

# PERISHER HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Issue 1 December 2008

## Welcome

A warm welcome is extended to all members, potential members and casual readers to the first newsletter of the Perisher Historical Society (PHS). As the PHS grows in membership and projects, we hope that the newsletter will also grow with lots of interesting articles. At this stage we plan to produce the newsletter twice a year, although a more frequent publication may be provided if required.

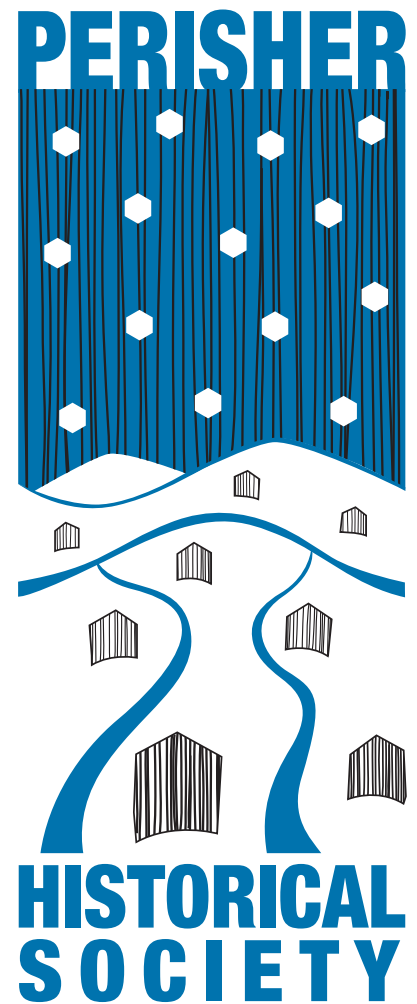
The purpose of the newsletter is not only to inform members about PHS activities, but also to profile people who have influenced snowsport recreation and industry in the Perisher Range Resorts, recount the stories of those who have experienced the wonder and challenges of skiing, working or living in the Perisher Ranges, and include any other snippets of information that may appeal to those interested in snowsports and Snowy Mountains history. Remember, this is your newsletter so share your history with us.

Although the PHS is still in its infancy, the Steering Group that has been coordinating its growth has been steadily working towards some manageable goals that are reported in this newsletter. With the PHS logo and the inaugural dinner already ticked off the list, perhaps the next most important item is the call for an Annual General Meeting

in January 2009 to elect members to committee positions. Other projects include the establishment of a website, collecting and cataloguing ski memorabilia, negotiating a book and preparation for an interpretative display in Perisher Valley.

Like any other successful group, our success will come from a coordinated effort by members and collaboration between the PHS and other organisations. Already we have nurtured a partnership with Perisher Blue and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service who have provided both financial and in-kind support. It is also appropriate to recognise the Thredbo Historical Society (THS) who have been active since 1995 and have given valuable advice to the PHS Steering Group. A special thank you is extended to Chrissie Web for sharing her experience as Secretary/Treasurer of the THS, particularly with respect to administration, cataloguing and archiving memorabilia.

So let us continue the journey that started with an idea espoused by Pam Woodman and Judy Thomson of Ku-ring-gai Alpine Lodge, with encouragement from former Perisher Blue CEO Ashley Blondel, as we make this newsletter an important contribution to the heritage of snowsport in our special part of Kosciuszko National Park.



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# Annual General Meeting

The first Annual General Meeting will be held at **2.00 pm Saturday 31st January in the Conference Room at the NPWS Office in Jindabyne**. The primary aim of the meeting is to elect persons for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and other general committee positions. Please consider your availability to be nominated for a committee position. Also to be considered at the meeting will be the selection of a guest speaker for the annual dinner in June 2009.

Currently the PHS has been managed by a Steering Group that has included:

**Pam Woodman**

(Ku-ring-gai Alpine Lodge);

**Judy Thomson**

(Ku-ring-gai Alpine Lodge);

**Philip Woodman**

(Ku-ring-gai Alpine Lodge);

**Peter Brulisauer**

(CEO – Perisher Blue); and

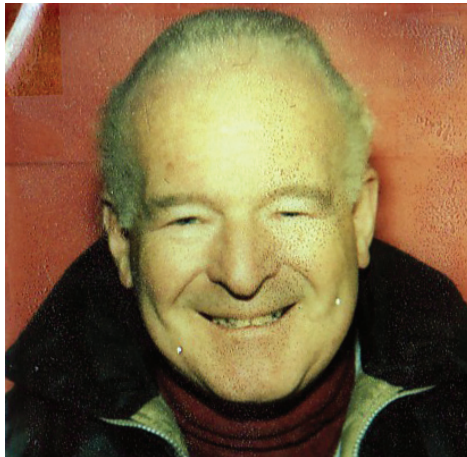
**Dave Woods**

(Environmental Liaison Officer – NPWS)

