



Journal of the New England Ski Museum

Fall 2017

Issue Number 106

Skiing In the Granite State Part Two of the Museum's 2017 Exhibit

By Jeff Leich



Christine L. Reid, New England Ski Museum

Whitneys' Inn in Jackson is seen here on January 1, 1937. The winter of 1936-37 was the first in which the Eastern Slope Ski School operated, featuring the instruction of Benno Rybizka of the Hannes Schneider ski school of St. Anton, Austria. The ski school taught lessons on the hill seen in the background, though as January progressed the snow cover suffered from warm temperatures and rain. Whitney's Inn, with its cable tow located behind the farmhouse, offered lodging steps away from its ski tow as early as the winter of 1936, when it was owned by Edwin Moody.

Enhancing Ski Life

The invention of ski tows and aerial lifts brought new concentrations of skiers onto ski slopes and trails with defined limits, in contrast to the earlier, more dispersed pattern, when skiers had not begun all their descents from the same point. Beginning in the winter of 1940, Cranmore developed a system of mechanical slope grooming to address the need to smooth the ruts and moguls formed in the snowpack from concentrated use.

Cranmore's system used modified agricultural implements towed by small tractors with caterpillar treads. Philip Robertson, earlier a partner in the Moody Farm lift and later a key figure in the development of the state's pioneering Tramway Safety Board, described the Cranmore slope-grooming methods in the *American Ski Annual*. Two different types of snow rollers and a mat drag were used for varying snow conditions, and calcium chloride was applied to areas of exposed ledge to develop a frozen base over the bedrock. In the next few years, experimentation continued, with a ski-mounted road grader proving to be very successful. Cranmore's mechanical methods were slow and were certainly not used every day as in modern resorts, but its crew's

ability to modify ski conditions over a wide area has no known counterpart at this early date.¹

After World War II, Cranmore's methods were adopted by a few eastern areas like Bromley and Stowe. The tractors Cranmore used at first were not designed for snow surfaces, but soon after the war an alternative became available when a New Hampshire company became the first distributor of the Oregon-built Tucker Sno-Cat, which proved to be a much more appropriate over-snow tractor for slope grooming.

David A. Gregg, II and partners Roy B. Deming and Charles Tobey, Jr. operated the Sno-Cat Corporation of New Hampshire from Plymouth initially, then in Nashua, where the machines were received by rail from the Medford, Oregon manufacturer. Between 1947 and 1963, Gregg's company and its successor, Eastern Distributors, Inc. of Concord, owned by Tobey, sold Tucker Sno-Cats to ski areas in the eastern U.S. and Canada. By 1963, the company advertised that 77 Tuckers were then in service in the northeast, and 19 were working in Canada.²

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New England Ski Museum

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Mission

New England Ski Museum collects, conserves, and exhibits elements of ski history for the purposes of research, education, and inspiration.

Specifically, the Museum:

- ❖ collects and preserves examples of ski equipment, clothing, art, and ephemera;
- ❖ collects and preserves photographic records, films, and historic documents of skiing;
- ❖ maintains a reference library of ski literature, including books and periodicals;
- ❖ collects and preserves memorabilia of the 10th Mountain Division;
- ❖ maintains an oral history library of notable skiers;
- ❖ provides exhibitions about the history of skiing and its importance to social and economic development; and
- ❖ provides education programs for its community.

Paul Valar Society

Have you considered including New England Ski Museum in your estate plan?

By including a financial bequest to the Museum in their estate planning, Paul Valar Society members continue the Museum's mission to preserve the history and heritage of skiing beyond their lifetime. The Society takes its name from Paul Valar, the charismatic and influential ski school director and coach who was the first president of the New England Ski Museum.

If you have made provision for the Museum in your planning, we would appreciate knowing that so we can thank you. Bequests need not meet any particular threshold, and the amount of the bequest need not be shared with the Museum. If you are considering such a step in concert with your financial advisor, a Museum board member or senior staffer can provide more information.

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We welcome your questions, comments, and letters.

Jeff Leich, Editor

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I hope this finds all of you with several days of skiing under your belt as the 2017-2018 ski season is well underway. Historically speaking this is a very special year for three New England ski resorts. Cranmore Mountain Resort in North Conway, New Hampshire, Gunstock Mountain Resort in Gilford, New Hampshire, and Shawnee Peak Ski Area in Bridgton, Maine are all

celebrating their 80th anniversary! Congratulations!! The stories and photographs collected in the Museum's archive of these great ski areas are steeped in history and truly fun to peruse. Dave Irons has written several books on New England ski areas and he has just finished a terrific one about Shawnee Peak and its earlier days when it was known as Pleasant Mountain. It promises to be a read that you will enjoy and they are available from our Museum gift shop.

If you've been watching this year's World Cup racing you've seen more history in the making as Mikaela Shiffrin continues

her reign in all Alpine events. That's right, all, as she has now won her first Downhill race. She's an incredible competitor and amazing young lady! We are very proud to have hosted the presentation of the Golden Ski Award in conjunction with the North American Snowsports Journalists Association to Mikaela on two occasions at our annual exhibit opening party at the Museum several years ago. *New York Times* writer Nick Paumgarten recently wrote a fantastic article about Mikaela. Nick's brother Xander is a current museum board member. Check it out, you'll enjoy the story. I'm sure that Mikaela, a prodigy of Burke Mountain Academy, has made the school very proud!

Our Museum expansion in North Conway is making great progress as exterior work is largely complete and interior construction is moving along in great shape. We continue to receive generous donations and expect to have this location open and in full swing by the end of February. The enthusiasm and support from the Mount Washington Valley and around the country has been remarkable and I hope that you will visit us soon.

Enjoy all the fun and excitement that winter brings and I hope to see you on the slopes.

Director's Report

By Jeff Leich



Those of us who work at the New England Ski Museum walk through the Lowell Thomas Theater multiple times a day, and give an occasional nod to the painting of the pioneer news broadcaster on the wall. When we ask visitors if they know the name of Lowell Thomas, often the only response is a blank look.

Now Rick Moulton, one of the museum's talented board members, has completed a documentary film on the life of Lowell Thomas, radio broadcaster, deep-voiced newsreel narrator, discoverer of Lawrence of Arabia, "the Indiana Jones of journalism" in the producer's words--and committed and passionate skier. His love of the sport may have kept him from becoming well-known by the baby boom generation, as he reportedly declined to go into television news in order to devote more travel time to skiing.

Thomas fashioned his life around his love of skiing, and often called in his radio broadcasts from ski areas, incurring significant expense to connect his ad hoc studio of the week at some remote ski mountain with the national network. He broadcast from Cannon Mountain, the Eastern Slope Inn in North Conway, the Lake Placid Club, Camp Hale, Colorado, Timberline Lodge in Oregon and many other emerging ski

resorts, providing unprecedented publicity to the then-new sport of alpine skiing. He was also a gifted networker, and maintained a massive correspondence with ski figures around the country.

Rick's documentary, *Lowell Thomas and the Rise of Broadcast News* will premier in early 2018. Museum members and those attending the Hannes Schneider Meister Cup Race on the weekend of March 10-11, 2018 will be able to view the film on Sunday morning, March 11 at the Eastern Slope Inn. This understated finale to the Schneider Race has been a feature of the event for a number of years, but before now it has never been the occasion for the Northeastern premier of a major documentary film.

Now that his Lowell Thomas project is complete, Rick Moulton is working to pull together footage from the museum's collection that will be shown at various screens in the new Eastern Slope Branch in North Conway. Also contributing time and effort to the new facility is Jeremy Davis of the board, webmaster and author of numerous books on lost ski areas. Jeremy's comprehensive research extending over a decade and a half will be the basis for an innovative visual presentation of the lost ski areas of New England that locates the now-defunct ski areas in time and space. These exhibit elements and many more in the new Eastern Slope Branch will be officially dedicated on Saturday February 24, 2018 in North Conway, and all members are welcome to attend this exciting expansion of the museum!



David A. Gregg II became the eastern distributor for Tucker Sno-Cats in 1947. Here he is shown at the wheel at a demonstration at the Nashua Country Club in December 1947. Gregg had purchased this machine in June, 1947, and earlier in December had driven it up Pack Monadnock in snow depths ranging from two to four feet. At the time, it was thought that such cats would be used mostly to haul passengers as an alternative to ski lifts, not be used for grooming. Shown peeking over the splash board of the trailer is Gregg's daughter Carolyn, and his son David A. Gregg III is in the back seat barely visible under his jacket hood. Guy Andrews, in the back of the Sno-cat with the cap, would become the operations manager of the company.

