Grand Canyon. At the end of the road at Lake MacKenzie we parked and walked along the western edge of the lake heading north towards the homely Sandy Lake Hut. It is a large, sturdy two room, horizontal board hut with a stone paved verandah and woodshed behind it. A nice place to sit and gaze at the wonderful landscape whilst having lunch. Ironstone Hut can also be accessed from Lake Mackenzie.

I hope to be able to tell you about a few of these and other huts in a later edition. **Our next target ... Walls of Jerusalem.**



Scott-Kilvert Hut Cradle Mountain





## **REVAMP of VALENTINES HUT** Simon Plum

Work party report – 22nd - 23rd April 2023 For more insight into its history - <https://khuts.org/index.php/heritage-guest/grazing-and-pastoral/valentine-hut-historical-background>



**Valentine Hut** has undergone some major reconstruction work this autumn, conducted by NPWS carpenter Garry McDougall. The western and south-western aspects of the hut had deteriorated over time given that it encounters the worst of the prevailing wind and storms.

The entire western wall has been rebuilt from the ground up, the windows either replaced or refurbished and the floorboards made anew. Sections of the door jamb have been replaced, corner flashing removed and replaced with Colourbond and a slow combustion heater has been installed as part of the replacement program jointly funded between NPWS and KHA. This program has seen new heaters go into Horse Camp, Whites River, Disappointment Spur, Schlink and now Valentines Hut. Mawson and Tin Huts are next on the list and may get their update before the coming winter.

The KHA work party came in to put a final coat of True Red paint onto the weatherboards, the initial coats having been applied by KHA members at the NPWS depot in Jindabyne before installation.

Also completed was painting on the external windows that had been restored and replaced. The new flashing and awnings were also painted, with the latter receiving the row of hearts along the lower border to

match the awning on the northern aspect of the hut.

These new awnings really make the hut stand out and are a regular feature in the log book comments. The internal walls were sugar soaped and are due for repainting now that the western internal wall and ceiling around the new flue are completed. This may get done before winter, otherwise a trip in late Spring 2023 will see this job completed.

The old Ultimate 500 has been replaced with a new Kalora slow combustion stove. These stoves are fast to light, easy to maintain and give out a brilliant warmth. They can be shut right down to burn far more efficiently than the older stoves ever could and are capable of boiling a billy on top. The new stove was given it's first run on the frosty second morning of the work party and impressed everyone. The hut was given a thorough clean out and rubbish removed.

The work by the NPWS is expected to be completed by the start of May 2023, with access to the public restored at that time. Thanks to everyone's patience whilst this important work has been undertaken. The visitors we had to the hut whilst we were there were all very understanding and complimentary of the time spent by both NPWS staff and KHA members. >>>>



## ***From Simon Plum - A few reminders to members and non-members alike.***

*If you pack it in, you must pack it out. Gather what firewood you need and even leave some extra for the next party. The only legitimate reason for not gathering firewood is due to very poor weather. Please do not rip out logbook pages to light a fire. As a result of this, an additional trip back in will be required to install a new logbook as it is reaching capacity well before it should have. Use your fire-starting skills and find some very fine kindling. Or do the smart thing and always bring a Firestarter with you.*

*Do not light fires inside the hut. There was a concerning logbook entry where a guest lit a fire on the shovel to create some 'coals' to aid in them starting the Ultimate 500. These difficulties have now been removed with the new installation, but there is never a reason to bring exposed coals into a hut and this is how we lose huts and possibly life.*

*Future work for the next work party will include a full repaint of the internal walls and ceiling.*

*Drainage creation around the western wall to promote airflow around the weatherboards to allow them to dry more effectively, which should prolong their life.*

*The southern wall will be next in line for rebuild by the NPWS and their ongoing work is to be commended.*

*We had perfect weather throughout the weekend and were very fortunate to get into the hut before the winter weather truly arrives.*

## **Two hikers located in Kosciuszko National Park overnight after activating emergency beacon**

***PLBs can be loaned for free at 13 locations in NSW including the Snowy Region Visitor Centre in Jindabyne and from the NPWS Perisher Valley Office.***

Two hikers have been found after signalling for help in Kosciuszko National Park last night in the New South Wales Snowy Mountains.

## **Key points:**

- The men activated an emergency beacon at 5:30pm and were found at 11:00pm around Mullers Pass
- A weather forecaster described the weather as "foul" with poor visibility and "blizzard conditions"

Spokesperson from NSW Ambulance said they were alerted to reports that a personal locator beacon (PLB) had been activated at about 5:30pm yesterday.

