

## Push to call Mount Kosciuszko an Aboriginal name runs into an unfortunate problem



**A portrait of Tadeusz Kosciuszko - a Polish national hero who led an uprising against the Russians in Poland and fought in America's revolutionary war.**

Australia's highest mountain could be the latest famous national landmark to change from a European to an Aboriginal name, if the Ngarigo people of the Snowy Mountains of **NSW** get their way.

But who was Kosciuszko, and does his name deserve to stay? That question is answered by Australian author Anthony Sharwood in his new book ***Kosciuszko: The incredible life of the man behind the mountain.***

'Kosciuszko was a skilful military engineer who fought in America's Revolutionary War and led an uprising against the Russians in his native **Poland**,' Mr Sharwood told Daily Mail Australia.

'But he was more than just a soldier. Everyone loved Kosciuszko because he was a humanist who tried to free the enslaved in America and end serfdom in Poland.

'George Washington was his biggest fan. Thomas Jefferson called him 'the purest son of liberty. Tsar Paul of **Russia** loved Kosciuszko so much that he freed him from a Russian prison even though he had led a revolution against his mother Catherine the Great.

'Kosciuszko remains morally unimpeachable. Nobody has 'cancelled' him and it's likely they never will,' Mr Sharwood added.

Australia's highest peak was named Mt Kosciuszko in 1840 by the Polish explorer Strzelecki, who was the first European to ascend it with the help of two Aboriginal guides.

Now the Aboriginal people want the name of their mountain back.



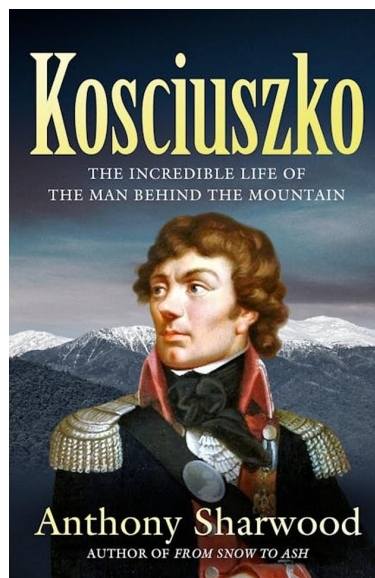
**The debate over the name of Australia's highest peak is just beginning. Above, a trekker who scaled Mount Kosciuszko, which is 2,228m above sea level**

No formal proposal currently sits before the Geographical Names Board of NSW but according to Sharwood, it's inevitable that the issue will surface again.

'I don't know what the right name for Kosciuszko is right now, but I think between us all, we'll work it out,' Ngarigo woman Cheryl Davison said in the book.

The high country around Mt Kosciuszko was an important place for Aboriginal people in summer, with many nations travelling long distances to meet up there for the annual bogong moth feast, and to engage in trade, ceremonies and settlement of disputes.

Different groups have different names for the mountain, and even the Ngarigo themselves have several different names.



**A new book - Kosciuszko: The incredible life of the man behind the mountain - is set to ignite the debate over the name of Mount Kosciuszko**



**'I think between us all, we'll work it out,' Ngarigo woman Cheryl Davison (pictured) said**

One Ngarigo clan favours the name 'Kunama Namadgi' which roughly translate as 'Snow Mountain'.

But to another clan, that means 'Shit Mountain'.

Another favoured name is Tar Gan Gil, although some believe that was the original name of Mt Townsend, Australia's second-highest peak, just four kilometres from Mt Kosciuszko and only 19 metres lower.

'Whatever the future name of the mountain, one thing is clear,' Mr Sharwood said.

'Though he lived more than 200 years ago, there are countless historical documents that tell us that Kosciuszko was this really chirpy, good-natured fella who hated arguments.'

- **Australia's highest mountain is named after a Polish military hero**
- **High country near Mount Kosciuszko was an important summer location**
- **Different Indigenous clans have different names for the mountain**
- ***Kosciuszko: The incredible life of the man behind the mountain* is out now**

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**Sources:** Daily Mail Australia