Long before ski tows appeared to ease skiers' uphill climb, those attracted to snowy pastures up north had to make arrangements for overnight lodging. Boarding houses and small inns welcomed the business in the formerly quiet winter season, and local chambers of commerce published folders and newspaper ads listing those establishments where skiers could find overnight accommodations. Edwin Moody's farm in Jackson was one such place, popular with the White Mountain Ski Runners club and others in the early 1930s. When the overhead cable ski tow was installed on the slope behind Moody's in 1936, the proximity of the farmhouse to the base of the tow, a short ski away, likely established the earliest instance of slopeside lodging in America. When AMC ski veterans Bill and Betty Whitney purchased the farm the next year, they changed the name to Whitneys' Inn (with the apostrophe after the 's', not before, because as Betty Whitney once told a reporter, "it took two of us to run it"). Whether near the ski tows or not, the inns and boarding houses that put up skiers were a bedrock feature of the increased business activity that skiing brought to economically depressed rural areas. After the war the choices available for overnight lodging increased with the introduction of second homes and condominiums.

Real estate development near the slopes—both short-stay lodging and second homes—is today a routine and expected feature of the modern American ski resort. The emergence of this symbiosis can be traced to New Hampshire, where as early as 1936 a "Ski Village" was planned, and one cabin actually constructed, along the Wapack Trail on Pack Monadnock in the Peterborough region.³ Led by Major A. Erland Goyette of the Monadnock Region Association, this effort appears to have ended quickly without any lasting impact. A decade later at Mittersill, the concept of a ski village in close proximity to ski lifts and downhill ski trails emerged. In the late 1940s Austrian émigré Hubert von Pantz, attracted originally by the Aerial Tramway, offered lots and chalet homes clustered around the ski-lift base. The Mittersill village became vital in the 1950s and 1960s and probably set the pattern for another early New England ski village, Vermont's Magic Mountain, which was developed by Hans Thorner, formerly owner of a Franconia inn near Mittersill.⁴

Cranmore, Gunstock, Cannon and Whitneys'—which would expand to become Black Mountain—all opened before World War II brought a temporary halt to ski area construction. Inspired

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Dick Smith, New England Ski Museum

Cranmore's experimentation with snow grooming equipment continued in the 1950s. This road grader was adapted with skis to be towed behind a tractor, and was useful for pulling snow from the edges of ski trails back into the trail where it could be rolled.



New England Ski Museum

Mount Cranmore was the first ski area to use mechanical slope grooming, beginning in the winter of 1940. Initially a small Oliver agricultural tractor was used to pull rollers and mat drags, but as the Tucker Sno-Cat came on the market after World War II, Cranmore adopted those machines for their better flotation in deep snow. The Tucker Freighter model in this photograph is shown with a wooden roller, with the Skimobile visible in the background.



Mittersill, adjacent to Cannon Mountain, was the site of the first planned village in close proximity to ski tows and trails. Baron Hubert von Pantz conceived his idea of a ski village in the early 1940s, and by the 1950s chalets like this were being built at Mittersill. In California, Sugar Bowl also featured the early construction of ski homes at the lift base, though there the home sites were reserved for the ski area's investors.



This aerial view of Mittersill shows the Richard Taft trail coming from Cannon above, and a connector trail to the newer Mittersill slopes. The concept of second homes close to ski areas pioneered by Mittersill in the 1950s would become common in the early 1960s.



Mount Sunapee became the second state-owned ski area, opening in the winter of 1949. Before the war, an aerial tramway was planned for the mountain, but when planning resumed, a tramway would have been too expensive, and by that time it was becoming clearer that chairlifts offered advantages of cost, convenience and capacity over tramways.

Wildcat was built in Pinkham Notch in the summer and fall of 1957. The top to bottom line for the Gondola can be seen on the left, and the T-bar line and Bobcat slope are on the right. At the time, reaching the base area from the parking lot under construction here required skiers to walk across a bridge over the Peabody River.



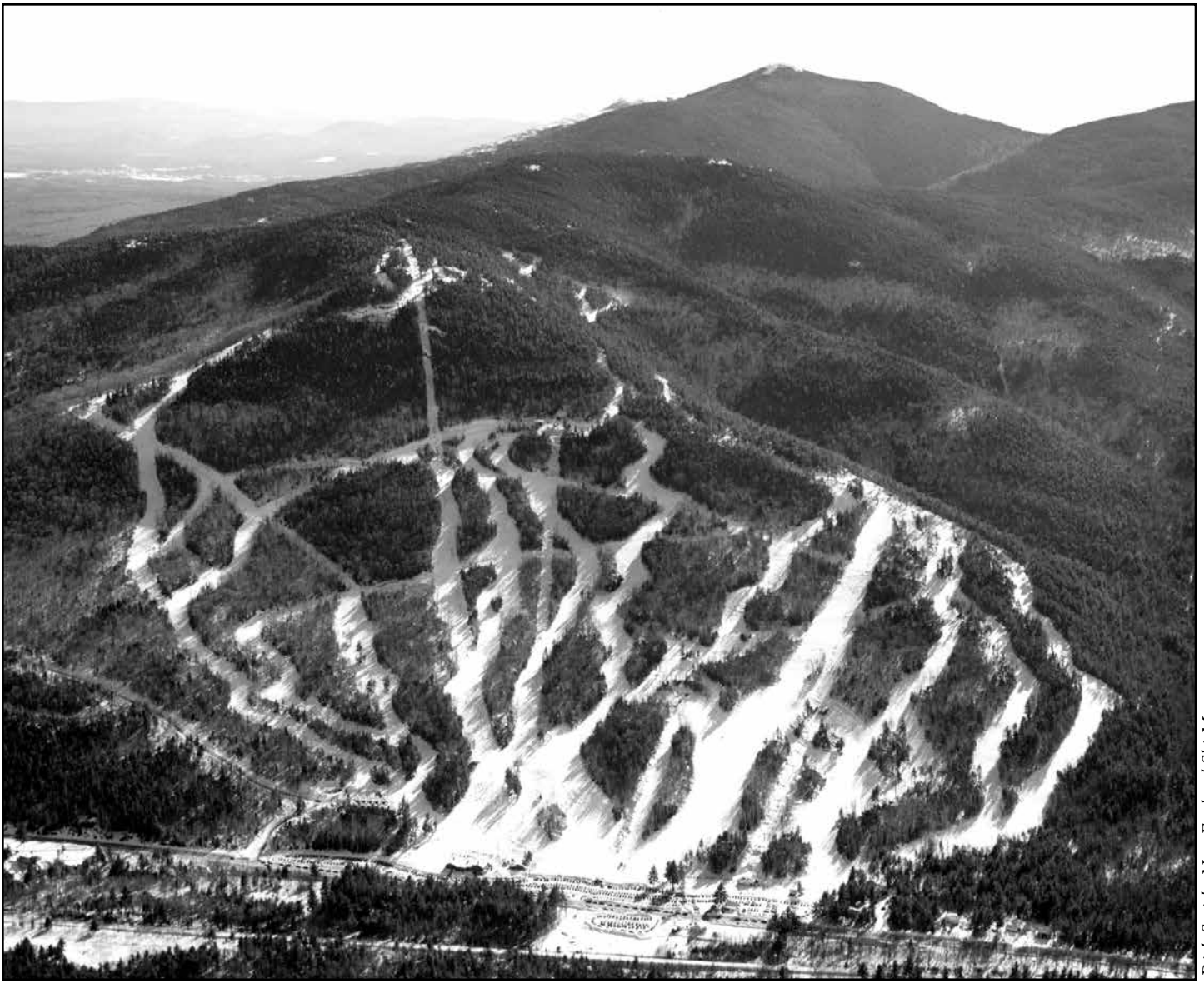
Workers cutting trails on Wildcat were housed in tents like this far up the mountain to minimize time spent hiking to the work site. The site of the tent camp is still known informally by Wildcat skiers as Tent City, though few now know what the name recalls.



A tower for the first two-person gondola to be built in the U.S. takes shape in the fall of 1957 at Wildcat.



