

KOSCIUSZKO HUTS ASSOCIATION INC.

www.khuts.org
Christmas Edition

No: 200
December 2023



Horse Camp Hut
Winter 2023
Photo: Matthew Higgins

Merry Christmas

IMPORTANT:

Membership renewals

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 through our 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 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

President

Pip Brown president@khuts.org

Vice President

Jonathan Wills vicepresident@khuts.org

Secretary

VACANT

Treasurer

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General Committee Members

Graham Cummings, Robert Croll,
Tony Grimmer, Colin Howie



President's Report : I took over as President from Simon Buckpitt at the AGM in May 2023.



Simon has been the driving force on the committee for the past few years and I would like to thank him for all his work over that period of time to keep KHA relevant and vibrant in too many ways to mention here. His shoes are way too big for me to fill but I will do my best.

NSW Hut Rebuilds - The major focus since the AGM continues to be the Hut Rebuilds in NSW and the ACT government response to community feedback regarding the rebuilding of two huts in NNP. I would like to thank Megan Bowden, Project Officer, Huts Rebuilding Program, NPWS for her continued collaboration with KHA regarding each rebuild program in NSW. We are all thrilled with the huts that have been completed so far.

The next hut on the program to be rebuilt starting in January 2024 is a favourite of many members and bushwalkers, Four Mile Hut. Yan's historic slip rails are also to be rebuilt. We look forward to hearing more as the rebuild begins. Four Mile Hut was also the favourite of our long - term member Bob Guy, no longer with us, who will always be remembered there.

ACT Hut Rebuilds - In early October the ACT Government announced that the 2 huts destroyed in the 2020 fires will be rebuilt as a result of overwhelming community support. I am awaiting further information from Peter Cotsell, Director - Namadgi, Tidbinbilla and Murrumbidgee River Corridor regarding the invitation for KHA to be part of a time limited working group to progress the implementation of the project.

NNP - Jonathan Wills (VP) and I will be having a meeting with NNP Park staff and managers next week to progress our role looking after huts in NNP. There has been a bit of an unavoidable disconnect due to fires, covid and floods and both Jon and I, as well as NNP staff and managers are keen to get back on track. I also had an introductory meeting with Mim Jambrecina, Ranger In Charge, together with Jean Hammond, HMO Namadgi, where we agreed that we are all feeling positive about working together in the future.

After the meeting I drove into the Orroral Valley and walked into the Orroral Homestead and

Woolshed. What a fantastic historic location, saved from the fires by a massive effort from brave park staff and firefighters to save this homestead against the odds.

KHA Constitution Review - A member of the committee has agreed to review the current KHA Constitution. There have been a number of amendments to the Act recently that we may need to incorporate. Updates will be provided to committee on a regular basis and of course any changes have to be agreed to by members at the AGM.

Donations - Currently liaising with NPWS to donate to the cost of Interpretation Boards, stoves, log book holders and share cost of toilet at Disappointment Spur Hut.

Docman - Two members of the committee are currently working on the development of a new electronic document management system called Docman. Updates will be provided to the committee as work progresses. Initially, we are looking at committee use only.

Memberships - Memberships remain stable from year to year. Currently we have 359 Memberships which equates to over 400 members. Over 80% of renewals are now paid through our secure CC system which then automatically updates the member's record thus reducing substantially the manual input required to update our records.

AGM - At the AGM in May this year we only just reached the quorum required (20 members) to conduct the meeting. Although I understand that people do not necessarily want to travel long distances it is a really important function of our association so hopefully next year we may see more members able to participate. We are also canvassing the possibility of reducing the number of members required to 15 but that requires a change in the Constitution. It is also not the preferred outcome.

In conclusion a reminder to members that minutes of all committee meetings are available in the Members Area of the website. You must be logged in to access them.

Many thanks to the committee for their guidance and support to me so far.

On behalf of all the Committee I wish members all the best for the festive season and the year ahead.

To the editor

Good Morning Pauline -

My wife Maureen and myself would like to congratulate you and all involved on the wonderful job you do in producing the regular KHA Newsletters.

As we reside in Melbourne and only get away to stay in the Snowy Mountains every Xmas break and sometimes Easter it really keeps us connected with our love for the area and its history.

We would very much appreciate to receive a printed version of the Xmas Newsletter and a Calendar if possible.

Ron & Maureen Cann

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I want to pass on absolute praise for KHA, its committee and the newsletter ... So take a bow ... the Worsfold family is highly appreciative of what we do.

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## What are the Snowy Mountains?

Hi, Robert Green, author of 'Exploring the Jagungal Wilderness', asked me to answer that question. Here is my response:

**Emotional:** Where my pulse quickens, lips open and my face crackles into a smile. The zone where listlessness transforms into joy. Its got a certain vibe. I know when I'm there. When I get a whiff of fresh, cooler air.

A place where words are not enough. A place for adventure and testing my bush nous, where I can camp [almost] wherever I like.

**Prosaic:** Most of KNP but not Byadbo. Roughly speaking anything over 1200 metres but not including the Brindabellas. Areas covered by snow in a heavy winter.

Populated by Snow Gums and Alpine Ash.

Above Alpine Creek, Sawpit Creek, Leatherbarrel Creek and Wolseley Gap.

Down south as far as the Tin Mines.

Up north including Long Plain but Coolamine marginal.

A place owned by all of us, for use by all of us, ie, The Commons.

**Klaus**

**From the Editor:** Thank you to those members who have shared with us their experiences in the mountains whether they be the Snowy Mts or the Tassy mountains; we enjoy your experiences and envy the beauty which you will see in the articles within.



Our appreciation to those members who offered to help with the mailing out of newsletters as Colin and I were swamped last year sending out almost 400. Instead, members this year wishing a hard copy have been asked to request them. The newsletter will be sent to every member via the internet as usual. I have had many comments from those members who opted for a hard copy newsletter who are looking forward to sitting in a comfy chair outdoors and enjoying their copy of the Christmas Edition.

