

PERISHER HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Issue 11 Summer 2013 / 14

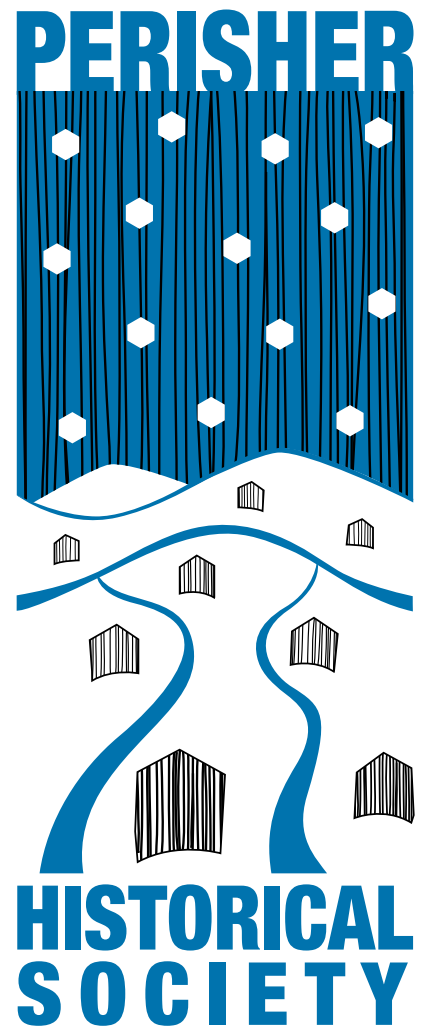
STOP PRESS... Highway to Heaven wins prestigious ski history book award ... see page 8!

The Carl Walter Frankel Collection

PHS is the fortunate recipient of a number of photographic collections to date and has now received a donation from Louise Herzberg and Peter Trankels of some hundreds of photographs (and negatives) of the Snowy Mountains taken by their father. The images, some of which date back to as early as the 1930s, include Kiandra, Alpine Hut, Charlottes Pass, Hotel Kosciusko, Guthega, Smiggin Holes, Mt Franklin, Yarrangobilly, Perisher Valley, Bett's Camp, Sawpit Creek, Mt Kosciusko and the Main Range. Louise and Peter are the children of Carl and Alma Frankel. Louise, who lives in Toronto, Canada, has documented the collection and we are very grateful that she and her brother considered the PHS a suitable recipient for these treasures. The gift is in memory of their father and is to be known as 'The Carl Walter Frankel Collection'. Interestingly Peter had his surname changed from Frankel to Trankels which is how it was once spelled in Latvian. An insight into The Carl Walter Frankel Collection is sampled below.



View of south-west aspect of Hotel Kosciusko taken by Carl Walter Frankel during a holiday at Betts Camp in 1946 (© Perisher Historical Society).



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Perisher Historical Society Inc.
PO Box 213 Gordon NSW 2072
e-mail pshadmin@iprimus.com.au
www.perisherhistoricalsociety.org.au
Ph 02 9488 7475

The Carl Walter Frankel Collection



Frankel party leaving Bett's Camp, October 1946. Note the luxurious fully enclosed passenger sled (Carl Walter Frankel Collection) (© Perisher Historical Society).



Canine transport at The Chalet, October 1945 (Carl Walter Frankel Collection) (© Perisher Historical Society).



Motorised transport challenged by deep snow, October 1946 (Carl Walter Frankel Collection) (© Perisher Historical Society).

President's Notes

Thanks to our marvellous new book *Highway to Heaven – A History of Perisher and the Ski Resorts Along the Kosciuszko Road* and the continuing support of the membership, the Society is in a position to invest in some new projects this year.

Some may be aware that John Davis published this memoirs for his close friends. It is wonderful insight to the early days of Perisher Valley, the challenges faced by John and Pat, the fun and the successes. We approached John and asked if PHS might re-publish their reflections on this fascinating period. To our delight they agreed.

The Society's website is undergoing a re-build to enable our growing collection of material to be accessible to all. Building the website is the first step, loading and documenting the material is a bigger step. We would be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to be involved in the necessary documenting and tagging of our material.

"Hello in the Snow", our annual on-snow mid-winter get-together was included as an official XC Race Week event. Hosted by Murrumbidgee Alpine, it drew an even bigger crowd than last year.

The AGM will move back to its normal date, this year being 2.00 pm Saturday 15 February, 2014, again hosted by NPWS in their conference room – do come along if you can.