Whitneys' Inn and the tow that was once called the shovel handle can be seen on the lower left of this 1975 photograph of Black Mountain in Jackson. Black Mountain was a postwar expansion of Whitneys'. By this time real estate development had become common, and a network of roads and houses is seen above the Whitneys' Inn.



Dick Smith, New England Ski Museum

Attitash in Bartlett was another of the new resorts that were built in a burst of ski area development in the early to mid-1960s in New Hampshire when skiing was growing rapidly.

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by the success of the Cannon Mountain tramway, in 1941 the legislature appropriated \$375,000 to construct a similar tramway at Mount Sunapee near Newport, but the war forced a quick stop to the initiative. When planning resumed about 1946, the amount of the appropriation would not cover the cost of a tramway, but was found to be sufficient for construction of a single chairlift, base lodge, and access road. Two public works engineers, Fred Hansen, a veteran of the 10th Mountain Division, and Malcolm Chase, realizing the greater skiing potential of the northwest side of the mountain, located the chairlift and ski trails there, though the original proposed tramway was planned for the eastern side. Mount Sunapee opened in the winter of 1949, the second ski area owned by the state of New Hampshire. Though projections showed that

summer visitation would be the greatest draw at Sunapee, within a few years winter business surpassed summer revenue.⁵


The only other major ski area to be built in the state in the 1940s was Thorn Mountain in Jackson, which opened in the winter of 1949. Thorn had a very short lifespan, and closed sometime around 1956. Thorn was notable for having two single chairlifts built in series, so that between the lower and upper chairlifts, significant vertical gain could be achieved.

The Dartmouth Skiway in Lyme, Mittersill in Franconia and Wildcat in Pinkham Notch were the most notable ski areas built in the 1950s. Wildcat was especially significant as the first ski area in the east to be built entirely under a special use permit from the U.S. Forest Service. The first half of the 1960s brought a surge in ski area



Dick Smith, New England Ski Museum

Tyrol opened in 1965 with its base lodge on the ridgetop of Thorn Mountain above the village of Jackson. A double chair was added in 1969, seen here angling from the lower left. In the upper right across the valley, some of the trails of Attitash are visible. Tyrol ceased operating in the early 1980s.

construction in the state as King Pine, Whittier, Ragged Mountain, Tyrol and Attitash all opened up operations. Whittier and Tyrol would close during the difficult years of the 1980s, but Wildcat, King Pine, Ragged and Attitash continue to thrive. These areas of the early 1960's would soon be overshadowed by the scale of the two new resorts that would open in the winter of 1967: Waterville Valley and Loon Mountain. 

Endnotes

¹ P. A. Robertson, "Snow Maintenance on Open Slopes," *American Ski Annual* (1945-46): 208-9; Phil Roberson, "Tailor-Made Skiing," *Eastern Slope Regionnaire 2* (Winter 1942-43): 11.

² "Lincoln Hotel News," *The Marcalog*, 2, 9, April 1948,

9. Advertisement, Eastern Distributors, Inc., *Skiing News Magazine* 15, 6, Spring-Summer 1963, 49.

³ "America's First Ski Village Becomes an Actuality at Peterborough, N.H.," *Boston Herald*, December 20, 1935; "First Cabin of Peterboro's Ski Village Formally Open on Sunday," *Boston Herald*, January 31, 1936.

⁴ Emily Williams, "Vacation Home Boom," *Skier* 14 (January 1966): 24.

⁵ E. John B. Allen, "The Development of New Hampshire Skiing," *Historical New Hampshire*, XXXVI, 1, Spring 1981, 33. Janet Young, "Dick Parker interviewed by Janet Young, Mt. Sunapee, 22 Oct. 1980," typescript in New England Ski Museum collection.

Waterville Valley: 150 Years a Resort



Dorothy I. Crossley, New England Ski Museum

In 1967, Interstate 93 was being built north from Boston, and when Waterville Valley and Loon Mountain opened, the highway was open as far as Campton. The new interstate route would make access from Boston rapid and convenient, eclipsing the eastern roads to New Hampshire ski areas. This view shows Interstate 93 in Franconia in 1967, when only one of two lanes was complete.

Waterville Valley had been a summer resort for nearly a full century before Tom Corcoran's organization began building their ski area on Mount Tecumseh. Railroad access to Plymouth commenced in 1853, and visiting anglers discovered the isolated valley soon thereafter. Nathaniel Greeley and his son Merrill built a large hotel in the valley in 1860, though it was destroyed by fire just a year later. They rebuilt in 1868, and that hotel remained intact as the core of the Waterville Inn until 1967.¹

Nathaniel Goodrich, a second-generation Waterville Valley summer resident, Dartmouth College Librarian and editor of the *American Ski Annual*, characterized the people drawn to the valley as "of moderate means, many of them teachers and ministers." They had a "distrust of excess. They disliked it in morals and religion, in gossip and clothes, in smoking and drinking."²

Even before the construction of his hotel, Greeley had built a network of hiking trails and bridle paths radiating from the valley center. He pioneered footpaths up Mount Tecumseh and Sandwich Dome, and bridle paths up Mount Osceola, along the route of today's Tripoli Road, and as far as Crawford Notch

so his guests could ride from his inn to the summit of Mount Washington. Greeley's pre-Civil War network of paths predated all other early trail systems, such as Randolph, in the state.³

By 1919 the Waterville Inn was owned by the Waterville Association, a cooperative formed by long-time hotel guests, and leased to Dartmouth graduate David S. Austin II. Seeing the potential for winter tourism, Austin had served on a statewide committee to locate sites for ski trails to be cut by the CCC, and in 1934 a trail was roughed in on Tecumseh using segments of existing logging roads. In 1935 Austin convinced the association to winterize the Inn to accommodate winter visitors.⁴

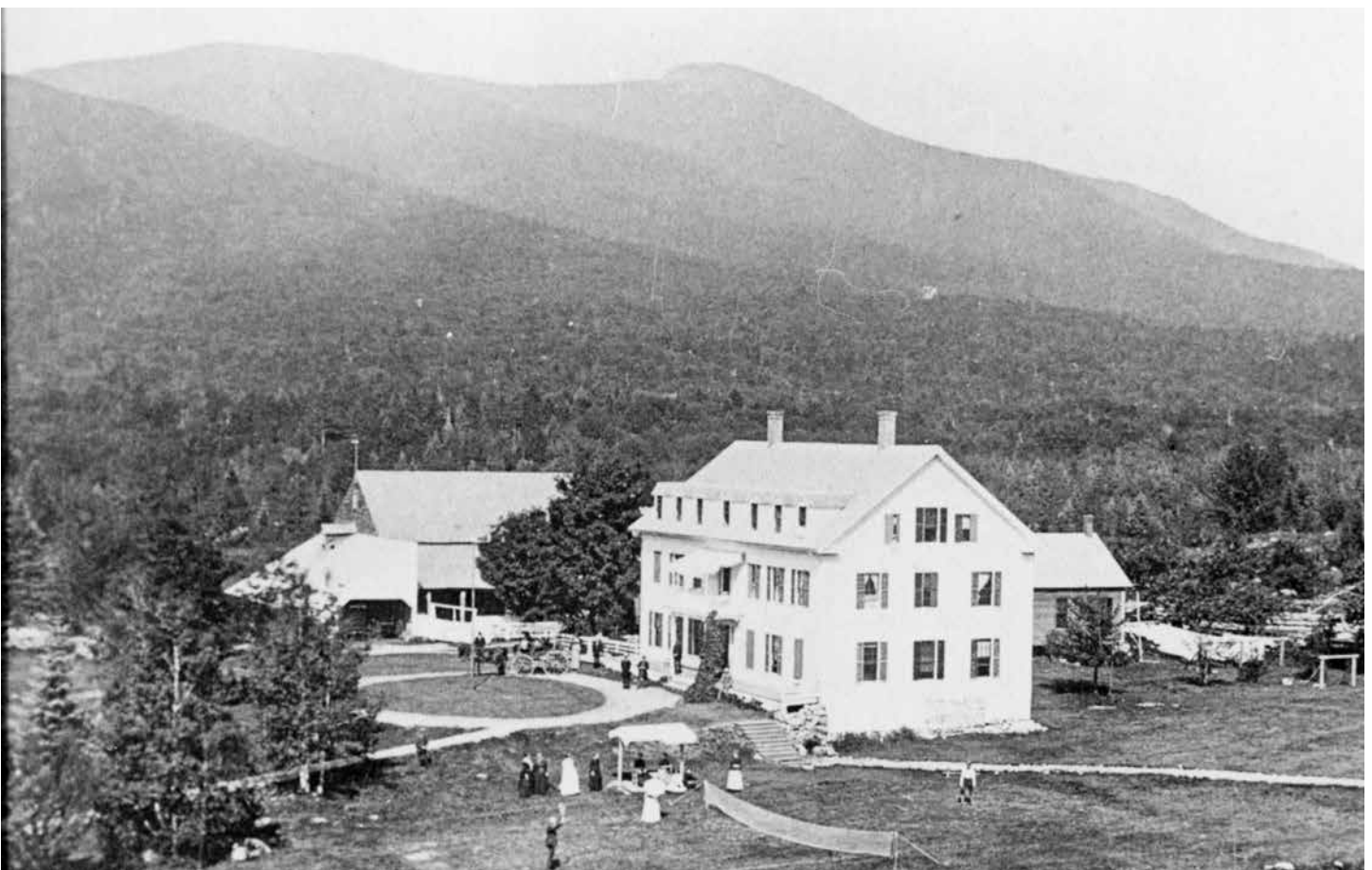
Like the East Branch region of the Pemigewasset to the north where Loon Mountain would one day be built, Waterville Valley was the scene of extensive logging operations. The Parker-Young Company, operator of extensive logging railroads in the East Branch section, purchased large tracts of land in Waterville Valley from International Paper in 1926. Parker-Young's plan to extend a railroad branch line through Greeley Notch to the valley triggered a campaign to authorize the Forest Service, now empowered by the Weeks Act to purchase land for national forests, to acquire the Parker-Young acreage. Largely through the efforts of the Forest Society—officially