I truly need to thank my partner Colin for his patience and assistance in the face of delays and the dozen other niggles which have to be overcome to ensure the Newsletter's production.

**Pauline**

## **KNP Hut Rebuilding Program**

The rebuilding of Sawyers Rest House, Delanys and Vickers huts has been completed, while the last coats of fire-retardant paint are being applied to Bradley & O'Briens. These huts are the first of 11 historic huts damaged during the 2019-20 summer bushfires that will be rebuilt in Kosciuszko National Park by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) assisted by volunteers from the Kosciuszko Huts Association (KHA) and families associated with the huts.

The opening of Sawyers Rest House and Delanys Hut was held in early April and Vickers Hut on 18th November. The openings were attended by family descendants of the builders, lease holders and the many families who came after, that used and maintained the huts. There were many a story told of living in and visiting the huts over a cup of tea, scones & a BBQ.

Big thank you to all those who assisted with the rebuild and the openings.

Whilst working on the huts the crews have had lots of interested people dropping in to check on progress; often recounting their stories of visiting the original huts. The rebuilding of these huts has succeeded in keeping the social significance/people connections to these places as well as maintaining the cultural landscape and teaching the timber skills necessary to conserve these structures.

Reconstruction of Harveys Hut is underway with the completion of the building work. Work parties are planned with the Tumut Scouts to paint and clean smoke damage in early December.

Planning is underway for the rebuilding of Four Mile and Happys huts in early 2024 and Round Mountain and the Fifteen Mile Ridge Linesmans huts at the end of 2024/25.

All works are planned to be completed by 2026.

Descendants and others with photographs and other historic records of these huts, or those interested in volunteering to help rebuild these huts, are encouraged to contact NPWS by emailing [-srhutsrebuild@environment.nsw.gov.au](mailto:-srhutsrebuild@environment.nsw.gov.au) or calling

**02 6947 7000**

*Megan Bowden Project Officer  
- Hut Rebuilding Program*



**Sawyers before the fire, 2002**

*Photo: Olaf Moon*



**John Hamilton at Vickers showing repaired chimney - 1988 Khuts.org**



**Bradley & O'Briens Hut before the fire**

*Photo: Narelle Irvine, 2010*





**Ian Vickery** opening Vickers Hut #2 with grandson, Roger Rosenboom, NPWS builder, Peter Dow & Megan Bowden. Ian is a son of Ross Vickery who built Vickers Hut in 1939 with his brother Noel when they were grazing stock in the Jounama Creek area. The logs for the hut were cut with a cross cut saw and axe, snigged to the site with a horse and lifted into position by hand. Wagga 4WD assisted with transporting the logs, rebuilding and transporting people to the opening.

*Below:* Opening of Vickers Hut.



*Left:* Sue Cross and Graeme Johnston from Tumut and District Bushwalkers; NPWS Ranger Kerryanne Cummins is applying fire retardant to Vickers Hut #2.

*Below:* Rebuilding Bradley and O'Briens Hut. NPWS Builder Roger Rosenboom adzing chimney slabs.

Opening of Vickers Hut





## Heritage-listed huts to be remembered



*Two new huts will soon be built near the original sites of heritage-listed stockman huts that were destroyed by the Orroral Valley bushfire.*

03 October 2023

The ACT Government will build two new huts in Namadgi National Park in remembrance of the heritage-listed stockman huts destroyed during the 2020 Orroral Valley bushfire.

Two new huts will be built near the original sites of the Demanding Hut and Max and Bert Oldfield's Hut.

The two destroyed huts were part of the Namadgi Stockmen's Huts heritage listing and the remains of the destroyed huts will also be preserved.

The proposal to build the new huts received overwhelming community support with more than 90 per cent of the 800 responses agreeing with the proposal, proving the historical and cultural significance of both these sites.

A historic huts project will be introduced to bring together knowledge and archaeological investigation into build a single archival record that communicates the story of each original hut place.

The new buildings will be designed and constructed to reduce the risk of fire damage.

The ACT Government will work with a heritage architect and the community to finalise the designs and construction plans for both huts.

Learn more about the Namadgi National Park Huts proposal and how the community had their say on the ACT Government's [YourSay project page](#).





Artist's impression of the new Max and Bert Oldfields Hut. Credit: Colin Small.



Artist's impression of the new Demanding Hut. Credit: Colin Small.

<https://www.act.gov.au/our-canberra/latest-news/2023/october/heritage-listed-huts-to-be-remembered#:~:text= The ACT Government will build Max and Bert Oldfield's Hut.>



Thank you for having  
YourSay

## Cultural heritage at Namadgi

Members who volunteered to work on the old Orroral homestead were concerned to see the 1950s Gregory homestead being demolished. The Namadgi National Park Management Plan of 1986 states as an objective:

*to ensure that all developments and works undertaken within the park comply with the plan of management.*

In response to our letter, the Director of the Environment and Conservation Bureau, Greg Fraser, wrote:

Thank you for your letter of 22 December 1991 concerning the 1950s homestead at the Orroral Valley in Namadgi National Park.

I regret that the work you described at the Gregory homestead at the Orroral Valley was undertaken without full Heritage consultation. I have put an immediate stop to the project and instructed that no further work at the site be undertaken until a proper Heritage assessment has been made and advice received on what action should now be taken.