## Keith Line Accepts Honorary Life Membership

Keith has had a long and continuous association with the area and the development of skiing, both in the introduction of skiing instruction and the development of junior competition and training. He was also instrumental in the planning and construction of the All-denominational Church at Perisher Valley. In recent years Keith's sight has been dimming but his memory is as clear as

ever. He has digitally recorded an interesting account of his time in the snowfields, which contributes to the timeline for the development of Perisher Valley and provides many fascinating anecdotes. Keith was unable to attend the PHS Dinner in June but his recorded memoirs were enjoyed by all.



*Keith Line's photograph taken from his 1987 Perisher/Smiggins season's lift pass.*

## PHS Name and Logo

In setting up the PHS, the Steering Group recognised the importance of branding the organisation using an easily recognised name and unique logo.

In attempting to get the name right, the group was trying to capture the focus of the PHS, including Perisher Valley, Smiggin Holes, Guthega and Blue Cow. However, it was decided that the name 'Perisher' was synonymous with the area and easily identified. The use of the 'Perisher' name was never intended to diminish the historical importance of or exclude Smiggin Holes and Guthega Village, or even Charlotte Pass, as future articles will no doubt show.

To give the PHS a unique identity, the logo you now see was kindly designed by Sydney architect Jason



Reid of Reidesign, who is a member of Ku-ring-gai Alpine Lodge. The graphic was further refined and formatted by Blizzard Publishing in Jindabyne. The concept connects the main elements of the area combining the resort, mountain and snow environment with a feeling of the past. We were particularly taken with the symbolism of the hexagonal snowflakes falling to the ground to form ski lodges.

## Inaugural Dinner a Success

The official launch of the PHS was held on Saturday 14th June 2008 with a dinner at the Snow Gums Restaurant at Perisher. More than 100 people were entertained by a presentation by John Davis and an audio narrative by Keith Line. Coinciding with the Perisher Celebrations that launched the start of the 2008 snowseason, the evening began with a firework display as guests mingled with pre-dinner drinks before sitting down to a fine three-course meal. Some guests also made the most of the event by donning the ski fashions of the 1960s and 1970s. The occasion was further enhanced by the photographic displays and ski memorabilia that decorated the room, including Bill Day's Olympic blazer from the 1960 Winter Olympics at Squaw Valley. Bill had donated the blazer and other items to the PHS and he and his wife Judy were at the dinner.

Proceeds from the inaugural dinner were kindly donated to the PHS by Perisher Blue and the Steering Group would like to say a special thank you to Snow Gums Manager - Di Brulisauer - and all her staff for making the evening such a success. The dinner will now be an annual event on the PHS calendar. Our special thanks also go to Lynne Murray-Walker for providing the wonderful movie footage taken by

her father, Dick Turner Walker, of skiing in Tasmania, Perisher and Charlottes Pass. Filming in Perisher was in and around Telemark with great shots of Jean Ecuyer (complete with trademark white cap) giving ski lessons.



Larry Adler (left) stands besides PHS founders Pam Woodman, Philip Woodman and Judy Thomson as they welcome guests to the dinner (photo by Dave Woods).



Over one-hundred guests listen attentively to Keith Line's historical recording that was especially prepared for the evening (photo by Dave Woods).



Some of Bill Day's donated Olympic memorabilia on display at Snow Gums Restaurant (photo by Dave Woods).



Images of an earlier period in the history of the Perisher Range Resorts (photo by Dave Woods).



John Davis provides an entertaining account of his early years working and living at Perisher Valley (photo by Dave Woods).

## Bill Day Returns Home

The inaugural dinner provided an opportunity to take three-time Olympic skier and former resident of The Chalet - Bill Day - back to the ski slopes and home he grew up in at Charlotte Pass. Although at boarding school, home for Bill was The Chalet, which was managed by his father George between 1932 and 1949. His father was a ski champion as was his brother Gordon who also competed in Bill's first Olympics at Oslo in 1952. Bill subsequently went on to compete at Cortina in 1956 and Squaw Valley in 1960. Incidentally, this was Bill's first visit to The Chalet since 1960.