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Left: Berlin-born Sel Hannah who first took up skiing with the Nansen Ski Club, became one of the earliest ski area design professionals. He had long experience scouting potential ski sites at both Loon Mountain and Waterville Valley, and would be an important figure in the development of each of the resorts which were built in 1966. Here, Hannah consults with Sherman Adams during the Loon Mountain project.

Below: Waterville Valley became a summer resort in the 1860s, long before skiing and winter sports were anticipated. Greeley's Hotel was the center of the summer colony of Waterville Valley from the time of its construction in 1868. Here, Mount Tecumseh is seen looming over the hotel and its rudimentary tennis court. In time the hotel as seen here became incorporated into the Waterville Inn. Today this is the approximate location of the Waterville Valley Academy.





Expansive summer homes called cottages dotted the cleared hillsides above Greeley's Hotel, as seen in this 1886 view.



The Greeleys built a network of hiking and riding trails in the valley, and hiking was one of the chief pastimes of Waterville Valley summer residents. Here, Margaret Goodrich, left, and Grace Norton set out on a trip to Mount Carrigain in 1911.

In his first paid job as a ski designer, Sel Hannah laid out the Tecumseh ski trail in Waterville Valley in 1936. In this view, Fred Franz looks out from the Tecumseh Trail onto the slopes of nearby Mount Osceola, where cutting by the Parker-Young company was still ongoing.



New England Ski Museum



Waterville Valley Resort

WATERVILLE INN

WATERVILLE VALLEY

Campton P. O., New Hampshire

1957

1957

The Waterville Inn was winterized in 1935, and a rope tow built behind it in 1942. The Black and Blue Trail Smashers club of Lowell, Massachusetts became regular users of the Tecumseh Trail in the 1930s, and in March 1941 helped bring the U.S.E.A.S.A. women's downhill and slalom championships to the walk-up trail. After the war, BBTS and the Vorlage Ski Club rented seasonal space in the inn.



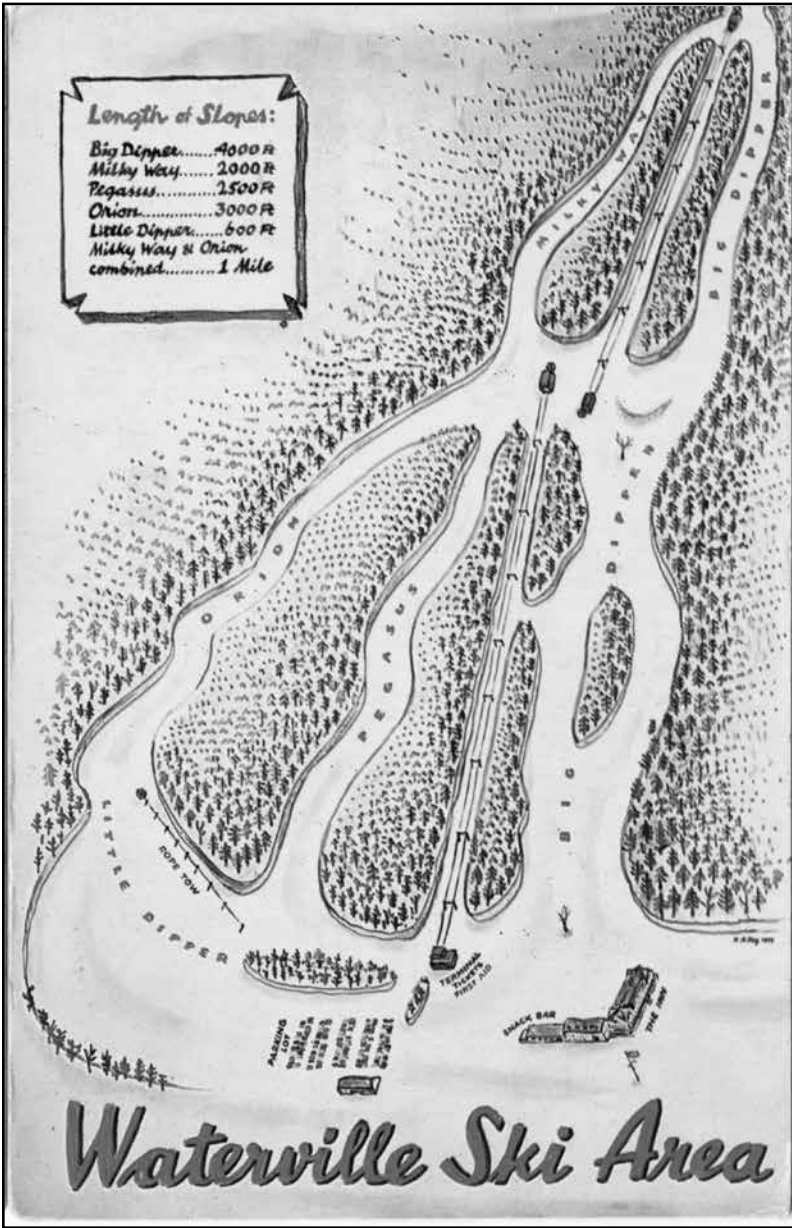
The lobby of the Waterville Inn was a welcoming space for generations of summer and winter visitors. The inn was managed for nearly three decades by David S. Austin II until it was sold in 1948 to Ralph Bean.



In the March 1952 presidential primary election, Sherman Adams suggested that Waterville Valley, with its small population that could vote quickly, vote just after midnight so that the results could be broadcast the next day as the state was voting. Adams had entered Dwight Eisenhower's name on the ballot without approval from Eisenhower, then the chief of NATO. Ralph Bean, left, Waterville Valley town clerk, watches as David Austin deposits his ballot in the box. Eisenhower won the town in a 7 to 0 vote. Between them, Austin and Bean operated the Waterville Inn for 48 years.



In 1952 Ralph Bean and Ray Brox of Dracut, Massachusetts installed a T-bar on Snow's Mountain behind the Waterville Inn. A second T-bar was added several years later, and the area was advertised as Waterville Ski Area. This image shows the view of the Waterville Inn from the lower slope.



This early trail map of Snow's Mountain was illustrated by Waterville Valley resident H.A. Rey, who with his wife Margaret was the producer of the Curious George children's books.



The lift corporation owned by Ralph Bean and Ray Brox bought this early Tucker Sno-Cat and used it to ferry skiers to the base of the Tecumseh Trail.

