

Réal Charette

Inducted CSHF: 1993
Hometown: Ste-Agathe, QC
Date of Birth: November 1, 1919
Date of Death: October 2002
Affiliated Discipline(s): Instructor, Builder
Active Career Date(s): 1945 - 1986
FIS Code: n/a
Club: Snow Eagle Ski School

Réal Charette began a long and illustrious ski instruction career in the Canadian Army in 1941 when he became an instructor in winter warfare. During World War II, he taught both Canadian and Scottish troops, "The Lovat's Scouts".

Following his return to civilian life after the war ended, he was able to find work as a ski instructor at the Gray Rocks Inn resort in Quebec under the two well-known ski school directors, Herman Gardner and Luggi Foeger, a disciple of Hannes Schneider, originator of the Arlberg Technique which transformed alpine skiing.

In 1948, he was named Director of the Snow Eagle Ski School at Gray Rocks, the first Canadian to be appointed as director of the ski school. Before this, the position was invariably held by instructors from European alpine countries.

After 34 years, in 1982, he relinquished the position and responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the ski school which now employed over 50 fulltime instructors giving over 125,000 ski lessons a year.

In 1982, he assumed the position of Manager of Public Relations & Marketing at Gray Rocks.

In 1954, he became one of the first three instructors to achieve the Level IV (the highest level) of the Canadian Ski Instructors Alliance (C.S.I.A.) professional certification program. He was also President of the C.S.I.A for 3-years and Chief Examiner for the Alliance seventeen times.

His enthusiasm for ski instruction was furthered in pioneering efforts to promote and market the sport through film. These productions included "Learn to Ski" and "Skiing for All" aired on both Canadian and United States television networks. In 1958, he produced a further short film (14-minutes) titled "Let's Go Skiing, with Lucille Wheeler, Bronze Medallist, Alpine Downhill, 1956 Winter Olympic Games, Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy.

His contribution to skiing and the C.S.I.A. resulted in profound changes to the Canadian ski industry.