Relevant staff at Namadgi National Park have been instructed that in future any modification or removal of structures or historic sites will not take place without reference to the Heritage Unit and appropriate community consultation.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

The proposal was founded on conservation of heritage values, professional advice received by the ACT Government, the listed heritage values of the two huts and the policies contained in the Namadgi National Park Plan of Management 2010 in relation to the protection of cultural heritage values. When submissions were called for on the *YourSay* project, Geoff Ashley and Simon Buckpitt were in the forefront of the proposal backed up by HMO Jean Hammond to *Construct two new hut structures that will respect the original values of Demanding Hut and Max and Bert Oldfield's Hut, while preserving each hut's remains within the park.*

A record number of public submissions (**806 online *YourSay* survey responses were received**) ... many thanks to our members who also rose to the occasion and helped support the long drawn out 'battle'. I simply sent the NPA photo (below) of the (mostly) demolished Gregorys Homestead, the modern homestead at Orroral and the letter published in the NPA Bulletin March 1992 that I found on the internet, and forwarded my book - ***HUTS AND HOMESTEADS of NAMADGI NATIONAL PARK ~ AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY*** to the ACT Legislative Assembly - Exhibit 003.

The homestead was occupied until the early 1960s and only a few bricks remain of the more recent house.





## NSW HUT REBUILDS UPDATE

**Bradley and O'Briens** roof is now on and hoping to complete by end October or beginning of November. Possible opening early December or else January 2024. We hope to finish Bradley & O'Brien's this week with a possible opening 9<sup>th</sup> December or in January 2024....

Will draw up a bit of a roster to include some weekends, but let me know if u/family &/or committee want to come & if a particular weekend suits

**Brooks Hut** - Commencing on site: 6 November till Christmas.

Have been in contact with some of Brooks descendants- (Ann Robinson & Margaret Brooks) & Reid (Phillip)

**4 Mile Hut** Start after Christmas, have told Ian Griffiths 8<sup>th</sup> January with a weather/fire etc caveat, their group are keen to be there from the start, will need to keep it small or split people so can work on slip rails & hut, will discuss prioritising people as a lot of interest. - discussing plans with caretaker, Nordic Ski Club and structural engineers. Work to begin January next year.

Happys Hut: April - June next year.

- Bradley & O'Brien's roof is on, guys had to pull out due to rain/snow/strong winds & are now prefabbing 4 mile steel subframe at Tumut
- Discussing 4mile plans with Ian Griffiths/ Nordic Ski Club/structural engineers
- Hope to finish Bradley & O'Brien's end of October/start November
- Brook's Nov/Dec
- 4 Mile Jan/Feb/Mar
- Happy's April/May/Jun

**Megan Bowden**

**Project Officer, Huts Rebuilding Program  
NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service**

## WELCOME! NEW MEMBERS

**Madeline Druce  
Raymond Henderson  
Laurence McCook  
Lauren Robinson  
Julianne Kelly**

## DONATIONS TO KHA - THANK YOU!

**Total donations for the quarter: \$210**

**Andrew Pengilly  
Michael MacNamara  
Larry Barrett**



## Illawarra Alpine Club (IAC) KHA & NPWS Tin Mines Huts work party April 22-25, 2023 (ANZAC long-weekend)

After a quick overnight at the IAC Lodge at Smiggin Holes on the Friday night, IAC volunteers Murray Lang, Jonathan Mandl and Jim Purss enjoyed a spectacular sunrise during our drive around to the Cascades trailhead carpark near Dead Horse Gap on the Alpine Way above Thredbo. We found Ballan and Rachel Bolton with sons Tully (11) and Luka (9) enjoying a hot cooked breakfast in the warm morning sun, waiting for us after overnighting on the river at the Thredbo Diggings campsite. Ballan is Pat Edmondson's Wollongong-based grandson and a veteran volunteer for IAC huts work who wanted to share the unique Pilot Wilderness area experience with the whole family this time. I

IAC support veteran Col Wooden was soon on the scene with his very handy (camp-kitchen) camper-trailer, as was Head Ranger for the Pilot, Campbell Young. After a warm welcome and introductions we struck out on the trail and arrived safely in good time at the Tin Mines Huts site.

Our aim was to construct an exclusion fence around part of Tin Mines Creek to allow clean drinking water to be collected by hut visitors. This critical nearby water source has been severely impacted by wild horse activity.

Fencing was constructed from Saturday to Tuesday with all volunteers 'on the tools' and experienced direction provided by Col, Jim and Ballan.

The original siting of the southern section of the fence was improved after consensus to extend further to capture a deep creek bank area next to a large outcrop of granite tors with an existing log 'bridge' – ideal for water collection with large bucket. Construction materials included 100mm round steel posts with galvanised caps, star pickets, high tensile fencing wire and a run of horse sighter wire secured on each picket as the topmost strand.

Custom-cut timber droppers were added at each long-span creek crossing on the northern and southern ends of the enclosure.

Other tasks included some manual earth-works using shovels which took place at the base of the steep (direct) descent trail to site, to improve the existing diagonal swale, channelling water runoff away to the north of the huts.

Hot porridge and bacon and eggs rolls with a cuppa fired up the crew every morning and fresh ham and salad wraps made a delicious lunch. Camp oven hot roasts with mixed vegies cooked on campfire coals were followed by piping hot desserts and rum toddy to stave off the evening chill.

The perfect, mild Autumn weather conditions were with us all four days (bar one foggy morning) making every day fully productive under blue skies and warm sunshine.

On the Sunday, Ranger/Carpenter Shane Burdett joined us and fitted a supporting bracket to the manager's hut upper chimney section. The hut door was straightened with a timber strip added to the door frame closest to the chimney for the door to close on. A leather door closing strap will soon be fitted to prevent animals nudging their way in. Tuesday morning saw the project completed in fully tensioned glory – our first fence construction work party in 51 years of partnering with KHA and NPWS!

With tools packed it was time for a quick lunch and write up in the visitor's book before the trip out via Cascades Hut.

The high quality of the finished work came from a solid effort every day from each and every one in the group. It's fair to say we all felt a great sense of achievement as we said our farewells and made our way home.

This was a unique work party where, for the first time, we were able to help directly improve part of the adjacent natural environment, rather than the actual hut structures nearby.