Perisher Cup – activity is underway to form a Steering Group to better formalise arrangements and promotion of this much loved event. More information will be forthcoming early next year.

Have a safe and happy festive season.

Hello in the Snow 2013

On a snowy afternoon in August, a congenial crowd gathered around the fire in the bar at Marritz Alpine to catch up with friends and yarn about the 'good old days'. Hosted this year by PHS and Perisher Cross Country, Hello in the Snow 2013 brought together skiers of all types and ages on Tuesday 6 August for drinks, delicious finger food and plenty of good cheer. Our thanks to Simone Beilicz and her staff at Marritz for their support.



Left to right: Mike Smith from Vernon BC Canada, Wayne Pethybridge, Peter Cunningham and Friedl Barch (photo by Philip Woodman).



Left to right: Friedl Barch, Jimmy Spiers, Trevor Weekes and Terry Cronan (photo by Philip Woodman).

Sochi Winter Olympics

The PHS would like to congratulate all those athletes who have been selected for the Australian team for the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. We wish them every success in their respective sports. The games will be held between 7 – 23 February, 2014.



Dates for your Diary

The PHS 7th Annual Dinner

When: Sunday 8 June, 2014

Where: Marritz Alpine, Perisher Valley

Guest Speaker: Ron Webb

Ron is an avid photographer, Smiggin Hole resident, Antarctic veteran and long time Perisher Resort employee, who has installed many lifts in NSW and Victoria for Doppelmayr.

The PHS Annual General Meeting

When: 2.00 pm Saturday 15 February, 2014

Where: NPWS Jindabyne Office (Conference Room)

Agenda items welcome, please forward to PHS President, Philip Woodman.

A Walk Through The Old Hotel Kosciusko

by Olive Lamble

'A walk through the old Hotel Kosciusko' was written by Olive Lamble in August 1991 for the KAC Bulletin. Olive was the daughter of H.J. Lamble, manager of the Hotel Kosciusko between 1916 and 1922. The following passages were transcribed by Jan Glover for the Perisher Historical Society from the original notes.

Come, walk with me through the old Hotel Kosciusko. I see it all very clearly and want to record it in detail, even to the big ball of white quartz to the left of the steps to the entrance, near some attractive metal mud scrapers for boots. Was that quartz just so much like a big snowball, or was there some connection with an ancient legend and the marking of an entrance? Who knows? Perhaps former manager, Mr Cheeseman would have known. He had been a purser with a P&O Liner, and after handing the management of Hotel Kosciusko to my father in 1916, took up management of Sydney Hotel opposite Central Railway Station.

Colonel Vernon was Government Architect for both Hotel Kosciusko and Central Railway Station in Sydney. Hotel Kosciusko was somewhat "ritzy" and to many it was "Kosi".

Imagine it in 1928. You have arrived at the front double doorway arched by surrounds of blue grey granite, quarried from under what is now the croquet lawn opposite. You first caught sight of the hotel with its background of range upon range of snow covered mountains from a fleet of Balmain's Cars from Cooma. They brought you through Rennix Gap, so named after the chief engineer for the Summit road from old Jyndabyne, completed in 1906. The only other buildings higher up are Smiggins road hut, and Surveyor Bett's Camp.

As you drove along towards the hotel with Panorama Peak on your right, the Pretty Point and Alpine View on your left, you passed by the old deer park and rounded the southern end of the lake, crossing the bridge over Diggers Creek in sight of platypus holes, and the dove cote, before the short climb through the golf links to the main gates, amongst a number of exotic pine trees.

The wrought iron lamps on the gates, like those at the front door lighting up the name of P.M.A. Speet, manager at the time, were seen in construction by Director, NSW Government Tourist Bureau, H. J. Lamble, when a junior clerk in the architect's branch of the Public Works Department in Sydney.

Mr Speet is on the steps to greet you and Mrs Speet waves her welcome. Mr Speet speaks to the incoming medical officer in the V.I.P. seat next to the driver, Bill Caldwell, who by now has gone through the main entrance to the Post Office, delivering the mail bag. He did not have to toss it into a box as he had done so expertly all the way along past the various properties. The outgoing medical officer joins Mr Speet and they lead the way inside to the visitors book, passing through the weather lobby, built with lead lined drainage in preparation for snowclad skis, and then swing doors before the vestibule. There are porters busily unloading luggage with green labels and taking it inside, separated from luggage with red labels for the

outgoing trip.

