

KIANDRA AS I SAW IT

By **GEORGE DERSCHKO.**

WINTER in 1956 has given an excellent skiing season to an ever increasing number of snow enthusiasts in all parts of the southern Alps due to good snow falls and friendly weather.

I had the good fortune to spend the whole season in the Kiandra Pioneer Ski Club Lodge at Kiandra. Situated on the main road from Cooma to Melbourne via Tumut, access from both sides is easy. Snow clearing work is carried out by snow ploughs of the D.M.R. Kiandra, unlike most other skiing centres in our snow fields, is a village where people live and work all through the year. Well known from the gold pioneering days in the second half of the last century, it was here that skiing was born in Australia and records of the first skiing activities go back as far as 1860. To-day only a

few reminders of the old days are to be seen; however, the population, though small in number, produced some of the country's finest skiers.

The ski village itself consists of the new Kiandra Pioneer Ski Lodge, the recently improved Youth Assn. Hostel and the Chalet. Between them accommodation for nearly 100 skiers is available. The K.P.S.C. Lodge, a large one story building on the side of township hill is not quite 100 yards from the main road.

I regard the lodge as being ideal for family groups because of easy access, exit and safety. Some of our casualties, which were negligible, were brought to Cooma hospital in less than two hours after the accident. Good communica-



Kiandra Wagon, a relic of the gold rush.

Photo. M. Cronin.

tions by means of the local post office telephone, and last, but not the least important factor, a family can live at the lodge nearly as cheaply as at home.

One cannot help but admire and enjoy the pleasant and colourful country of Kiandra. The generously gumtree-covered hills, the Eucumbene River, the plateau, and township hill have really to be seen to be admired as beautiful scenery. Thickly snow-covered trees and bushes after heavy snow fall often reminded me of European Alps. The beautiful picture of the village on an early frosty morning is well rewarding to the early riser. The animal life deserves mention: wombats, foxes, rabbits and porcupines find homes in the surrounding hills. Jimmie Pattinson's dogs must be kept in mind by those contemplating storing their fresh meats in the snow. After losing mine I do recommend the use of the club "fridge." Also those contemplating moonlight shooting—remember those same dogs look much like foxes. It is so disconcerting to shoot a fox and then hear it yelp like a dog!

The slopes offer a variety of runs for the experienced as well as the beginner. I regard Kiandra as an ideal ski-ground for the beginner as easy slopes are in close proximity to the village. The main run on the slope of Township Hill is served by a short rope tow which I understand will be replaced by a T-bar tow of late design in the near future.

The Lodge and Youth Hostel were booked out right through the season, and as ski instructor I was kept busy. Despite the number of beginners in the village the standard of skiing is of a reasonably high standard. Weekly sports or races conducted by the resident Club captain showed spontaneous enthusiasm of the competitors, some of whom competed after only one week on the snow. The K.P.S.C. Championships early in August showed keen racing in both downhill and slalom. Langlauf event was of very high standard indeed. Weather was fine, snow good and nearly 400 onlookers gathered to watch the racing. More girl competitors would be a welcome sight at future meetings.



Model of the Olympic Stadium to be built at Squaw Valley. Architect William Corlett of San Francisco, visited Australia for the 1956 Games.