NSW Police said two men, aged 26 and 27, had set out the day before and became lost on Tuesday afternoon near Mount Townsend.

"The men sought shelter under a rock outcropping where they spent the night, activating their PLB at 5pm the next day," a NSW Police spokesperson said.

The SES, along with ambulance and Fire and Rescue crews assisted police with the search.

The men were found about 10:15pm on Wednesday and treated for mild hypothermia, before returning to Charlotte Pass at midnight.

"Two young males required assistance after having a bit of an adventure," said NSW SES Snowy River Commander Mallica Bailey.

"They had all the equipment required and were doing OK.

Foul weather, blizzard conditions

Commander Bailey said the two men were not locals but were experienced hikers.

"They were two adults having a good time and got caught by the weather," she said.

"It was cold and windy, and there was some snow."

Just weeks out from the official start of the ski season on the June long weekend, the search serves as a reminder to properly prepare for the Snowy Mountains.

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has been advising hikers and backcountry skiers to fill out an online [Trip Intention Form](#), which helps provide information to NSW Police in case of an emergency.





📷 Gus Angus and Bob Sluce at the Ginini hut, June 1950. Picture by David Cook

## Gus Angus and Bob Sluce at the Ginini Hut, June 1950 Picture by David Cook

### Forgotten ski huts of the Brindabellas

The story of skiing on the Brindabellas is well known among parts of the community. Many Canberrans will have heard of Mt Franklin Chalet (opened 1938), and the Royal Military College Duntroon Ski Lodge (started 1951).

What is hardly known at all is that there were other ski huts on the range during the late 1940s.

By and large these huts were built by Mt Franklin skiers (members of the Canberra Alpine Club) who wanted to do their own thing and to explore the higher peaks and deeper snow further south from Franklin. Extension of the Mt Franklin Road past Mt Ginini and to Mt Gingera in the 1940s facilitated this activity.

The first hut was built at Stockyard Gap in 1948. The skiers were Peter Spottswood, Geof Hall, Dave Morell, Doug Anderson, John Beaumont and Cliff Kratzing, and they variously knew one another not only through the Canberra Alpine Club but through work connections. They were keen skiers and Peter had come third in the langlauf in the Balmain Cup races at Kiandra in 1947.

The hut was intended as a "half way house" between Franklin and Gingera. Fearing the government would not grant them a lease of the land, the skiers chose a spot just over the border inside NSW, and built their hut there. Materials were transported on Geof's T-Model Ford utility known as "The Hopper". Main timbers came from Bulls Head, while wall-cladding was pine offcuts from a sawmill; the bark was still attached, giving the little hut a rustic look. A slow combustion stove was installed and the hut - or "permanent tent" as Peter called it - was complete.

But the hut saw only little use, as the group either moved, married or otherwise didn't get back to the Gingera snows. The building stood until at least the 1970s but eventually collapsed. In the 1990s pieces of timber and metal were still visible, but the timber was lost in the 2003 bushfires. Today a little of the metal can still be found.

Another group built a hut on Mt Ginini. Known as the Ginini Hut Club, the group officially took out a lease in October 1948. Main members were Gus Angus, John Murray, David Thomas and Jim Gillan.

In addition to wanting access to the snows of Ginini and Gingera, the club was keen to get in before a commercial operator took a site on the range, which would have made for much more expensive skiing on the Brindabellas. This concern about a commercial lodge (possibly owned by a brewery) was widespread among alpine club members. Some bush timber for the hut was found locally, and sawn timber was transported from Canberra, mainly in Dave Thomas's 1924 Cleveland motor car. Roofing iron (rare in this post-war period) was bought at a government auction in Kingston.

A wood stove and bunks were fitted. Friends helped with construction, especially English carpenter Horace Morley who was employed on Canberra's Havelock House. Several members of the group rode motorbikes to Ginini from Canberra.

The Ginini Hut Club members enjoyed the 1949 winter from their little base, driving to Franklin Chalet and skiing from there to the hut. A small ski run was formed on Ginini. The skiers also did tours along the range. But like the Stockyard Gap group, job changes had their impact and there were concerns that the lease might be lost due to government protection of the Cotter water catchment. The Ginini club offloaded the lease in 1951 - to RMC Duntroon which developed the site into its own ski lodge.