There are groups of people enjoying the sunshine on the croquet lawn beneath the flagpost on which they fly the flags of the schools in residence – Fort Street, Sydney Grammar and Sydney High School. There has been competitive interschool racing on the Kerry Course, and cross country racing at Dainer's Gap during the week.

The tours of the Australian School Ski Clubs are organized by the Government Tourist Bureau together with the schools, and a wonderful week to the hotel from the time of departure from Central Railway, as described in H. J. Lamble's article in the 1928 Australian Ski Year Book, has been most successful in popularizing the sport in this country.

The history and development of the sport in Australia has been covered in the 1928 Australian Ski Year Book edited by Percy Hunter, who at the turn of the century had been entrusted by Premier Sir Joseph Carruthers with the opening up of the snowfield at Kosciusko. The 1928 edition was the first combined publication on behalf of the ski clubs of that time. In the following year it was published on behalf of the newly formed Ski Council of N.S.W. comprising the Kiandra Ski Club, the Kosciusko Alpine Club, the Ski Club of Australia, the Mills Ski Club, the University Ski Club, the R.A.C. Ski Club and the Public

A Walk Through The Old Kosciusko Hotel ~ cont.

Service Ski Club. An article about famous photographer and enthusiast for the introduction of Sydney people to the winter sports at snowshoe carnivals in Kiandra, announced the recent death of Charles Kerry, the Father of skiing and tobogganing at Kosciusko in 1909. In 1897 Kerry with his camera and snowshoe party reached the summit of Mt Kosciusko and members of that party formed the nucleus of the N.S.W. Alpine Club in Kiandra.

The 1928 Year Book carried a coloured print of Will Ashton's painting of Hotel Kosciusko with its latest 1927 addition, the new most up to the date laundry within the new staff quarters, now restored as Sponar's Lakeside Inn, following the fire which burnt the hotel to the ground in 1951.

Once inside the vestibule you are aware of a crackling log fire in the ingle on your right where young people are exchanging autographs. In a flash you take in the maroon colour of withdrawn woollen curtains edged with pom poms, the maroon leather upholstery and blue prints of Kerry's historic photographs. There is an aroma of eucalyptus from an arrangement of red gum tips in bronze jardinière on central table, lit up by rays of sunlight all the way down the stairwell, from high up courtyard windows. There were happy people on the carpeted stairs, some checking appearances in the full length wall mirror on the first landing, on either side of which were Prince of Wales feathers arranged in shapely, tall blue and white delft vases.

Others were studying the very large topographical maps on the wall showing the high country from the summit and main ranges

down to the Thredbo and Snowy River areas.

Tom the Tapper (alias Baker) in bottle green serge suit trimmed at neck and cuffs with red and gold crowns sounded the luncheon gong with his drumstick. When he took the gong from the Porter's room under the stairs you noticed a row of Brasso tins and cloths for the polishing of the numerous door handles and surrounds to the fireplace.

With pen and ink from a leather inkwell you signed the visitor's book by the screen of scenic photographs and were ushered with your luggage to your room to make ready for lunch.

Old Tom was a Kosci favourite with his morning call, "Come on Boys and Girls – Rise and shine". We placed flowers from our garden on his grave on a visit to the old Jyndabyne Cemetery after his death when Balmain's Bus driver let us down at the gates and waited for our return.

Tom was a migrant from Northumberland and with his friend Sam, and their packhorse was on the Kosci Road looking for work, when H.J. Lamble met them before 1920. H.J. Lamble was driving the manager's horse and sulky to inspect the hotel annex at "The Creel" on Thredbo (River). He promised them work as kitchenmen and said proceed to the Hotel.

It was on such outings that my mother selected choice young eucalyptus gum tips for the vases in the hotel. At the sound of Tom's gong, people collecting mail from the wall letter rack of green felt criss-crossed by red tape, moved through the open doors of the spacious, sparkling dining room, warmed by two

large log fires; one in the centre of the far wall near the wine bar, and another between the swing doors to the courtyard corridor and kitchen. There were a few classical prints on the walls, and mantle shelves with various fine art pieces including equestrian statues.

On the left were a number of alcoves looking onto the verandah, which was the extent of the original 1909 dining room. After the 1911 additions and alterations there was open space to the French windows where deer used to sometimes appear for loaf sugar and where Aroline the goose would tap his beak on the glass. The tables covered with white shiny starched damask cloths, and serviettes folded in chef's cap shapes, were set with heavy silver cutlery and dishes of various shapes and sizes, for example for butter balls made by the use of butter pats.