*Jonathon Mandl*

IAC has written in June to the Hon. Penny Sharpe and Mr Steve Whan MP inviting them to inspect the Tin Mines huts site along with Cascades Hut, to inspect the achievements of 51 years of ongoing restoration work at these locations by KHA/IAC and NPWS.

It would also provide an opportunity to witness first-hand the environmental impact of wild horses in the National Park and see the successfully constructed wild horse exclusion fence spanning a section of the Ingeegoodbee River adjacent to the Tin Mines hut site.

The invitation is seeking an opportunity for their joint availability in December 2023. This initiative is supported by the IAC Committee, myself, Pat Edmondson and Dave Darlington. Many thanks, Jonathan -

**Below: Tin Mine Huts Breakfast 25 April 2023**







**Jim and Murray building the horse exclusion fence at Tin Mines 24 April 2023**

Photos: Jonathan Mandl

**Illawarra Alpine Club**

**Rachel, Luka and Ballan**

>>

<< **Horse exclusion fence**

**Below: -EMTB visitors to Tin Mines**



**Matthew Higgins spent some time in the Snowy Mountains recently...and shared these photos >>**



>> **Flame Robin**

<< **Feral fallow deer**





# Geoff Ashley's Tasmanian Huts Article

## - Huts of the Great Western Tiers

This snapshot of huts on the Great Western Tiers in northern Tasmania aims to highlight the role of huts as markers of changing cultural landscape use and how huts provide, with their social heritage values, a connection between historic and contemporary communities. The volunteer community groups who conserve huts are not just retaining fabric but are also passing on these cultural landscape and social heritage values.

In this case, the connection between communities past and present is evident in the love and passion of the Mountain Huts Preservation Society (MHPS) of Tasmania expressed in their work on huts, tracks and bridges and through their publications. I witnessed this love expressed in the huts that I visited with the kind assistance of members of the MHPS in April 2023.

So, it all starts with landscape. While the word Great is shared with the Great Dividing Range on the mainland, it is the visibility and visceral physical presence of the Great Western Tiers that is different and almost intimidating (see photo). Rising up 800m in about 3.5 kilometres they both divide and link the Central Plateau to the plains that run to Bass Strait. The Tiers are exactly that — layers or tiers of sedimentary sandstone combined with volcanic material punched up through the sandstone as dolerite. These bands of eroded geology also resulted in a layered landscape which includes the stunningly tall and straight *Eucalyptus regnans* (mountain ash) and other species (see photo) on their lower and middle slopes.

For Aboriginal peoples the Great Western Tiers and the Plateau represents a landscape place of both resource and ceremony. The paths they forged were later used by settlers, and the camp and ceremony sites they created later became hut sites when settlers used the Tiers and Plateau for grazing stock, as a resource using its flora and fauna, and for recreation.

As noted in an MHPS publication 'Europeans established themselves at the foot of the Tiers from 1820s and formed a bond with what they called 'the mountain' via grazing, hunting and recreation – as an important part of local identity, and accessing it, a vital part of community traditions'.

There are four historic landscape use themes expressed in the huts here: pastoralism (summer grazing); forestry; trapping and recreation.

The first formed paths in the 1870s were for access to the Plateau for summer sheep or cattle grazing. The

Higgs Track constructed by Sydney Higgs used an old Scottish pitching technique where stones were hammered on their edge into the path forming an 'artisanal stone tapestry'. This same technique was used in 2014 conservation works to the track (see photo). Whiteleys Hut, with evidence of yards nearby and accessed via the Western Creek Track is, although more recent, a good example of such a pastoral hut.

Tracks were also made to connect to the south of Tasmania beyond the Plateau. Warners Track constructed by the local community from the late 1800s features dry stone retaining walls, switch back corners, drainage under the track and log bridges and was used for horse drawn carts as well as stock.

From the early 1900s the massive trees on Great Western Tiers were logged, initially felled using axes and crosscut saws, with many of the remaining stumps including cuts made to insert platforms for the timber getters. Logs were dragged via cleared 'tramways' to mills located nearby the forest. From the 1960s chain saws and logging trucks and more distant mills became the norm. Hills Hut is associated with this later period when Bruce Hill constructed a logging road and built the gable roof weatherboard hut for his loggers to rest in or stay overnight when needed.

In addition to the forestry resource use, some huts are associated with trapping and skinning possums, in particular during the 1930s Depression. The Trappers Hut on the Walls of Jerusalem Track reflects both the accommodation and production role of the hut where skins were fixed to walls for drying. Trappers Hut was the first hut to be restored/reconstructed by the MHPS in 1990.

Haberles Hut constructed by Ted Haberle in 1932 was used by Ted and his sons Bill and Gordon as a refuge and food store at the upper end of the trapping snare route that they used to and from their property (see photo). This small hut, located just below the Plateau, was constructed of vertical palings cut from a Black Peppermint tree (*Eucalyptus amygdalina*) located near the hut site. When the post-war economy improved, trapping was not needed and the hut not used.

The next cultural landscape chapters for both Hills and Haberles Huts began when the Deloraine Walking Club, formed in 1972, started doing working bees on the Hills Hut from 1979 and undertook conservation works on Haberles from 1981, led by the club's founder Charles Crowden. The community's conservation baton has now passed to the MHPS that has undertaken conservation works programs on both huts.

The conservation work on Haberles is acknowledged as the inspiration for the later conservation of three huts on the Central Plateau constructed in the early 1900s for recreation — the fourth theme of landscape use discussed here. >>>





The Great Western Tiers from Jackeys Marsh



Higgs Track with traditional Scottish stone paving



The Big Tree near Hills (forestry) Hut



Haberles Hut constructed in 1932 and restored in 1981





Lady Lake Hut, Central Plateau Conservation Area



Sandy Lake Hut, Lake McKenzie

The concept of, and time for, recreation took off in Australia at the end of the nineteenth century and is reflected in organisations such as the Deloraine and Districts Improvement Association and Northern Tasmanian Fisheries Association urging the construction of huts to attract tourists, particularly for fishing associated with the stocking of lakes with trout.

