



# The Canadian Ski Museum News

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Honourary Patron: H. SMITH-JOHANNSEN "CHIEF JACKRABBIT"

## MEMBERSHIPS

Because of the growing number of new members in the Ski Museum association each month, we have had to reorganize our schedule somewhat from last year. In future, all memberships will be renewed in the fall and the annual general meeting will take place in May or June. Any membership purchased during the summer will therefore be good for a full year and a bit, and any membership purchased before the spring meeting will be renewed the following September.

The fees for individual members stay at \$3.00 but group memberships have been increased to \$10.00 yearly and commercial or resort memberships to \$20.00. It is felt that these amounts are more appropriate to the organizations involved while still remaining nominal.

There may be some confusion with memberships that are due to expire between now and September. Some members have already sent in their second year's fees, even though they are not quite due. Since the consensus is that most members will wish to contribute before each annual meeting, we have decided to renew these memberships now, and again in the fall. This way each membership year will include one annual general meeting. (We could, of course extend memberships purchased before the first annual general meeting through to the September following the second and we will, if loud enough complaints are heard.)

P.S. for clubs, associations, retailers and resorts.....

In response to the many inquiries at the Museum concerning ski areas and conditions, a special display section has been designated for posters, notices and brochures of member organizations. By distributing ski area information to the thousands of tourists who visit the Museum each year, we can provide an added service to the public and to those organizations who have given us their support.

## MONEY

During the past five years the Canadian Ski Museum has received most of its funding from the National Museums of Canada, the Federal Department of Manpower, the Ontario Department of Culture and Recreation, the Canadian Ski Association and the City of Ottawa. To help cover basic operating costs for this year, however, we must now raise \$15,000 from private sources. All gifts are tax deductible and official receipts will be issued promptly. We are almost flat broke. We need your support. Thank you. KPT

## Chalet Cochand Inc.

YEAR ROUND  
RESORT



STE. MARGUERITE STATION  
QUE. CANADA

Emile Cochand was born in Switzerland on October 16, 1890. By the age of eighteen he was a champion skier. Ernest Desbaillet, manager of the Laurentide Inn at Ste. Agathe des Monts, engaged him to come to Canada as a ski instructor. The following is taken from a personal account of his early years in Canada, sent after a visit to the Ski Museum last summer by Mr. Cochand, now a resident of Niagara Falls, Ontario.

"I arrived at Halifax in September, 1911, after a rough voyage and took the train to Montreal where I was met by my sponsor. I was impressed by the wooden sidewalks of the old city and the forest of telephone poles. After a couple of days at the Freeman Hotel on St. James Street, we departed again by train from Place Viger Station. On the way north I looked for the mountains where I would start my new adventure as a Ski Pro but saw only rolling hills. I later found those hills very attractive and picturesque, a good place to start my Ski School.

"Skiing was not known at Ste. Agathe des Monts except to people who had skied abroad. Snowshoeing was regarded as the national sport, especially in Montreal where well-organized clubs held races and big parades with many colourful costumes.

"As the Montreal Ski Club started to develop, the members came to join us at the Lac Manitou Club. Open slopes were few and mostly on farm land. At first the farmers didn't cooperate because they didn't understand what this new sport would later mean to them. After one exhibition of jumping, however, they helped us by offering the use of their land and allowing us to open fences to make cross-country trails.

"After my Ski School was established in 1912-1913, it was well patronized by skiers from Montreal and Toronto. I had the honour of teaching many prominent people including the Governor General and the Consuls General from Switzerland and France and from Germany the famous Count Von Ribbentropp. The Drummond family were prominent participants and the Baumgartens, Ekers, Davises, Hansens, McGibbons and others from around the Lake all contributed to the success of the Ski School.

"I was invited to put on an exhibition on Mount Royal. It was well publicized on the street cars and the Montreal Ski Club helped build the jump. The hill was crowded with children who wanted to see skiing for the first time. I made a few Telemarks around the trees and a few jumps of 50 and 60 feet which was all that was possible on that hill.

"The Lake Placid Ski Club also invited us to give an exhibition of ski technique but it rained the two days we were there and we were not able to ski at all. Everyone was very disappointed but the snow had all gone.

"In 1913 the Montreal Ski Club with Thomas Drummond as president, helped organize a jumping competition at Ste. Agathe. Skiers came from New Hampshire to participate. The Duke of Connaught, then Governor General, was among the many spectators. The jumps of about 50 to 75 feet were purely acrobatic and in spite of it being a very cold day everyone was kept laughing and had a good time.