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the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests—this was accomplished in 1928, and while the terms of the sale allowed continued logging for 15 years, construction of a logging railroad and the consequent clear cuts were averted. Instead of a railroad, Parker-Young trucked timber from the valley to their Lincoln mill via Tripoli Road, which was built around 1934, roughly following the route of Greeley’s bridle path.⁵

The 1934 ski trail on Mount Tecumseh was steep with abundant stretches of cross-fall line sidehills, and the Forest Service hired recent Dartmouth graduate Sel Hannah to survey a new route that was better for skiing, to be cut by a CCC crew. While also working for Austin in the kitchen of the Waterville Inn, Hannah and Belgian skier Francois Bertrand laid out the route of the 2,400-foot vertical Tecumseh ski trail which became a favorite of skiers willing to undertake the uphill hike. Tecumseh was a particular preference of the Black and Blue Trail Smashers club, and after World War II they conducted their annual Widener Memorial race on the trail. A 1941 Forest Service inspection report recorded some 1,100 skiers for the season on the trail.⁶

In the winter of 1942 a rope tow was built behind the Inn by the new leasee, Treadway Inns, operated by Bertrand that season and again in 1947. In 1948 Ralph Bean, a Pacific Theater combat veteran originally from Lowell, Massachusetts, purchased the Inn from the Waterville Association, and soon formed a partnership with Ray Brox of Dracut, Massachusetts to build a ski area on Snow’s Mountain, further up the slope in back of the Inn. They acquired a used 1,700-foot T-Bar from Winter Park, Colorado and installed it, partly on Forest Service land, for the winter of 1953. This was followed by an upper T-bar that was also operated under a special use permit from the Forest Service.⁷

Bean owned and successfully operated the Inn and Snow’s Mountain from 1948 until 1966, when a new era in Waterville Valley began as Tom Corcoran’s Waterville Company purchased the Inn and its 425 acres for \$200,000 and the Snow’s Mountain operation for \$130,000.⁸





Lou Hechenberger, an Austrian ski instructor hired by Ralph Bean at the Waterville Inn in 1950, was also the artist of a well-known publicity poster for the State of New Hampshire. “Lou was crippled with arthritis, but still managed graceful Christies on the gentle grade of the B slope. Paying customers were few and far between, but Ralph provided food and lodging, and Lou eked out a living with his camera,” wrote fellow photographer Lou Baker.

Endnotes

¹ Nathaniel L. Goodrich, *The Waterville Valley: A Story of a Resort in the New Hampshire Mountains*. (Lunenburg, Vermont: The North Country Press, 1952), 8-9.

² Goodrich, *The Waterville Valley*, 9, 11.

³ Laura and Guy Waterman, *Forest and Crag: A History of Hiking, Trail Blazing and Adventure in the Northeast Mountains*. (Boston: Appalachian Mountain Club, 1989), 201-202.

⁴ Grace Hughes Bean, *The Town at the end of the road: a history of Waterville Valley*. (Canaan, New Hampshire: Phoenix Publishing, 1983), 73-74.

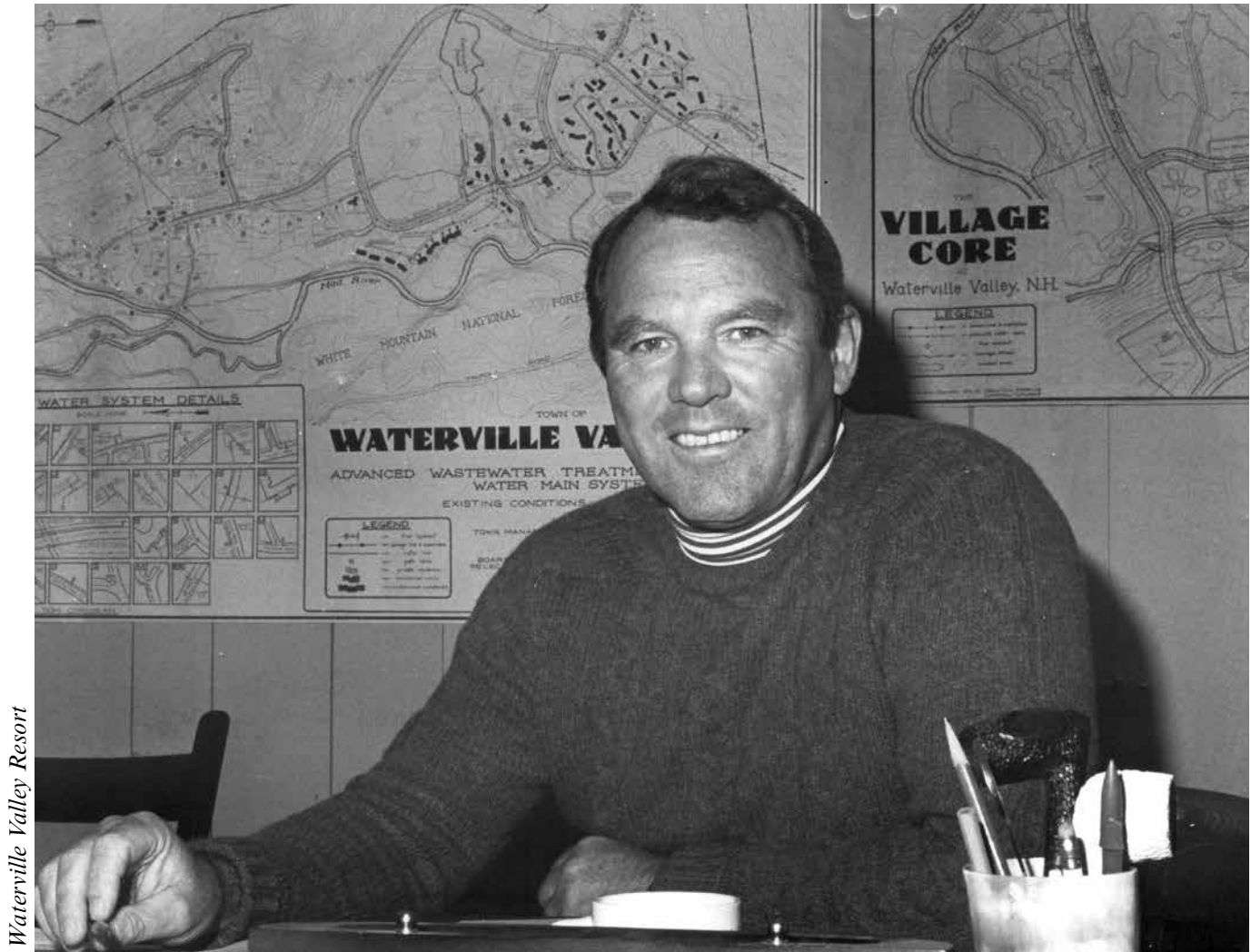
⁵ Goodrich, *The Waterville Valley*, 35-38.

⁶ U.S. Forest Service, “Inspection Outline For Winter Sports Areas: Mt. Tecumseh”, January 16, 1941, photocopy in New England Ski Museum, 2004.062.014.

⁷ Bean, *The Town at the end of the road*, 84, 87.

⁸ Bean, *The Town at the end of the road*, 101-102.

Waterville Valley in the Corcoran Era



Waterville Valley Resort

The maps on the wall behind Corcoran are a reminder that he and his Waterville Company were building a municipality as well as a ski resort. Having grown up skiing at Mont Tremblant in Quebec, Corcoran noted that the design of the base area there, conceived by Philadelphia owner Joe Ryan, offered the skier a wonderful sense of arrival, something he tried to incorporate at Waterville Valley.

By the early 1960s Sel Hannah, who designed the 1936 Tecumseh Trail as a young college graduate, had made a career for himself in designing the trails, lifts and base areas of the numerous resorts that were being created in the decades after World War II. Thomas A. Corcoran, a ski racer on the Dartmouth and 1956 and 1960 Olympic teams, had raced on the Tecumseh Trail in a Widener Race in 1948 as an Exeter student but the place did not leave a strong impression on him at the time. After obtaining a Master's degree in business management, Corcoran worked for the Aspen Skiing Corporation as assistant to manager D.R.C. Brown. At Aspen he oversaw promotion for the company, and was general manager of Buttermilk Mountain once it was acquired by the company. Buttermilk made impressive revenue gains during Corcoran's tenure and for the first time made a profit.¹

Seeking to develop a new ski resort in the east after his years in Aspen, Tom Corcoran contacted the company Sel Hannah founded with several others, Sno-engineering. In January 1965, Ted Farwell, vice president of the company, piloted a small plane with Corcoran on board, and the pair viewed a variety of possible sites from the air, including Waterville, Crawford Notch, the Killenney basin, Bolton Valley, Camel's Hump and other sites known to Sno-engineering. At a break for lunch in Montpelier, Corcoran contacted Ralph Bean to meet for dinner, and in the afternoon flight saw no area that exceeded the potential of Waterville Valley.²

When the sale to the Waterville Company was finalized in February 1966, Ralph Bean retained a 20% interest in the company, with Corcoran and his family controlling the rest.