Tumblers and glass jugs of bubbly water were on each table and in the centre of each stood a tall silver vase filled with fresh blue gums.

On the sideboards were grouped silver fruit stands with fruits in season, dried fruits, nuts in shells with nut crackers, in silver dishes.

Sunday dinners every day, and Christmas dinner every Sunday induced H.J. Lamble's enthusiasm for applying for the position as manager in 1916. They also gave the guests the necessary energy for their activities on the snow.

The Menu Cards read: "Some hae meat but canna eat and some wod eat that want it: but we hae meat and we can eat and so the Lord be thanked."

In 1928 the cards had Will Ashton's painting viewing the buildings from the golf links with skiers in jodhpurs and coloured woollen clothing around the gates at the foot of the Mt Vernon Course named after

Colonel Vernon. An historic photograph in 1908 shows Percy Pearson and other Kiandra Skiers at that spot with the Dept of Works Caretaker.

Bon appetit. After lunch meet me in the courtyard corridor to

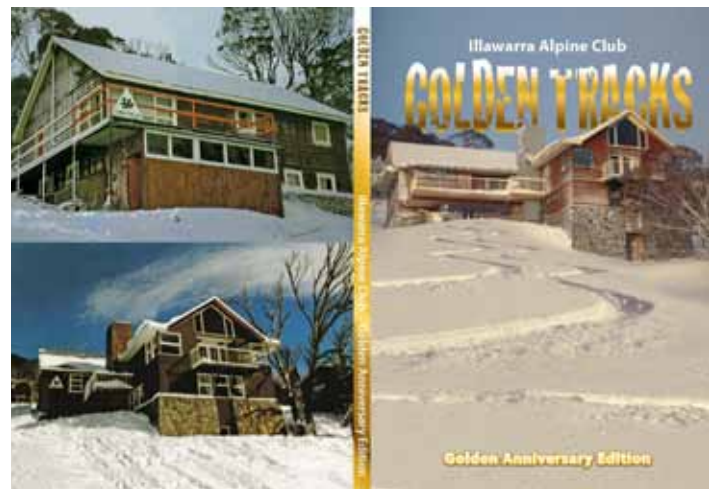
continue with this history and inspection of rooms of a mansion that people before the turn of the century considered a fantastic dream.

Illawarra Alpine Club 50th Anniversary Book

Golden Tracks has been compiled as a record of the second 25 years of Illawarra Alpine Club, the first 25 years being recorded in "Silver Tracks". It includes a full history of the club's formation, the building and renovations of the lodge in Smiggin Holes, Club and Inter-Club racing results including records of the Smiggins Bowl, Illawarra Interclub Races, Illawarra Invitation Downhill and club championships. Chapters are also included on back country skiing, the remote huts that IAC maintains, involvement in ski patrol, plenty of social activities and an informative chapter on the many changes that have affected all snow lovers over the last 25 years, with the introduction of the Skitube, Blue Cow, snowboards, snow making, slope grooming, 60 years of snowfall records and more.

The book is priced at \$45 + \$10 postage (if

required). If you are interested in purchasing a copy of the book for home or club lodge, please contact Geoff Mettam at: coldfacts@iacski.com



Monaro Sculptures 3: Snowy River Sphere

In 2011 a large 'ball of steel' or 'orb' was positioned adjacent to the southern side of the Kosciuszko Road just east of the Snowy Mountains Airport.

The *Snowy River Sphere* was commissioned by the Snowy River Shire Council as a 'gateway project' by well known south-coast artist Richard Moffatt, who had been shortlisted with two other sculptors.

The artists were asked to consider the dramatic Snowy Mountains landscape, social history and aspects of economic development, and then create a large scale artwork that captured these elements. In assessing the artistic merit of the submissions, members of the shire's Public Art Advisory Panel also had to consider design, budget, excellence, relevance and maintenance. A number of locations were proposed by the shire's Public Art Advisory Panel, with final approval resting with the then RTA (now RMS).



'Snowy River Sphere' by Richard Moffatt east of the Snowy Mountains Airport (photo by Dave Woods).

Richard's 'Artist's Statement' is reproduced below:

Of particular interest to the PHS is the use of curved steel shoring beams used in the construction of the ski tube tunnel, which Richard procured before the remainder were sent to Sydney for smelting.