"Later I imported two hundred pairs of skis as they were not available here. In 1913 with the cooperation of several sportsmen, Gordon Greenshield, A. Baudry, Dr. Richer and St. Amour, we built a bobsled run that was very popular, especially with the residents around the Lake, and a skating rink for the children of the village. There were no automobiles yet in Ste. Agathe; all transportation was by horse and sleigh. The horses needed exercise so I built a large rink on the lake and introduced skijoring.

"1914 and 1915 were War years and the Spanish Flu was pretty bad so only a few devoted members of the Montreal Ski Club continued to ski. The Laurentide Inn where I was oper-

(contd.)

### notes and queries

Q. Do you have any record in your museum on the first woman skier in Canada? I saw a 1901 picture recently in a defunct magazine and began to wonder about such a person.

Mrs. RWC, Winnipeg

A. As far as we know, the first written mention of any skiing in Canada is a reference in a Norwegian newspaper of 1872 to two brothers called Gjerdrum using skis in the Toronto area. I'm sorry to report that we don't have a similar reference to a first woman skier.

Many Scandinavian immigrants made skis for themselves after settling in various parts of Canada in the latter half of the 19th century. We can, I think, assume that women as well as men skied but we have very few references to those early years. There is more written material available from the 1880's when the leisured eastern establishment began to take up the sport but still no specific reference to a woman until 1883, when an Ottawa newspaper mentions the children of the Governor General, Lord Aberdeen, skiing under the direction of a Swedish governess. Her name was Ebba Wetterman, and, whereas she probably wasn't the first woman skier in Canada, she may have been the first to receive written notice.

Ed.

ating my Ski School was closed and turned into a hospital for soldiers. I went to Montreal for a while where I married but I didn't like the city and wanted to go back to the mountains. This time to Ste. Marguerite Station which I felt was an ideal place surrounded by mountains that could be developed for skiing and winter sports. The Laurentians needed a winter resort hotel to accommodate the flow of skiers. In 1917, two miles from the CPR station, I founded CHALET COCHAND."

by Emile Cochand Sr.

## SLALOM HILL

Captain Joe Morin's latest gift to the Ottawa Ski Club was dedicated Sunday afternoon before a large enthusiastic crowd. A slalom hill was one thing more the club needed and this explorer of the Gatineau volunteered to find one. Carved and blasted for fully 1,000 feet down the precipitous slopes of the ridge just west of Camp Fortune, Ottawa now has one of the best slalom hills in Canada. Fred Taylor, experienced in all the technicalities of the slalom and no mean performer himself, set the difficult and testing course that tried out the skill of a score of entrants. John Blair of the Red Birds made the winning two runs over the course, taking the difficult turns in good form and fast, his average time 1.39 being exceptionally good. Ed Connolly of Ottawa University was second and W. Clark, a fine all-round ski runner, third.\*

\*from the Canadian Ski Annual of 1933. And to conclude we have a poem submitted by Hal Heggtevit with his report to the same publication sixteen years later. The "Annual" was by then known as the Canadian Ski Year Book. Mr. Heggtevit's report in the 1949-50 Year Book concerned the activities of the Ski Traffic Corps, an organization responsible for, among other things, supplying information regarding trails and hills, enforcing discipline on trails and hills and organizing line up at loading points. Here is the poem:

Oh, you who have daring deeds to tell  
And you who have felt ambition's spell  
Have you heard of the chap who didn't ski well,  
Yet he yearned for a slide down the Slalom.  
He sighed all day and he sighed all night  
And no one could understand him quite  
For the practice slopes are a beginner's delight  
Yet he pined for a run down the Slalom.  
So he left his friends in merry play  
And off by his lonesome he stole away  
From the gentle hills where he ought to stay  
And practice until he could slalom.

At last he came to the ski-tow gate  
And he made his way in a manner straight,  
For a fool will go when he should wait,  
Right to the top of the Slalom.  
He boldly took off in rapid descent;  
Smack into the creek at the bottom he went,  
And lo, when the Ski Patrol found him there  
He had only one ski instead of a pair  
But he mumbled feebly, "I do not care,  
For I've had a slide down the Slalom."\*

\*reprinted here with the author's permission and his apologies to Mr. Service.