The third group of Brindabellas skiers to form a small club was the Gingera Ski Club. Members included Bill Ginn, Doug Hyles, Ron Bell, brothers Dick and Ken Prowse, and Harry White (and later, Eric Dunshea). They took out a lease in April 1947 on Mt Gingera, again for access to the peak's better snow and to forestall commercial interest in the area. Aged surveyor Colonel J.T. H. Goodwin surveyed the block for the young guys, setting a fast pace: "*He was prancing around the mountain like he was a rock wallaby,*" said Ron Bell. >>>

Two impediments soon arose which made hut construction difficult. The first was the road which was very primitive. Secondly, Lindsay Pryor, head of Parks and Gardens, wanted a site on Gingera for his Alpine Botanic Garden (an annexe to the Canberra botanic garden) and in 1951 Pryor was successful in obtaining a section of the mountain which was the very same as that wanted by the skiers.

So, a hut wasn't built, though the skiers did make ski trips on Gingera. Ironically, Pryor's Hut itself, built for the garden annexe in 1952, became a destination for Canberra Alpine Club skiers doing cross-country ski tours to Gingera from Franklin, as part of the hut was open to the public. During the 1960s and 70s, Canberra Alpine Club's Alan Bagnall led an annual trip to Pryor's and Mt Gingera.

Today there are no ski huts on the Brindabellas, just the day shelter at Franklin which tells the story of the alpine club's Mt Franklin Chalet which stood there until the 2003 bushfires. RMC Duntroon's lodge was demolished many years earlier.

Pryor's Hut still stands and attracts visitors into these beautiful mountains behind Canberra.

**Matthew Higgins is a Canberra author and historian.**

Canberra Times

:Email [timtheyowieman@bigpond.com](mailto:timtheyowieman@bigpond.com) or  
Twitter: [@TimYowie](https://twitter.com/TimYowie) or write c/-

*The Canberra Times*, 9 Pirie St, Fyshwick.

**Mt Ginini:** Mt Ginini (1762m) is the ACT's seventh highest peak. It is located near the end of the publicly accessible part of the Mt Franklin Road (dirt, 2WD OK when dry) in Namadgi National Park. It can take up to 100 minutes to drive from Civic. After snowfalls the road is often closed to reduce the risk of accidents and to provide cross-country skiers with a safe (and smooth) track to explore the Brindabellas.

**Tim's tip:** Before embarking on a winter drive into Namadgi National Park, call the Visitor Centre (6207 2900) to check on road (and snow) conditions.

**The old Mt Ginini ski run:** It crosses the Mt Franklin Road just before the locked gate at the Mt Gingera Walk Trail Head. For the less adventurous, the scar can be seen from various places around Canberra after snow. Best view points are from the Mt Ainslie lookout and also where Yamba Drive heads over the hill and turns into Erindale Drive near Farrer.

**Urban legend:** Contrary to some far-fetched stories, the buildings for the Duntroon barracks atop Mt Ginini weren't "pre-fabricated huts dropped out of a Dakota onto a snow drift and put together next summer". According to high country historian Matthew Higgins, material was sourced from the decommissioned Molonglo Construction Camp at Fyshwick, driven from Canberra and painstakingly assembled by cadets during regular work parties.

**Up the top:** Although you will have to fossick hard to find remnants of Duntroon's ski lodge, the peak of Mt Ginini is now home to both a distinctive A-frame air navigation facility and an automatic weather station. The station was added after the 2003 fires to aid emergency management in the ACT, especially to assist with calculating north west winds at high altitude.

Cheers  
Matthew

Attached copy of Dorothy Brown's beautiful 1970s pic of the original Delaneys that featured in my talk last Sat night at Curr.



**Report on the work party at Waterholes  
NAMADGI and the stockyards by  
Jean Hammond, 26th -29th April inclusive**

Attendees included:

*26th April:* Namadgi National Park Staff,  
Nicholas Thorne, Aidan Chard, Hazel Benet, Dylan  
Killock-Moran

*26th April:* KHA members, Jean Hammond (HMO),  
David Argall, Lukas Tan, Stephen Joske

*27th April:* KHA members, Jean Hammond (HMO),  
*David Argall, Lukas Tan, Stephen Joske, Sean  
Sunley. Nicholas Thorne (NNP)*

*28th April:* KHA members, *Jean Hammond (HMO), David  
Argall, Lukas Tan, Sean Sunley. Nicholas*