Artist's Statement - *Richard Moffatt*

The sculpture currently being created is inspired by the Snowy Mountains, taking into account the rich cultural, social and economic diversity of the area.

The artwork reflects this place in three specific ways: The random lineal surface is indicative of many interconnecting pathways which cross over to connect the Snowy Mountains community. The lines recognise the journeys undertaken by our indigenous forebears, foot tracks of past settlers, the gold seams followed in the 1800s, agriculture with animal tracks, river systems especially the Snowy River, the pipelines of the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electricity Scheme, roads, now defunct railways, phone lines, ski runs of our favourite mountain playgrounds, high altitude jet streams and futuristic invisible cyberspace connections.

These lines connect our community and support life in this vast and often challenging environment. The interconnecting lines allow for our survival in this spectacular landscape.

The large scale of the sculpture evolved by researching the history of the region and developing a concept from the local materials I sourced. For the Gateway project, the material was sourced from the remains of the Skitube tunnel project that was constructed in the 1980s. It is important to me that I build from found objects that have a historical connection to the community.

The discovery of the curved steel shoring beams used in the construction of the Skitube tunnel, which were about to be sent to Sydney to be smelted, dictated the construction of this five metre orb. These high quality materials have particular relevance to this area.

The sphere as a shape pays homage to the area's boulder strewn environment. The sphere also relates to a series of works I have been creating. This is intended to be the final and ultimate one. The sphere is universally attractive to human beings who tend to have a natural alignment with this shape. Astronomy comes to mind with a collection of my other Orbs on the way to Thredbo which will be like stars to this sun.

The design and engineering of the sculpture allows a complete view from both the background and the foreground. There is a surreal essence of motion to the piece when you drive by. A sense of movement will be felt by the viewer, achieving a reference to the universal globe.

My objective is to create an iconic marker that will compliment and capture the essence of the area. By virtue of its size, it will have a strong presence in the landscape.

I have endeavoured to create a contemporary work of art that resonates and ties together the elements that form the Snowy Mountains region and reflects the connectivity of the people living here.

This large durable sculptural orb will be highly visible and become an entrance statement that will profile and enhance the Snowy Mountains area for years to come.

Highway to Heaven Wins the Skade Award

The recently published *Highway to Heaven – A History of Perisher and the Ski Resorts Along the Kosciuszko Road* has just won the International Ski History Association Skade Award for 2014.

The Skade Award is for an outstanding regional ski history or for an outstanding work published in book form that is focused in part on ski history. This year's winners will be announced at a banquet in Park City, Utah, on 4 April, 2014, and PHS will be there.



Left to right: Chris Brangwin, Jenelle Brangwin, Pam Woodman, Fred Murray-Walker and Gordon Coss (photo by Philip Woodman).

Fortunately skiing conditions were not very good on 5 August when a work party of PHS members gathered at Ku-ring-gai Lodge to label the jackets and covers of the 133 books presented to each club and commercial lodge. PHS is very grateful for Iggy Holmes (Hans Oversnow), Rick Walkom (Jerrabomberra), Belinda Shaw (Smiggins Hotel) and Nick and Jenny Kennedy (Guthega Alpine Inn) who provided points of distribution.

Vale - Elisabeth Sponar



Elisabeth Sponar (courtesy of the Sponar Collection).

On Tuesday 2 July 2013, Elisabeth Sponar passed away peacefully in Bombala, aged 93. With her husband Tony, Elisabeth was pivotal in turning the remnants of the former Hotel Kosciusko into Sponar's Lakeside Inn and managing the business from 1959 until its sale in 1980. Interestingly Elisabeth and Tony arrived at the Hotel Kosciusko only seven days before the complex burnt down in 1951; both were reassigned to work at The Chalet in Charlotte Pass. Elisabeth also played a major role when her husband was pioneering his vision for a Thredbo resort. In 2009, Elisabeth made the journey from Bombala (with assistance from her good friend, Flora Elliott) to attend the 100 year anniversary of the Hotel Kosciusko/Sponar's Chalet, to celebrate a history in which she was a key player. Over 100 people gathered at Sponar's Chalet later in July to honour Elisabeth and to celebrate her life and her role in the ski industry.



Tony, Elisabeth and daughter Louise in front of their newly acquired Sponar's Lakeside Inn in 1959. The former name in the background, 'HOTEL KOSCIUSKO', was eventually replaced by 'SPONARS' which can still be seen on the building today (courtesy of the Sponar Collection).