The first of these huts was Sandy Lake Hut constructed in 1903, and originally accessed via Parsons Track. It took its name from the sandy beaches of a natural lake. Sadly, this lake was lost, and the hut flooded, when the adjacent Lake McKenzie was dammed for a hydro project, however, the MHPS and the community lovingly reconstructed it nearby in 2018 above the new lake levels with wall boards and roofing shingles (see photo).

The second recreation hut was Lady Lake Hut which is adjacent to a series of water bodies at the edge of the Plateau and is accessed by the Higgs Track, discussed above — and it was Sydney Higgs who also built the hut in 1911. With car travel to other Plateau lakes, fishing here declined from the 1930s; in 1956 the hut was in poor condition, and it was burnt down in a bushfire 1961 (however some of its material was re-used in Whiteleys Hut noted above). While Lady Lake (see photo) is a 2003 reconstruction of the original gable roofed corrugated iron hut, it screams authenticity in

terms of its use and its welcoming timber interior. Higgs Track goes on to Ironstone Hut at Lake Nameless, the third of the recreation huts built and constructed in 1917/18 and named after the volcanic Ironstone Mountain.

Prior to my trip I had viewed MHPS huts data (<https://www.mountainhuts.com.au/>) and their Secretary Ian Hayes assisted with more contacts and mapping. I was then privileged to be guided on the walk to Sandy Lake Hut by their President Eddie Firth and Jenny Cook (nee Parsons) who is a descendant of the Parsons family for which Parsons Track takes its name. For my visit to Hills and Haberles Huts I was also totally privileged to be assisted by legendary Caveside locals Margaret and Kelvin Howe. Margaret has written books on each hut (available via the MHPS website) and she and Kelvin have been involved in every aspect of the huts' work. Like the KHA, the MPHS is a wonderful mix of local community people such as Kelvin and Margaret as well as and people from town and urban areas who share a love of these huts. Huts provide for the coming together of different communities. Like the mainland organisations, the MHPS started with struggles to prevent the removal of historic huts. The first test case came about after the quiet removal of Tiger Hut in 1988 by the Parks and Wildlife Service. >>>>



In 1990 there was conflict on the best approach to conserve Ironstone Hut that was at that time a stone ruin, with the Parks and Wildlife Service, archaeologists, and environmental activists keen to maintain it as a ruin. However, a rebuilding adding to the existing stone ruins on the same site was eventually agreed to by the local World Heritage Committee and undertaken in 1993.

In more recent times the MHPS has become the volunteer backbone support for the historic conservation work of the Parks and Wildlife Service working in all weathers to get the job done, including on places that reflect a full range of cultural heritage values such as the two of the log bridges on Warners Track and the Higgs Track restoration.

An example of the commitment and dedication of the MHPS occurred in 2002 when a helicopter contracted by Parks and on which Kelvin Howe was on board crashed when returning from a hut place, seriously injuring Kelvin the two other passengers and the pilot and resulting in a perilous rescue effort. Margaret's book *Miracle on the Mountain*, 2012, provides a terrific account of both Kelvin's background and the amazing survival and rescue involved.

In addition to sharing with you the historic landscape context of these huts, I wanted to share the love that beams out from these huts, that in turn reflects the love and commitment for these places held by their local communities. The role of the MHPS (and similarly the KHA and VHCHA) in retaining, and indeed continuing, these cultural landscape and social values is critical.

**Geoff Ashley**

## ***Snowshoeing: Recce for a Perisher Valley to Blue Calf circuit walk***

**Date:** Monday, 17 July 2023

**Participants:** Mike Bremers, Brian Slee, Max Smith

**Weather:** Blue sky, chilly at first, warming later

Dainers Gap had been the likely starting point for the National Parks Association of the ACT's 30 July beginners' snowshoe walk but at 1,600 metres, it increasingly lacks snow. A member suggested a recce of the area between Perisher Valley and Smiggin Holes.

After departing Canberra and driving through icy fog in Max's Outback to Cooma, we were guided into Perisher Valley car park just before 9 am (about 50 spaces remained). Sun was shining, forecast wind was absent, snow was concrete solid. Off to a promising start.

Perisher Creek Road heads north, adjacent to the creek, and initially passes isolated chalets and ski

lifts. On-snow vehicles trundle or whisk past. As the valley narrows and deepens, the view to Guthega Ridge becomes impressively inviting. Instead of descending to Perisher Creek, however, and crossing to Guthega Link Road, we turned west on Blue Cow Road with big picture views of Blue Cow itself (1,983 m).

After morning tea watching descending skiers, Mike steered us off the road up a steep slope to Blue Calf (1,900 m). Along the way were the sad remains of a half-eaten ringtail possum. At the same time, borer damage in the snow gums was diminishing as we got higher. We turned a corner at 11:45 am to find ourselves at crowded Blue Calf Ski Tube terminal. Looked chaotic but no-one was colliding: lunch was at the open air metal tables.

We had had a brief cheeky exchange with a lady skier on our ascent and when departing the terminal, met a cheery young male instructor sneaking some nicotine. We soon found ourselves on a quiet and beautiful south-facing ridge, studded with healthy small snow gums. As we progressed south east, we began to encounter more of the ancient colourful trunks. It was snowshoes-on for the first time for the descent.

Interceptor Quad occupies a wide valley leading down to Perisher Creek. We kept west of it; a delightful place to be on one of those long, lovely declines. The road at the bottom was now slushy; tobogganers careered down from the left. A happy dad enquired about our outing. At 2 pm, after 8.3 km, we were back at the car.