*Thorne (NNP)* came in to check on progress

*29th April:* KHA members, *Jean Hammond (HMO), David  
Argall, Lukas Tan*

**Day 1:** We all met up at Namadgi Visitor Centre at 0800hrs to have a briefing and to get vehicles washed down. The staff at Namadgi had already delivered the equipment and materials to the site. Some additional equipment was also taken from Glendale en- route. The track normally into Waterholes was inaccessible after Westermans Hut so we had to drive via the Old Boboyan Road then onto Bulls Flat Fire Trail then Grassy Creek Fire Trail then finally onto Waterholes Fire trail. When everyone was onsite and vehicles parked work began. Aidan was in control of the mini excavator and was briefed on where to start digging the trench and the two sump holes. This made our work much easier but we all had to manually shovel clay and dirt and remove old ag pipe and the geotextile fabric which had decayed.

This was the hardest to remove as the fabric was imbedded in the clay and soil. Eventually we had a trench dug. We then had to lay the black plastic up the side of the hut just a few mm above the level of the ground and then to lay it on the bottom of the trench. The plastic was held in position using gaffer tape on the building. After this was in place the crushed material and stones were placed in the base of the trench with the help of Aidan controlling the excavator before the first layer of ag piping (20metres) was installed. A second layer of crushed material and stones covered the ag. pipe and then the second ag. pipe was installed followed by more crushed material and stones and finally the entire area was covered with the soil. As we were nearing the end the black plastic was then flipped back

on the soil and more placed on top.

Normally this would have taken a few days but we were so fortunate to have equipment that could dig the trench and a team of 8 personnel all working together.



We had completed the task before all the National Park staff were due to leave. Afterwards we walked down to the stockyards to discuss the how and where we would start work the following day

and how tedious it would be as we have to measure every post before removing. This was a project that I wanted to achieve as this part of history was so important. The posts had previously started to decline but were hanging on with the help of star pickets. I visited this site three times since we submitted the application to Heritage.

The ranger that was as passionate about the project as I was, was Deklyn Townsend who helped submit the application. We were both astounded that within a month we had the approval from Heritage but a number of events (access, floods, fires and more floods and then covid) prevented the work from being started. My submission plan was to utilise as much of the original 1940s timber used in the structure as possible and where we couldn't to use posts that were new. I had previously discussed this and had permission to use fallen timber if close by which would blend in with the old.

When we walked over very little of the stockyards were standing, the rails lying in the high grass. On inspection we knew this was going to take a considerable amount of time and we would only achieve a small section at this work party. I had taken photos of each section on a previous visit and used these as a guide throughout the work party.

We returned back to the hut for dinner and do an AAR (After Action Review) on the day's events and how we were going to start on the stockyards. Night came early and before long we were tucked away in our

sleeping bags and tents.



**What the stockyards had become**

>>>>

**Day 2:** Cold night. After breakfast we headed over to the stockyards at 0730 hrs despite the cold temperature to start work. It was forecast for another warm day (20 degrees). The stockyards are made up of two pens with two gates. I had decided to start on the bottom pen on the western side from the gate. Stephen and Lukas measured each of the posts as they were all different heights then added 600mm on to that for the depth in the ground. National Parks lent us a petrol driven auger to help with digging the post holes before we manually removed the dirt but before this the ground had to be cleared of fallen rails and rotten wood embedded in the ground. Old wire holding the posts to the star pickets and to each of the two posts had to be cut. Then the star pickets themselves had to be pulled out. David used the auger to drill the holes and then we had to remove the dirt and any rotten wood in the holes. Not all the post holes could be dug by the auger. Whilst both of us were doing this Lukas was cutting the new posts with the help of Stephen and then transporting them over to us. A team effort getting the posts into position and back filling the soil. We could only dismantle one section at a time after we did the measuring of each post.

In those days tape measures were not used and timber was sought where they found it to construct the stockyards. Each post was different, some higher than their counterparts and some the same. The stockyards utilised a large boulder between the two pens and two trees. The distance between each section varied from 7 feet to 18 feet and this gave it its unique character and charm.

By morning tea, we had completed digging and positioning the western side of the lower pen. One of the post holes was full of water and without the star picket would have collapsed. On returning we started placing the wire around each pair of posts approximately a foot above the ground using a wooden strainer we made at home. With the wire in place and working through the rails on the ground we were able to start placing them into position. By lunch time Sean and Nicholas had joined us and we continued around the southern side to the large boulder, repeating the same technique throughout.