Vale – Deidre Shannon (nee Gallagher)

Deidre Shannon died on Friday 13 September 2013, aged 83. Born on 25 April 1930, her middle name, Cazna, reflected in reverse the significance of the date (Anzac Day). Deidre worked as a house maid at The Chalet where she met and married fellow worker, Jack, in 1954. That same year Jack and Deidre took over management of the remnants of the Hotel Kosciusko and the bar located in an outside building, staying until Tony Sponar took over the lease in 1959. Jack subsequently worked for the Kosciusko State Park Trust (which became NPWS) until his retirement in 1988.

In the wider community, Deidre will be remembered for her tenacious stance against social injustice and her exceptional theatrical abilities in stage plays with the renowned Cooma Little Theatre. At the PHS Annual Dinner in 2011, Deidre was one of a panel of guest speakers at The Chalet and entertained the audience with a

jovial account of her days at Charlotte Pass and the many characters she met along the way. Deidre is survived by her three sons and three grandchildren.



Deidre Shannon seated between Rick Walkom (left) and Tommi Tomasi (right) in a row of guest speakers at The Chalet for the PHS Annual Dinner in 2011 (photo by Dave Woods).

NEW BOOK ~ NOW AVAILABLE

Lindsay Salmon ~ *The Drift Chalet ~ Mt Hotham Ski School & 1st Australian Corps Ski School*

The King of Hotham My Father



Gillian Salmon

Set in north-eastern Victoria's high country, where man is governed by nature's forces, the names Lindsay Salmon, the Drift Chalet and Mount Hotham are synonymous. During the late 1930's to the early 1970's, dubbed 'The Duke', 'The Ace Instructor', 'Mr Hotham' and 'King of Hotham', he became a legend in his time.

A stone monument, stands isolated on top of Mount Higginbotham as testimony to Lindsay Salmon's efforts in the early development of Mount Hotham as a ski resort.

The story pays tribute to a remarkable man, a hero, who fought against all odds in order to carve out a career for himself on the white-roof of Australia in Swindlers Valley.

This is a fascinating account of one man's journey, a historical memoir of epic proportion, compelling, educational, and truly inspirational, through war and depression, to a life in the mountains.

The reader is drawn into the picture as Mount Hotham grows from a gold mining outpost to the premier ski resort it has become today as it paints vivid and effective portraits of pioneering individuals who lived a life style few Australians have experienced.

There are several chapters dedicated to the 1st Australian Corps Ski School. Lindsay Salmon was one of six Australians to be chosen to teach the troops to ski in combat in the Lebanon Mountains during the second World War. On his return to Mount Hotham Lindsay met Pat, a stunningly beautiful young woman. After a romantic interlude on top of Mount Hotham in 1945, they eloped on skis to be wed in Bright; a story that deserved to be filmed.

It is not only the biography of Lindsay Salmon, but also an autobiography, as I, the author, explore my relationship with my father and the mountain I once called home.

Of course it will not only appeal to people interested in snow, skiing, mountain life, and Mount Hotham, in particular, but equally it will captivate a much wider and general audience as a true tale of bravery and adventure. As amazing achievements always will. \$

Featuring

The Albury Ski Club, The Alpine Club, Mt Hotham, Mt Buffalo, Middle East, Johnny Abbottsmith, Derrick Stogdale, and other early pioneering individuals and more... The history of skiing, Early skis, different styles of skiing, wax, clothing.....

Almost
Sold Out

Paperback ~ 426 pages ~ 444 Illustrations ~ September 2013 ISBN: 978-0-646-90282-1

~ PURCHASING DETAILS ~

Please note:

Mail orders for the 'First' edition have *sold out*. However some copies are still available from the following book shops.....

- * Snow Print Bookshop, Jindabyne – (02) 6457 1115
- * Snowy Visitors Centre, Jindabyne – (02) 6450 5600
- * Wildbrumby Distillery, Jindabyne – (02) 6457 1447
- * Pages of Life, Cooma – (02) 6452 4283
- * Dymocks Books, Albury – (02) 6041 1805
- * Albury Library Museum shop – (02) 6023 8333

The 'Second' edition, should be out by the end January, early February 2014.

If you wish to pre-order and secure a copy please send your details to.....

Gillian Magnabosco
4740 Mt Darragh Road,
Mt Darragh via
Cathcart NSW 2632

Phone: 02 6458 2065
Email: tresche@bigpond.com



On behalf of the PHS Committee we wish all our members and those involved in snow sports a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and safe travelling during the holiday period.