A special use permit from the Forest Service had been issued, and the company began clearing trails immediately. Corcoran's concept was to combine the ski area of over 2,000 vertical feet located completely on Forest Service land with controlled, tasteful development of a town center on the 425 acres of land owned by the company surrounding the Waterville Inn along with eventual expansion of the smaller Snow's Mountain ski area.

Construction of trails, lifts and lodges proceeded rapidly, and by the fall of 1966 135 acres of trails had been cleared, four Stadeli chairlifts installed, and the base lodge completed. The area opened in December, 1966. Almost immediately, the company's plans had to be revised when the Waterville Inn, which with its capacity of about 150 had been an important lodging element in the valley, burned to the ground on February 23, 1967. Although there was a newly-installed sprinkler system in the hotel, the water line serving the supply tank had been broken by a loader on the day of the fire. The fire started at dinnertime when the 140 guests were awake and moving, and no casualties besides the 99-year-old building resulted.³

As a life-long ski racer, Tom Corcoran introduced an intense focus on competition to Waterville Valley. The earliest instance of his emphasis on racing was in 1968, when Waterville held the first Nastar pacesetter trials as that citizen racing program was introduced. *Ski* magazine editor John Fry had conceived the idea to apply a handicap system similar to that in golf to ski racing, indexed to percentages in comparison to top national racers. As a *Ski* columnist, Tom Corcoran was aware of Fry's initiative and arranged for the pacesetter event, which Jimmy Huega won, to be held at Waterville.⁴

In a similar vein, Tom Corcoran helped arrange an event at Waterville in 1971 showcasing the emerging, and still largely undefined, freestyle skiing movement. For this he teamed up with the editor of the other principal ski publication, Doug Pfeiffer of *Skiing*. Pfeiffer convinced Chevrolet to sponsor the event, with a Corvette Stingray as first prize and cash consolation prizes, sufficient motivation for freestylers from across the country to attend. The event held on March 6 and 7, 1971 was called the National Championship of Exhibition Skiing, and

Continued on page 25

New England Ski Museum



The Waterville Valley north complex base lodge under construction in the fall of 1966. The adjoining south complex housed the offices of the company.



New England Ski Museum

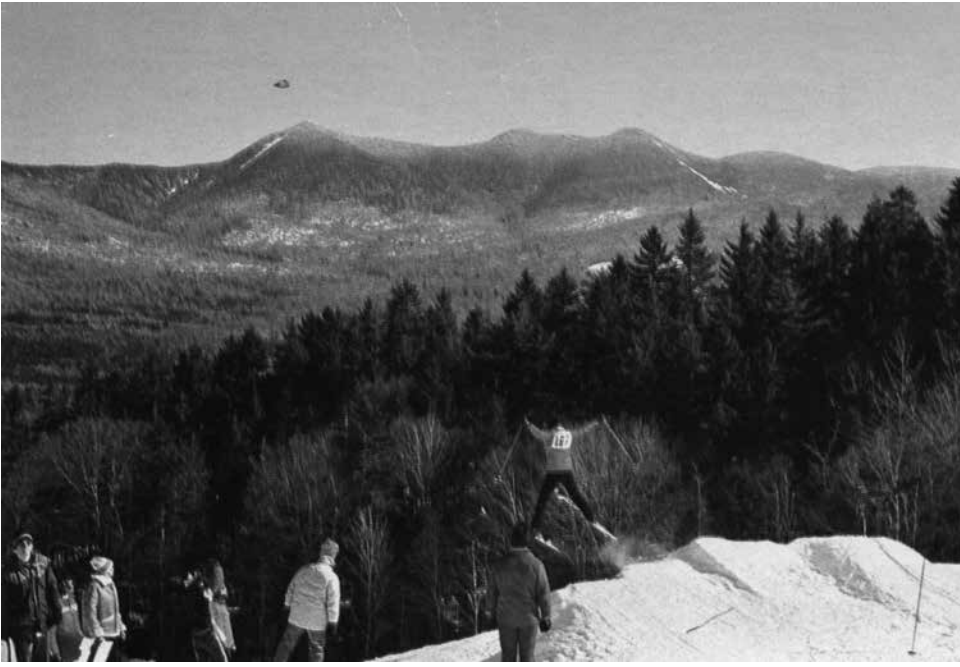
Former Swiss ski team member Paul Pfosi was the first ski school director at Waterville Valley. He had been recruited from Switzerland by Paul Valar, director of the ski school at Cannon and Mittersill, and spent two seasons there before moving to Waterville. He in turn then brought other Swiss instructors to his ski school, establishing an alpine flavor to the mountain and the town. Pfosi opened an inn in the valley, and was instrumental in establishing ski competition programs at the mountain. He established a freestyle instruction program at Waterville Valley in the winter of 1970, said to be the first in the country. Sadly, Pfosi died prematurely in a plane crash near Lake Tahoe.



The Waterville Inn had been an important part of the plans of Corcoran's company, but on February 23, 1967 it burned to the ground after a fire that started in the kitchen could not be controlled. A new sprinkler system had just been installed in the rambling building, but was not yet functional. All escaped the fire without injury, but the guests had to find makeshift lodging in the base lodge. Tom and Birdie Corcoran's fourth child was born five days after the fire.



Tom Corcoran's background in ski racing meant that the new Waterville ski area would aggressively pursue competition events. In 1967-68, the first pacesetter trials of the fledgling NASTAR program, developed by John Fry of Ski magazine and Corcoran, were held at Waterville. The first World Cup finals held in the U.S. were sited at Waterville in March, 1969, under the title of the 1969 North American Alpine Championships. Those races were dedicated to the memory of Robert F. Kennedy, who had spent his last days on skis before his assassination at Waterville Valley.



Waterville Valley was an early supporter of freestyle skiing, and hosted the 1971 National Championship of Exhibition Skiing at a time when the newly developing sphere of skiing had little official sanction. Wayne Wong, an icon of the freestyle movement, was third in the 1971 events, and taught at Waterville Valley for several years afterward.

After the initial enthusiasm for freestyle brought by the 1971 National event, the event grew in popularity at Waterville Valley, and the BBTS program became a force in the discipline.





With the backing of Waterville Valley and a sponsorship from Chevrolet, which donated a Corvette as the grand prize, the 1971 National Championship of Exhibition Skiing gave a new respectability to the emerging 'hot dog' skiing movement. The event was run on True Grit, with one run each of moguls, aerials and ballet. With 2,000 spectators present, the judges, who included Jean Claude Killy, awarded first place to Austrian Herman Goellner, seen here in the center accepting the keys to his Sting Ray



Tom Corcoran's racing career and Western interlude influenced the design of the ski area. Ski competition was important and he designed racing areas where they would not conflict with general skier traffic. Ten World Cup races, including the finals in 1969 and 1991, were held at Waterville in Corcoran's years, though the ski area was easily the smallest resort on the World Cup circuit. This photograph shows part of the crowd at the opening of the 1969 World Cup finals.



Waterville Valley hosted World Cup races throughout the 1980s. Roswitha Steiner, seen here in the 1986 event series, was the named Austrian Sportswoman of the year. It was at Waterville Valley in the 1980 World Cup races that breakaway slalom gates were first used in international competition.