With six of us all working together we achieved

what we didn't think we would and before both Stephen and Nicholas left, we also cleaned up the rotten timber from around where we had been working all day. I had requested a brush cutter and Aidan was kind enough to pick one up en- route.

He was coming out to pick up the excavator for another job. For the next hour or so we put in four posts on the other side of the boulder and then called it a day. We had completed ten post holes (20 posts in total installed). Another hard day's work by everyone. We had a brief rest then David, Lukas and I walked over to Westermans Hut for some exercise and to look around. You would have thought we'd had enough for the day. Sean stayed at camp to set up his tent. After



***Sean using the brush cutter and David digging***

dinner we had another AAR and worked out a plan for the following day.

**Day 3:** Up and started work at 0630hrs while we still had good weather. Sean cut the grass to help with clearing and to make it easier to visualise our working area. By 0830hrs we had accomplished a lot of work and Sean thought it was a morning tea break but to his disappointment we continued to work till 1000hrs. Nicholas came in to check on us and how we were going but was not able to help out. He was very pleased with how the stockyards were evolving. By lunch time we had managed to do another 6 post holes (12 posts in total). After lunch we focused on the front of the lower pen. By now we had to search for wood for the posts and for the rails. We decided to dig the remaining 8 post holes (16 in total) and worry about the rails afterwards as we were informed that rain was predicted later that day. All of the remaining posts had decayed and could not be salvaged so sourcing timber that was suited and to the height became an issue. Whilst Lukas was searching and cutting wood, I was clearing and David and Sean were >>>

digging. There were a considerable number of rails that had fallen and were embedded in the grass that had to be removed before digging with the auger could continue. The three of us chipped in and Lukas found long sections of fallen limbs that were ideal for the posts. We did have to use some of the new poles that we brought from Glendale that had come from another old building. With the post holes done we repeated applying the wire and then putting in what rails we could find. In the end we were short of 6 rails as there was not wood around for the length we needed. We had a small section between the two pens with one side flushed up against the large boulder where a gate was attached to the adjoining pole. Thanks to Sean when we were doing the front section, he uncovered the remains of a tree trunk which was also a part of the stockyards. After installing all the posts, we stood the remaining tree up and left it in its original position, between the posts to the stockyards. We cleaned up all the rotten wood and



*David and Lukas tying the wire*



dispersed it amongst fallen trees and piled up all the posts that were not able to be used that we had pulled out of the ground. We called it a day as Sean had to leave.

Clouds had built up and the temperature had dropped but I was not expecting the storm we had after dinner. We sat in the hut for what seemed like hours until the rain eased. The downside was the storm revealed another problem which I am having Parks investigate. The ridge capping was allowing rain water into the hut.

**Day 4:** The rain poured most of the night and in the background we could hear dogs howling in the distance. We were all up extra early as both tents took on some water. As soon as daylight surfaced, we were out searching for long branches for the stockyards. We measured and re-measured the spaces before cutting them and carrying them all the way to the stockyards. We then finished applying wire to the tops of all the posts. Lukas cut more wood for the rails for the gate sections to finish it off.

After cleaning up again we headed back to pack our gear up and waited for National Parks staff to arrive to pick up their equipment but unfortunately due to staff shortage they came after we left. We dropped off the equipment at Glendale before we headed home. We were very fortunate that the rain held off till after we completed work and left the park.

I would very much like to say a huge Thank You to all the Namadgi Staff for all of their assistance in helping with the work and supplying the equipment (mini excavator, brush cutter, the petrol driven auger and shovels) and for delivering all the resources (timber, ag piping, plastic, additional tools, rolls of wire and rolls of black plastic) for both work parties. And just as important your support which means a lot to me as a HMO. I would also like to say a huge thank you to David, Lukas, Stephen and Sean for all of their hard work and for putting up with me. And lastly, a big thank you to Deklyn who helped me get this project underway.



*David & Lukas*



**The Newcastle Ramblers** - The labyrinth of waterways of Tantangara Creek which we needed to cross to get to Witzes Hut, as viewed from our MT stop. Ingrid is leading the way along the flooded trail to the marked bridge crossing over the creek. The next day (Wednesday) creek levels had dropped about 150mm making progress less difficult.