Max and Mike shared the return driving, with a coffee stop at Nimmitabel Café, Jindabyne. Having left at sun up, we were back at sun down. An interesting day in a largely unfamiliar area. Well worth further exploring.

Sadly, come 30 July and the weather proved to be too cold and windy for the beginners event to proceed.

**Brian Slee**







Return route (Mike Bremers).JPG



Descending from the trig (Brian Slee).JPG



South west into Victoria (Brian Slee).JPG



# Lindley's look at local history through postcards

Author David Lindley takes readers on a fascinating and thoroughly well-researched journey of what life was like in the Tumut, Gundagai and Adelong districts from the Golden Age to the Early Modern Era through the time-honoured act of communicating through the humble postcard.

His latest book, *A Trip to Tumut, Gundagai and Adelong*, highlights the work of Tumut stationer Gabriel Speich along with other local stationers, photographers and publishers in what is a piece of history forgotten with time.

With real-life snippets of greetings and news shared and exchanged, the book not only offers an insight into a bygone era, but beautifully depicts the sights and scenes captured from these three townships while meticulously detailing the stories of the photographers and publishers who brought these stunning, and now historical, postcards to life.

"Photographed by some of Australia's best scenic photographers, postcards were immensely popular, their postage was only one penny and there were up to three mail deliveries a day in some towns and cities," David wrote.

"Postcards were the nearest thing to immediate communication."

Throughout the book, readers will regale in not only viewing the district as it once was, but through the eyes of those who lived there, with the transcriptions of a significant collection of more than 150 rarely seen post-

cards giving a real insight into the lives of those who wrote them.

"Text accompanying these postcards was penned by locals, commercial travellers and visitors and included items of historical interest, exchanges reflecting conditions on the land and attitudes of the day," David said.

"Some were penned by the district's early pioneers, reflecting on the isolation of their communities.

"These postcards give a delightful and intriguing snapshot of life in rural communities before the advent of modern electronic communication."

The book documents a talented group of hitherto forgotten local stationers, newsagents, other traders and commercial photographers who published their own postcards, and thoroughly chronicles the often fascinating tales of their lives locally.

Among those featured is Charles Weston, a photographer and businessman from Maitland, who lived in Gundagai for twelve years and made an indelible mark on his community.

Ephraim Close O'Sullivan, another businessman and Sheridan Street stationer and newsagent, became known as 'Gundagai's supersalesman', being an early promoter of the town's famous 'Dog' through the Jack Moses poem and long before a statue was ever erected at the Five Mile.

O'Sullivan's daughter, Muriel Whitmore, recalls her father peddling his newspapers and the poem, fashioned onto a piece of cardboard with a drawing of the dog on the other side, to trav-

ellers at the train station, however he did not obtain Moses' permission to do so.

As Muriel tells it, Moses took O'Sullivan to court for infringement of copyright, however, "the court case had no effect on their friendship which lasted until Moses' death."

The book is available at the Gundagai and Tumut Visitor Information Centres and at the Tumut Newsagency.

David's other works include *Early Gundagai: Thomas Lindley (1807-1862) Emancipist in Southern New South Wales; Images from an Intermontane Landscape: A Journey into the Keveri and Ada'u Valleys, Eastern Papua;* and *From Goobarragandra to Long Plain: Exploration, Gold Mining, Grazing, Timber Milling, Eucalyptus Oil Distillation and Recreation 1824-1969*, in two volumes.

Dr David Lindley is a geologist and has spent much of his working life in Papua New Guinea.

Born in Gundagai and educated at Tumut High School and the University of New South Wales, his historical research has centred on southern New South Wales and eastern Papua.

**Pictured: In his new book, *A Trip to Tumut, Gundagai and Adelong*, author David Lindley captures a unique insight into the early 20th century history of Tumut, Gundagai, Adelong, Yarrangobilly village, Yarrangobilly Caves and Kiandra districts.**



A TRIP TO  
**TUMUT, GUNDAGAI AND ADELONG**  
1900-1940  
*The scenic postcards of Gabriel Speich, Stationer, Tumut and other photographers and publishers*



**DAVID LINDLEY**

## A trip to Tumut, Gundagai and Adelong 1900-1940

The scenic postcards of Gabriel Speich, Stationer, Tumut and other photographers and publishers David Lindley takes readers on a fascinating and thoroughly well-researched journey of what life was like in the Tumut, Gundagai and Adelong districts through the time-honoured act of communicating through the humble postcard.

With real-life snippets of greetings and news shared and exchanged, the book not only provides an insight into a bygone era, but beautifully depicts the sights and scenes captured in these three townships while meticulously detailing the stories of the photographers and publishers who brought these stunning, and now historical, postcards to life.

- **Helen Castles, Journalist and author**

Available from local outlets including Tumut Newsagency and Visitor Centres in Gundagai and Tumut.

Online orders through [plesyumi.com](http://plesyumi.com)

New publication

A TRIP TO  
**TUMUT, GUNDAGAI AND ADELONG**  
1900-1940

*The scenic postcards of Gabriel Speich, Stationer, Tumut and other photographers and publishers*

DAVID LINDLEY





## Klaus' salute to his beloved Four Mile Hut



10.3.18  
 I was walking with Mum, Dad  
 and brother Luka. We stayed for one night  
 How we got here...  
 We walked here with our heavy  
 backpacks on our backs with us  
 eating our scroggin and playing a  
 dragon egg games and was very  
~~exhausted~~ exhausted when we  
 got here and we had lunch  
 I set a mouse trap with cheese  
 but I didn't get anything!  
 FROM CHARLI SCHWAB!