Continued from page 20

attracted a national field. Each competitor took three runs on True Grit, which was a mixture of moguls, large bumps and groomed terrain. The judges, including Pfeiffer and two 10th Mountain Division veterans, Dev Jennings and Don Henderson, awarded the Stingray to Herman Goellner on the basis of his backward flip. The event attracted a crowd of spectators estimated at 2,000, and afterward was remembered by many as the first formal freestyle event and the beginnings of a new Olympic sport.⁵

The most consequential events from Tom Corcoran's commitment to ski racing were the series of ten World Cup races held at Waterville between 1969 and 1991. In just the third season of operation, Waterville managed to attract the World Cup finals. Corcoran had become friends with Robert F. Kennedy when he acted as his guide to the Aspen ski resorts in 1964, and worked on Kennedy's campaign for a New York Senate

seat that year. Following Kennedy's June 1968 assassination, the World Cup finals were dedicated to his memory, and a new trail called Bobby's Run, was named in his honor. Corcoran noted in a welcome letter to the competitors and coaches that Kennedy's last ski vacation had been spent at Waterville Valley.⁶

Despite the reported \$50,000 cost of holding the 1969 World Cup finals, the mountain hosted a World Cup event again in 1978, then for seven years in the 1980s, and once more held the finals in 1991.⁷ Waterville Valley was likely the smallest resort on the World Cup circuit in that period, and was able to manage the races year after year only with the help of a large contingent of volunteer race workers and officials led by Anna McIntyre and Leland Sosman of the BBTS. Sosman's skiing experiences at Waterville bridged the old walk-up Tecumseh Trail and the Waterville Valley resort, as he was president of



Dr. Leland Sosman, on left, was a BBTS stalwart long before the ski area was built on Mount Tecumseh, and an influential race official on the national and international levels.

the BBTS when that club held the special use permit from the Forest Service to use the Tecumseh Trail for the Widener races.⁸

Waterville's skier visits grew from 76,000 in its first year to 117,000 in the winter of 1968, to 170,000 in the winter of 1969. The Waterville Company made its first profit in that winter. By 1971 the company claimed the greatest attendance in the state, and the fifth greatest in New England. Income had gone from \$482,000 in 1967 to more than \$2 million in 1970, and the company had constructed and sold more than 60 condominiums, then the most in the east according to their literature. Eyeing an eventual capacity of more than half a million skier visits, the company proposed expanding the Tecumseh trails as well as a larger extension of Snow's Mountain, upgrading the Tripoli Road, and an expansion of the golf course, all on national forest property.⁹ This proposal met with opposition from the Appalachian Mountain Club and other conservation organizations and did not materialize, which may have been a disguised blessing since just a few years in the future, the nation-wide growth rate of skiing which had allowed the rapid growth of Waterville Valley would slow dramatically.



Endnotes

¹ Grace Hughes Bean, *The Town at the end of the road: a history of Waterville Valley*. (Canaan, New Hampshire: Phoenix Publishing, 1983), 100. "An Application to the U.S. Forest Service for a Special Use Permit to develop and operate a major ski area on Mt. Tecumseh, White Mountain National Forest, New Hampshire," August 25, 1965, 10, New England Ski Museum collection 2005.023.015.

² Ted Farwell to Ed Siegel, ca. summer 1966, New England Ski Museum collection, 2009.059.031.

³ Bean, *The town at the end of the road*, 106. Dave Britton, "Who's Who—Bill Cheney (More about the Waterville Inn Fire)," *Waterville Valley Wig Wag*, XV, 3, March 1, 2017, 7.

⁴ John Fry, "The Press Changed Skiing," in E. John B. Allen, ed., *Collected Papers: International Ski History Congress, 2002*. (New Hartford, CT: International Skiing History Association, 2002), 244.

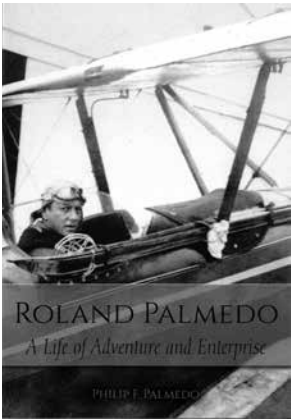
⁵ Morten Lund and Peter Miller, "Freestyle Comes of Age," *Skiing Heritage*, 10,3 (September 1998), 26-28. Doug Pfeiffer, "The Greatest Show on Snow," *Skiing*, 24, 1, September 1971, 89-90.

⁶ Bean, *The Town at the end of the road*, 99. Tom Corcoran, "Welcome To All Competitors, Coaches and Team Officials," letter in New England Ski Museum collection 2005.137.003.

⁷ Bean, *The Town at the end of the road*, 116.

⁸ "An Application to the U.S. Forest Service for a Special Use Permit to develop and operate a major ski area on Mt. Tecumseh, White Mountain National Forest, New Hampshire," August 25, 1965, 6, New England Ski Museum collection 2005.023.015.

⁹ Edward B. Siegel to Jim Branch, with attached Waterville Valley Comparative Income Statistics, August 28, 1969. James R. Branch to Chester Winter, July 30, 1971. Waterville Co. draft Proposal, ca. 1971. Thomas A. Corcoran to Robert Tyrrel, Forest Supervisor, October 26, 1971. All in New England Ski Museum collection, 2009.059.031.



Philip F. Palmedo, *Roland Palmedo: A Life of Adventure and Enterprise*. Portsmouth, NH: Peter E. Randall, 2018.

“Your continuing contributions to skiing are well-known, and I’m sure ski enthusiasts, internationally, appreciate your dedication and innovation in developing this fine sport,” President Gerald Ford wrote to Roland Palmedo in 1975. Now Roland’s son, Philip Palmedo, has made sure that his father’s

contributions remain a matter of record in this 9-chapter, 140-page, well-illustrated and footnoted paperback.

‘Adventure and Enterprise’ is the entry into the life of Roland Palmedo (born 1895 in Brooklyn): active and activist, initiator, promoter and overseer of adventurous projects, often combining a roughness tinged with aristocratic privilege. Hiking, kayaking, white water devil riding were important but skiing was at the center of his life. The ski sections range across the world: Hawaii to Alaska, Colorado to Garmisch, south to Morocco and east to Bulgaria and Russia...but Roland’s main interest was more accessible at Stowe and Mad River, both in Vermont.

Neither of these projects, however, would have been possible, even probable, without Roland’s involvement with Lehman Brothers as investment banker, nor without his personal and business interest in aviation. The cover of the book shows Roland in his biplane, skis strapped to the fuselage ready to scout out possible skiing areas... Stowe was one, Mad River was another. Roland had skied in Europe and at Williams College before World War I, and by 1930 he had interested many like-minded friends in skiing, climbing logging roads, scaling wooded mountains, living the rough life for a day on the trail. At times things got too rough; as a result he became a major influence on the development of the national ski patrol. He also was a supporter of the giant slalom event. In 1931, he founded the Amateur Ski Club of New York (‘Amateur’ was important), and it was many of these member friends who he persuaded to invest in what became The Mount Mansfield Lift Company that built and ran the longest single chair in America, opening in November 1940.

But then the war came and Roland, who had served as a Navy flyer in World War I, now rejoined and was posted to the Pacific, so skiing (other than a 14-man expedition with two pairs of skis up a snow-topped volcano on Hawaii) had to wait until he was demobilized in 1945. But by then, Stowe was becoming a glitzy resort-on-the-make, and Roland had no time for “belly dancers, discothèques and other side-show attractions.” Philip Palmedo does not hide the acrimony that developed among the various entities

running Stowe. Roland’s lift was built on private and state lands, the Mount Mansfield Ski Club felt it was the central organization, and ‘owned’ the Sepp Ruschp Ski School. Sepp had been welcomed by Roland in 1936, but had then become involved in obtaining a permit for a second tow, something that was not illegal but went against Roland’s ethical standards and he wrote a blistering letter to him.

This “toxic atmosphere” caused Roland to search out—often in his own plane—another mountain area where he might build and maintain a ski area to his own ideals. Some 40 miles south of Stowe at Mad River, 1650 acres of Stark Mountain were bought for \$29 an acre. He looked for a broad investor base of right-thinking people who would be both Mad River clients and enthusiasts in maintaining the area’s natural character. Many of the early investors were from the Amateur Ski Club of New York with a Rockefeller and Rothschild in support. The official opening was 11 December 1948, and no profit was turned until 1953. Mad River embodied Roland’s idea of ‘community’ so there were no fancy hotels, no rows of condos. Individual houses, club lodges (the Hartford Ski Club’s was the first in 1956) brought north a clientele delighting in the single chair, “serene, serious, and stoic,” and, one must add, it kept low the numbers of skiers on the trails. In 1972 Roland sold Mad River, but its spirit is very much present to this day; the welcoming sign in 2017 proclaimed “Preserving Palmedos Spirit,” the experience of skiing in unspoiled nature.