*Catching our breath in the snow on the Jada FT*



*Lynne 'buggered and cold' in Witzes Hut. Our wet gear dried out quickly*

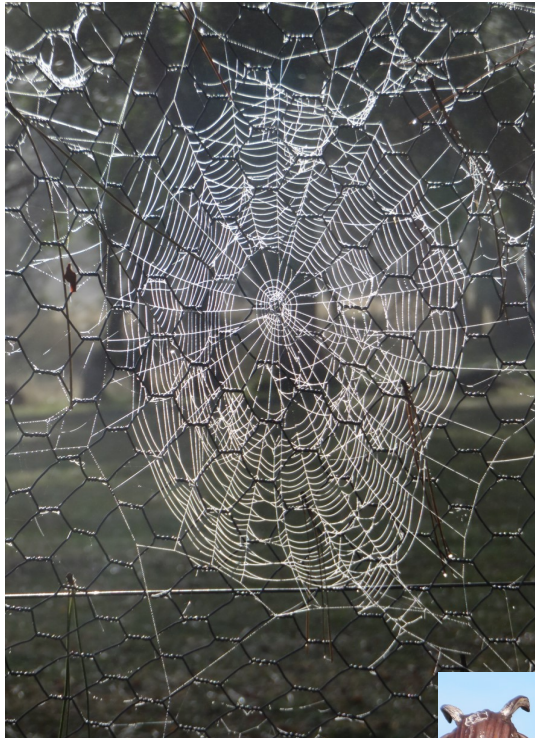


*Settling into Witzes Hut to avoid the continuing rainfall*

**The Huts of Tantangara, Kosciuszko NP –  
13 to 20 November 2022**

## Learn about leeches at Dorrigo National Park

Prepare yourself to come face-to-face with three enormous leeches in Dorrigo National Park at the Dorrigo Rainforest Centre, close to Coffs Harbour. These giant fibreglass leeches have recently been installed and provide a great opportunity to interact with one of the Gondwana Rainforest's least-loved creatures. Learn all about leeches and the important role they have played in the rainforest ecosystem for millions of years.



Left and below: Currango Homestead images

Photos: Graham Cummings and Colin Howie ...

March 2023





## **What do you mean by 'ghost net'?**

'Ghost Net' is a common term for any abandoned, lost and discarded fishing gear – it can also be referred to as 'Ghost Gear' or 'Derelict Fishing Gear'. Ghost gear can include ropes, nets, lines, traps or any other materials used in fishing operations.

The reference to the word, 'ghost' relates to the lost materials aimlessly drifting in the ocean, unchecked yet continuing to indiscriminately catch marine species, causing injury or death.

### **How will this program help?**

Addressing the issue of ghost nets is another step the Australian Government is taking to protect our marine environment for the benefit of all Australians now and into the

customary use of these areas.

### **Do ghost nets continue to cause harm once on the beach?**

Ghost nets that are left to wash up on beaches can potentially re-enter the marine environment during large tidal and storm events. They also have the potential to disturb and displace coastal plant and animal communities.

The materials which make up these ghost nets slowly deteriorate to eventually form micro-plastics which can cause damage to natural food webs and ecosystems.

There is evidence which indicates that clean beaches, free of large items of debris, see an increase in nesting turtles. This suggests that beach clean-ups can provide an immediate and direct benefit to marine turtles.

### **Why is the Gulf of Carpentaria the focus?**



Ghost net retrieval. Credit: Australian Fisheries Management Authority

future. The health of our oceans faces a broad range of pressures driven by the increasing use of ocean resources and human-driven environmental change.

Marine debris and plastics were listed as a key threatening process under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (EPBC Act) in 2003 after being recognised as a major problem affecting marine animals and their environment.

The Ghost Nets Initiative will reduce the threats posed to Australia's marine wildlife, helping to protect our unique marine habitats and wildlife, and support continued cultural connections between Indigenous Australians and sea country, along with sustainable

The Gulf of Carpentaria is recognised as a global marine debris hotspot as currents and conditions in the Arafura and Timor Seas, as well as the Torres Strait, drive debris towards the area where it accumulates in the Gulf's waters and washes up along the shoreline.

The Gulf of Carpentaria is home to marine turtles and dugongs, which are directly threatened by ghost nets, and are of vital economic, cultural, and spiritual importance to Indigenous Australians.

**How can I get involved?** You can get in touch with the Ghost Nets team by emailing [GhostNets@environment.gov.au](mailto:GhostNets@environment.gov.au)