Four Mile Hut, one that has taken the hut and I 50 years to experience and to write, if you know what I mean. It may, if other more prosaic voices let it, grace the walls of the rebuilt hut one day. The photos were taken by me in Dec 2019, two weeks before the hut burnt down. I hadn't been there for ages so must have had a strong premonition. A chief purpose was to copy items from the log book, three sheets from which I attach. The originals all gone up in smoke.

The entry from Charlie Schwab is a little corker. I suspect he was about 9 or 10....

Klaus Hueneke

*Lillian's poem is one of the best about a huts atmosphere and the people who lived there. 'And the stove rearranges it's wood'... 'Pulls hot minds and cold toes' ...wow, just lovely.*

### 4 Mile Hut

Four Mile Hut throbs  
 with the gentleness of man  
 The hut pulls hot minds and cold toes  
 towards it quiet mouth  
 As strongly as the branches of alpine gum  
 outstretch their fingers to touch the clear air

The hut restores the faith of those  
 who gaze at the single, diamond flame  
 They begin to feel the urgency,  
 and walk among tombstones and suburbs  
 In search of a close friend  
 Who has warmed their hearts, never met

The hut widens a smile with its weather-beaten frame  
 and welcomes a marching, stomping herd of skiers  
 Their eyes touch everything but stop  
 to meet Bob Hugh's sideways gaze.  
 The men draw breath  
 and the swollen slopes of Kiandra history raises and  
 lowers its hat.

The stove rearranges its wood  
 so that men's shadows ebb and flow  
 to the rhythm of their thoughts.  
 Every night, the stars open their eyes and watch  
 the snow jewels under man's foot  
 And this tenacious friendship between hut, and man





## THE LIFE OF A MOUNTAIN HUT

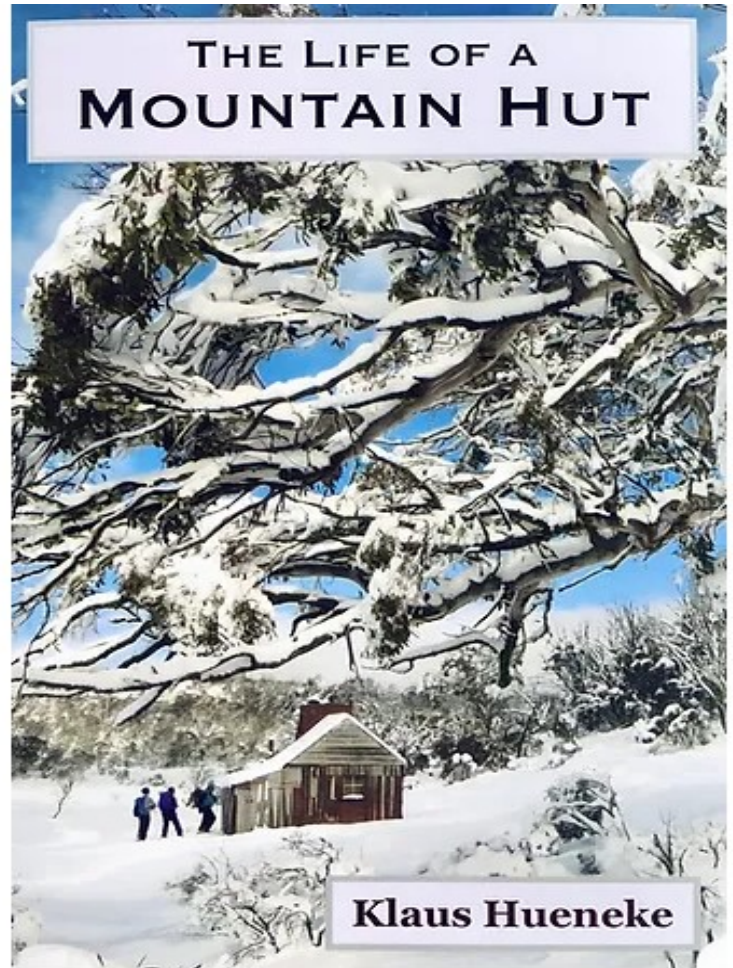
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*Graham Cummings, Committee Member of KHA forwarded this article - do you have these visitors in your gardens?*

Where do Bandicoots live?

The Long-nosed Bandicoot is found along the east coast of Australia, from north Queensland to Victoria and Tasmania. The Northern Brown Bandicoot's range follows the coastline of northern and eastern Australia, as far south as NSW.

## Springwood News

### Bandicoots in the Backyard: How to Co-habit With and Entice These Cute Little Critters

[Gabiann Marin](#) 26/10/2023

<https://springwoodlocalnews.com/blue-mountains-bandicoots/?fbclid=IwAR2WW8vppDRZ54d5sVKIa->



New South Wales

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au> > native-animals

## Bandicoots | NSW Environment and Heritage

28 June 2023 — **Bandicoots** are found throughout Australia and can be common in coastal areas of New South Wales. They can **live** in a wide variety of habitats ...



## My name is Four Mile

I'm a compact, rustic and quite homely slab hut with two rooms (one is a wood shed), a fireplace, a single four pane window and an iron roof on Four Mile Creek, which as you have probably guessed, is four miles from Kiandra, an old, now deserted gold mining town about halfway between Cooma and Tumut. A mile is 5,200 feet and every step is about two feet, so you can work out how many steps it'll take.

I was born in about 1937/38 but can't say exactly because I'm getting a bit forgetful and no one wrote it down. My builder was Bob Hughes, a handyman, miner, stockman, skier and photographer from a large Kiandra family. His dad was also a Bob which is quite confusing. To make matters worse his brother was a Bill. All those B's...

Young Bob and Bill were keen skiers who participated in the annual Kiandra Snowshoe races on Township Hill and searched for Seaman and Hayes when they got caught in a blizzard down Kosciusko way in the 1920s. Bob and Bill, on heavy ski gear, went as far as Tin Hut, almost a complete crossing from north to south.

