

Barry May

Barry has enjoyed a lifelong affinity both at work and at play, with our essential element, water, and in its frozen form, snow. As a 16 year old Barry took up spear-fishing, then scuba-diving utilizing one of the first aqualungs ever made in Australia. This marine pastime led to Barry's career in salvaging. At first salvaging scrap from coastal ship-wrecks which progressed to a full time occupation in commercial diving, with jobs in underwater construction, and cable and pipeline-laying. Barry's commercial diving activities led to running a salvage operation in the South Pacific as well; and subsequently a 'live on board' recreational diving business, based in Cairns. Self-employment was a joy, as Barry could always have the privilege to ski in Thredbo in the winter months.

Alan Martin his diving buddy introduced Barry to Thredbo, and after 2 or 3 seasons they both joined the volunteer ski-patrol in 1964 with Kasee as Mountain Manager. This love of water and snow motivated Barry to form a partnership with Ron Harding and establish a General Sporting Goods business, Ron Harding Sports in Manly, importing scuba gear and manufacturing wetsuits. It made eminent sense to introduce ski equipment as part of the product range, and with their experience in wet suits to launch an innovation in ski pants, with the introduction of neoprene ski pants, branded as 'Ski Skins'. From the sports store days Barry and a friend managed to rent what is known today as Crackenback Cottage, from the Berridale farmer Jim Southern who owned the land. This move created an excellent opportunity to patrol every weekend for the trip to the farm was in part subsidized with minimal charges for transport and lodgings by the hardy skiers who came on the trip each weekend from Manly. Barry introduced a swathe of first time skiers from the Sydney Northern beaches to the slopes of Thredbo! Whilst renting the farm in 1965 an opportunity arose to 'get in on the ground floor' as a shareholder in Happy Jack's, which in turn had further cemented his connection to Thredbo, and Barry remains a director to this day. Barry's five, now adult children and Barbara are all keen Thredbo skiers; Anthony was ski instructing at Thredbo and in the USA, and Nick was racing with TSRC and instructing in Canada.

Barry has received two awards for his dedication as a ski patroller, and for his length of service for TSPA. The first award, 'The National Medal for Service' was presented after 20 years of volunteer service. This season Barry will have achieved 50 years of patrolling, the only Australian patroller to do so, and to honor this milestone the VRA (Volunteer Rescue Association), has awarded Barry with an additional award, 'The 50th Year of Service Medal'. Barry will be only the 2nd recipient of this prestigious medal in Australia. Barry has made a particularly distinctive achievement to TSPA and Thredbo.