

Perisher Historical Society

A couple of years ago Pam Woodman and Judy Thomson of Ku-ring-gai Alpine Lodge collaborated on the idea of forming a Perisher Historical Society after earlier discussions about the history of skiing and the colourful characters that have graced the Perisher Range. An article in the 2005 autumn edition of Resort Round-up about an NPWS oral history project stimulated Pam to contact NPWS and Perisher Blue to identify a potential partnership in the historical society and for opportunities to contribute towards the groups establishment and subsequent exhibition. This article now provides an update as to the formation of the Perisher Historical Society and opportunities for people to contribute memorabilia.

As you read this, the Perisher Historical Society is going through registration with the Department of Fair Trading for registering as an incorporated body that includes the nomination of an inaugural committee and the reservation of a name. The name Perisher Historical Society was selected to be inclusive of what is often called the Perisher Range Resorts. The term Perisher Range and Perisher Range Resorts, whilst an accurate reflection of all localities in this area (eg. Perisher Valley, Smiggin Holes, Guthega and Blue Cow), has incurred a use that tends to be associated with a range of government plans and planning instruments. It was deemed important by the group that no ambiguity was construed in the name as well as imbue an effective identity of what the society was about – hence the compromise in the name.

In due course, consideration will also be given to the group for affiliation with the Royal Australian Historical Society that will help give access to reasonable insurance rates should public liability or voluntary worker insurance be required (amongst other benefits). Furthermore, a call for membership will also be made upon completion of registration.

What we would like to do now...

Whilst the Perisher Historical Society is going through the process of being formalised by registration, it is now timely to commence some of the activities that will help consolidate the type of history the society wishes to interpret. There are many possibilities for the direction of the burgeoning Perisher Historical Society, but in the first instance we would like to start collecting old photographs, articles and other snow-related memorabilia. Given the history of skiing in the Snowy Mountains and the context for the development of skiing in the Perisher Range area, material does not have to be Perisher specific. However, anything that helps communicate stories about ski club and ski lodge development, access to the mountains, interesting anecdotes of misadventures etc. would all be welcome. A number of lodges have been celebrating 50 years and as part of the celebrations have been producing commemorative booklets and DVD's. Clubs with similar upcoming celebrations may also wish to consider contributing these to the Perisher Historical Society or any other historical snippet that is snow sport or resort related. Photographs will always be a welcome contribution. Copies of transcripts and photographs would also be welcome should individuals or clubs wish to keep the originals. Copying of originals can be arranged by the Perisher Historical Society.

As a repository for contributions, the group decided that the NPWS Office in Jindabyne would be the best archiving location and to be managed by the NPWS Environmental Liaison Officer – Dave Woods (that's me). Contributions would be catalogued separately from the current NPWS archive and library and would be registered for the Perisher Historical Society.

What we would like to do in the future...

Having a repository for contributions is one thing, but being able to share and provide information is another. With the proposed development of the Perisher Village there is some negotiations in place to provide some space for a museum to exhibit a range of collected paraphernalia. The eventual relocation of the NPWS Office in Perisher Valley will also provide some space for historic interpretation and the display of memorabilia to the public. Events such as Perisher Blue's Celebration of Winter will also provide opportunities to display images and tell stories of early skiing, as well as special gatherings where guest speakers are invited to recount memories of their time and experiences in the snow and the development of the snow sport industry.

If you would like to contribute memorabilia or learn more about the Perisher Historical Society, then please contact:

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