Being multi-skilled, Bob had been employed to manage the Elaine Mine over on Bloomfield Creek but when that folded because of a catastrophic fire in the work shed, he decided to take a stack of slabs and other bits and pieces including some rusty ripple iron, and put me together as his weekender closer to Kiandra. He was helped by friends including Tom Yan and his bullock team. Tom was adept at swinging a whip as well as an axe - broad and mortise - and became well known for building that slip rail gate you might have seen on the way in. A way marker to my little valley, it's recently been restored to its former glory by Park staff and KHA volunteers. I was pleased as punch about that.

Once I was up and the floorboards were in, Bob had a test run, but soon discovered that I was pretty cold and breezy even with the fire blazing. Some stockmen and miners stuffed newspapers, mud or sacking into the cracks between the slabs but Bob had a think and decided he'd put the old kerosene tins to good use. He cut them into narrow strips and nailed them over all the cracks. To stop the nails from slipping through and to stop water seeping in, he hit on the idea of cutting tiny leather washers to go under the nails. That became his and my

personal signature. I don't usually brag but no other hut has this feature.

Inside, he nailed hessian under the iron and against the walls, fixed some boxes onto the walls for shelves, added an adzed mantelpiece to the fireplace and made himself a sturdy timber bed. Well, the frame was, but the sacking soon sagged. It was like sleeping in a hammock, chilly from underneath. An old 44 gallon drum became the place to store flour. With a lid that is. Mice and rats were plentiful then and still are. Over the next 20 years or so he brought in more creature comforts especially old gelignite boxes to sit on and containers for food. Things became crowded so he added a lean-to-shed for firewood, horse feed, tools, skis and stocks, and drying out wet gear. He left a space in the top of the entrance door which may have been meant for glass but never got it. Glass doesn't travel well on horseback.

Bob visited me until the early 1960s, on and off, sometimes for a week or two. He was getting on so he retired to Kiandra and some years later to Sydney after becoming ill. He died in 1964 and is buried in Rookwood Cemetery. Things became very quiet and a little lonely until 1975 when some Canberra bushwalkers discovered me and my quiet valley. They kept exclaiming about how things looked as though Bob had just left. Tony picked up a boot-last, John spied a jar of Mitchell's coffee and chicory powder and Klaus found some books from the Watchtower Society. It inspired him to pull out his drawing book and make a list of what they found. It was a very long list, here is a sample:

Boxes for corned mutton in 12 x 6 pound tins

A tube of Victor Sohn ski wax with rag

Aunt Mary's tomato sauce

A fruit box from E Johnston of Kenthurst

Boxes labelled Nobel S N dynamite 75% nitro-glycerine

Peerless 49 pound flour bag

Word soon spread and I had numerous visitors after that. Many remarked on my dishevelled appearance but it wasn't until Klaus convinced some friends to do a work party in 1978 that I was patched up. They replaced half my bearers and floorboards, patched up the chimney and found old weatherboards at Nine Mile Diggings to close up my eaves and the woodshed. I started to feel whole again. A couple of years later he brought some girlfriends and a tribe of kids to add finishing touches. They lined the inside walls with hessian, added rocks and mud to



my fireplace walls, restocked the wood supply and repaired the entrance door. The icing on the cake came when Klaus pulled out a movie camera to add to his film about huts. I was not only weather proof, I was also a star.

Many years later when some legs went wonky, I was saved by the industrious Nordic Ski Club and other volunteers. My feet and ankles were the worst. They were rotting. They replaced most of my worst legs or prised out the weak bits and bolted on new ones. Logs that is. The chimney was developing a serious lean so they excavated new and deep holes for posts that reached almost two metres down and five metres into the sky. Many new sheets of iron and attention to detail made me almost draft proof. If it wasn't for the unstoppable fire breathing dragon that roared through in 2019, I would have been okay for another fifty years. As it hit, I wobbled the chimney, rattled my irons and shook the walls, but the devious devil took no notice.

Fierce flames started in the woodshed, raced up into the rafters and in mere minutes devoured my slabs. That was it, my number was up. Or so I thought. Lo and behold, I was only dead in body and not in spirit. I yelled 'I WANT TO LIVE' in capital letters. Thankfully, others agreed. They heard my cries, scrounged around for money and with help from Park staff, the Nordic Ski Club and KHA volunteers laboured many days for what everyone can enjoy. Thank you for giving me another life. I will do my best to repay you with warmth, shelter and conviviality.

Copyright Klaus Hueneke (writer, photographer)

**Editor: Rebuild of 4 Mile hut is due to start after Christmas 2023**

*Hi Pauline* - The National Parks Association of the ACT scheduled a beginners' snowshoe outing for 30 July. It attracted numerous starters but did not take place due to adverse weather. However, a few members did a recce for the walk on 17 July (see attached report).

The NPA did host another walk. It was delayed by weather but eventually took place on Monday, 21 August, and consisted of an eight km circuit, from Guthega to Illawong, up onto Paralyser Ridge, followed by a descent down the ridge from Paralyser Trig. It was spectacular and has become a favoured outing.

*"Fear of missing out"*, due to the deteriorating snow season, kinda drove us to return to the High Country three days later. This time we began at Dead Horse Gap, climbed towards and around the unnamed 2080 metre peak before heading onto the ridge overlooking Leatherbarrel Creek.

The snow had an extremely thin shell of ice which reflected off the peaks in a brilliant fashion.

We returned high up, east of Ramshead, before descending on Dead Horse Gap Track to the Alpine Way. Another eight km circuit.

**"Fear of missing out",**

... due to the deteriorating snow season, kinda drove us to return to the High Country three days later. This time we began at Dead Horse Gap, climbed towards and around the unnamed 2080 metre peak before heading onto the ridge overlooking Leatherbarrel Creek. The snow had an extremely thin shell of ice which reflected off the peaks in a brilliant fashion.

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**Brian Slee**