Roland was an internationalist, not only from his upbringing but from interest; he was a capable translator of German and French, and he adventured widely and wrote about his experiences in magazines like *Appalachia*. For the most important of his books, *Skiing: The International Sport*, he corralled 20 authors from around the globe—I believe he knew them all—and produced what is still considered the major contribution of the 1930s. For Pan Am Airways he described international areas and he translated an Austrian ski manual. He was the impetus behind sending a US Women’s team to Europe to train and compete in 1935 and to the Olympic Games in 1936. His other international interest was in the formation of organizations supporting international competition. As the FIS became controlled by “the Nazi gang,” he was largely responsible for founding the Ski Union of the Americas and, for example, brought a Chilean team to the United States.

From a personal as well as historical perch, Philip Palmedo has analyzed his father’s contributions along with his many sporting and philosophical interests that have made skiing such a splendid sport. This is a most valuable historical contribution.

Scott Andrews, *A Century on Skis. The First 100 Years of the Chisholm Ski Club of Rumford, Maine (includes history of Black Mountain)*. Rye, N.H.: Great Life Press, 2017.

Over the hundred years between 1917 and 2017, Rumford, Maine’s Chisholm Ski Club has seen the world’s best cross-country skiers (the FIS meet of 1950), was an early proponent of women’s ski jumping

(1996 international meet), had 74 youngsters qualify for the Junior National Championships (1955-2014), created a major biathlon course, built lifts up an alpine mountain—the Black Mountain in the title of the book’s brackets—and been given away for \$1. A roller coaster ride for those involved, the “home town heroes” who have done the trail clearing, monitored the race courses, prepared the meals, run the raffles, sat on the boards, organized the finances, and insured the flags remained flying.

Jack Lufkin, Olympic 30 K cross-country man of 1968 wrote the forward and Chummy Broomhall, Olympian of 1948 and 1952 is a large presence. It was his telephone call that secured the FIS meet

from a rain-soaked Lake Placid. The Club and its area suffered much during the economic disruptions of the 1970s but it seems possible that the Chisholm Ski Club will be a major player on the national cross-country scene and that Black Mountain will be one of those “little areas” that supply future skiers for the big mountains.

This is a paperback book of 215 pages, with five appendices; 10th Mountain members, Junior nationals, 21 “People who made significant contributions,” local skiers inducted into Maine’s Ski Hall of Fame, and local skiers who participated in Winter Olympics and FIS events. There are about 25 black and white images and no index.

Letter to the Editor

Hi Jeff,

Months ago I promised to send you some prints you might find interesting for your files.

I was discharged from the U.S. Army Air Crew training program in November 1945 and felt I deserved some skiing time. One of my old time skiing group was Fred Hartwell. We grew up together in West Springfield, Massachusetts, were members of the Springfield Ski Club and skied Blandford every weekend through high school. He had been a member of the 10th Mountain troops and was now going to be an instructor for Hannes Schneider at Mount Cranmore. Fred spoke to patrol director Don Garnett and got me a job on the Cranmore Mountain ski patrol.

Wonderful experience. Made many new skiing friends and lasting contacts. Did it for two winters, then to Tuckerman and the Harvard Hut for a few weeks before heading home. Had my room and board at the Eastern Slope Inn.

Eventually I entered UMass for two years before transferring to Cornell for an ME in Administrative Engineering. I taught skiing for Hannes for two winters during Christmas and spring vacations, then changed my allegiance to Sepp Ruschp and Stowe.

The ski patrol picture was taken outside the Cranmore base lodge in the winter of 1945-46. At the time, Carl “Tiger” Tenny, on the left, was the number 2 man under Phil Robertson, the area manager. Don Garnett, second from left, was head of the ski patrol.

I’ve taken the liberty of including a picture of myself taken in the early 1950s at Stowe. In the background are Marvin Moriarity and Addison Augusta. Beautiful memories.

Sincerely,

Brice Dixon



Brice Dixon at the Mount Mansfield base area, early 1950s. Marvin Moriarity, wearing the famous Moriarity hat, is on the left in the background, and Addison Augusta is on the right.



Cranmore Mountain ski patrol, 1945-46 as identified by Brice Dixon: Carl “Tiger” Tenny, Don Garnett, Brice Dixon, Bill Bourke, Eden Lane, Jesse Lyman, Bob Savard, Chet Lucy, Bob Lucy, Red Haynes, Billy Patch, Wally Ashnault, Junior Gardner, Jimmy Lane.

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Gerry Phelps, Webster, NH

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Harold and Henrietta Kenney Family, Webster, NH

Marlene and Katrina Dikkers, Madison, WI

Susan and Steve Abramson, So. Portland, ME

Judy A. and Daniel L. Scruton, Rochester, NH

Robert Whittle, Arlington, MA

In Memory of Thelma Green

Stanley and Catherine Parker, Littleton, NH

In Memory of Tom Corcoran

John Fry, Katonah, NY

Peter and Judy Aydelott, Franconia, NH

In Memory of Thomas and Bernice Boyd

Diane and Ted Pelletier, Stow, MA

Derek and Andrea Pelletier, Boxford, MA

Lindsay and Lee Crowe, Norwood, MA

VOLUNTEERS

July 1, 2017 to September 30, 2017

Bobbie Box
Chris Collins
Ingrid DeWitt
Gay Folland
Stefi Reed Hastings
Lois Hatch

Martha Leich
Vicki Macdougall
Betty Newton
Betty Smither
Carol Westervelt
Gini Raichle

People and Events of the New England Ski Museum

The Nordic skiing community turned out in force on November 4, 2017 to honor the Caldwell family as they received the Spirit of Skiing Award at the Museum's 40th annual meeting at the Dartmouth Skiway in Lyme, New Hampshire.



Eleven members of the Caldwell clan surround John Caldwell, holding the 2017 Spirit of Skiing award, and president Bo Adams.

People and Events of the New England Ski Museum

Jamie Gemmitti



Bob Gray of the 1968 and 1972 Olympic team with Heidi Steele.



Tom Kendall and Kim Kendall share thoughts with Walter Malmquist of the 1976 and 1980 Olympic jumping squads.

Jamie Gemmitti

Jamie Gemmitti



Jason Densmore, 1968 alpine Olympian Kiki Cutter, Kay Morton and John Morton of the 1972 and 1976 biathlon teams.



Grace and Jerry Bird, Peter Caldwell, Bob Bass and Gretchen Zopf.

Jamie Gemmitti



UPCOMING EVENTS

Holiday Party

Thursday December 28, 2017
New England Ski Museum, 5-7 PM

Bretton Woods Nordic Marathon

Saturday February 10, 2018
OMNI Mount Washington Resort

Dedication of the Eastern Slope Branch

Saturday February 24, 2018
2628 White Mountain Highway, North Conway, NH

Hannes Schneider Meister Cup Race

Saturday March 10, 2018
Cranmore Mountain Resort

CURRENT EXHIBITS

Through June, 2018

New England Ski Museum, Franconia Notch, NH
Skiing in the Granite State

Bethel Historical Society, Bethel, Maine
The Mountains of Maine: Skiing in the Pine Tree State

Bretton Woods Resort Base Lodge, Bretton Woods NH
*The Mountain Troops and Mountain Culture
in Postwar America*

Intervale Scenic Vista, Route 16, Intervale NH
Skiing in the Mount Washington Valley

Sign up for our e-mail newsletter at
www.skimuseum.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I/We wish to join New England Ski Museum in the class checked.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

New England Ski Museum
PO Box 267
Franconia, NH 03580-0267
Phone: (603) 823-7177
Fax: (603) 823-9505
E-Mail: staff@skimuseum.org

 Official Ski Museum



Membership Levels

100% Tax deductible

- Life: \$1,000 Single payment
- Sustaining: \$125/Year
- Supporting: \$75/Year
- Family: \$50/Year
- Individual: \$35/Year
- Ski Clubs: \$75/Year
- Corporate: \$100, \$250, \$500, \$1000/year

Membership Privileges

- Newsletter Subscription
- 10% Discount in the Museum Shop
- NESM pin and decal
- Invitation to special events
- Access to the Library by appointment

_____ Exp. Date _____
American Express, Discover, MasterCard, Visa # _____ V# _____

_____ Cardholder Signature