In the company of PHS Steering Group members and patrons from the dinner, Bill toured the old building and reminisced about his younger days and the many characters who visited and lived in the village. As a boy, he was one of the famed skiers to have skied off the three-storied Chalet roof in the record 1946 snowseason. Charlotte Pass Resort owner Kevin Blyton and Resort Manager Melinda Proudfoot were most hospitable to Bill and his entourage, providing a generous morning tea, access around The Chalet and a ride up the Kangaroo Chairlift for more reminiscing and story telling.

The PHS Steering Group would like to thank Charlotte Pass Resort for arranging Bill's visit at short notice and the NPWS for providing transport to Charlotte Pass.



Bill Day at Charlotte Pass (photo by Dave Woods).



Bill Day explaining the origin of the gate posts from within The Chalet where he grew up (photo by Dave Woods).



Members of the Perisher Historical Society on the side of Mt. Stillwell (photo by Dave Woods).

## Website

The need for an internet website has not been lost on the PHS Steering Group. Philip Woodman has been liaising with Scott Melhuish of University Alpine Club who has donated his expertise in website design and is drafting the fields and menus to be used by the PHS. One of the aims of the website is to provide historical images and information that can be used by anyone who has access to the internet. The site is also being set up so that people can contribute their own photos and articles. Now that we are all part of the global village, it should be no surprise to find that Scott has been working on the website from his home in the Scottish Highlands.

The PHS website can be viewed at [www.perisherhistoricalsociety.org.au](http://www.perisherhistoricalsociety.org.au) but remember it is only early days, so it will take some time for the site to be built up with historical images and articles. A link to the PHS website can also be found on the Perisher Blue website at [www.perisherblue.com.au/winter/info/history.html](http://www.perisherblue.com.au/winter/info/history.html)

## Historical Book on the Horizon!

A number of books and transcripts have been prepared by individuals and club lodges over the years telling about their experience and establishments in the Perisher Range. Whilst these are valuable records that contribute greatly to our understanding and appreciation of our Perisher Range heritage, at the moment there isn't a single publication that synthesises a

chronological history in the same way that 'Skiing off the Roof' and 'Accordions in the Snowgums' do for Charlotte Pass and Thredbo respectively. It's only early days, but a collaborative project involving the PHS, Perisher Blue and NPWS is being considered for such a book. We'll keep you informed as this project develops.

## Interpretive Display

Let's not beat around the bush! The ultimate goal of the PHS is to have a museum where donated materials can be stored and displayed to the general public. It will also give the PHS a 'home' from which to conduct its business. While we pursue this vision, there is an opportunity to display some historical items in display cases within the Perisher Centre, the Ski-Tube Building and NPWS Visitor Centre. The PHS will work with Perisher Blue and NPWS to have something in place for the 2009 snowseason.

## Release Form

To facilitate the receipt of donated items and other project information including audio and video interviews, a Release Form as been prepared that addresses issues of Copyright, ownership, permission and receipt of information and materials incoming to the PHS. The form was needed to assist in the administration of items and to clarify the status of the arrangement. The PHS anticipates that memorabilia

will be either donated indefinitely or loaned for an agreed period of time. Some interviewees involved in audio and/or video recordings may wish for certain caveats to be added to the agreement. The release form has been designed to capture an agreement for each of these scenarios.

## Membership

At the time of preparing this newsletter in early December 2008, there were 29 financial memberships of the PHS. The PHS wishes to welcome these new members. They are:

Garry Abbottsmith  
Lois Anderson  
Uwe, Gillian, Kent & Byron Boehm  
Chris Brangwin  
John & Pat Davis  
Bill & Judy Day  
Warwick Dean  
Pat & Sue Edmondson  
Don Gowing  
Sarah Grant  
John Green  
Ku-ring-gai Alpine Lodge  
Carl Melvey  
Fred & Lynne Murray-Walker  
Narraburra Ski Club  
NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service  
Russell North Ash  
Max Old  
Perisher Blue  
Adrienne Smith  
Southern Alps Ski Club (Kahane)  
Sundeck Hotel  
Les & Judy Thompson  
Judy Thomson  
Ullr Ski Lodge  
Christina Webb  
Philip & Pam Woodman  
Tim Woodman  
Dave Woods & Family

Seasons Greetings

to all our our PHS members and we look forward to bringing you more interesting history in the new year.