



# The Ancient Skier

Summer 2020

## WITH UNCERTAINTY AHEAD, THE 2021 SUN VALLEY REUNION IS BOOKED

Ancient Skiers were able to hold another fabulous Sun Valley Reunion week in late January 2020, but it's not clear yet what our reserved Sun Valley week, set for Jan. 23-29, 2021, will have in store for us. We should be able to ski, maybe with limitations, but having the usual functions is still up in the air. Sun Valley is taking individual room reservations, and, if you make them, be sure to note you are with the Ancient Skiers group.



*Not too different from today's scene, except, perhaps, for the many runs since added on Baldy.*



*There's more on Ketchum's Main Street these days, but, for many, memories of the Alpine are foremost.*

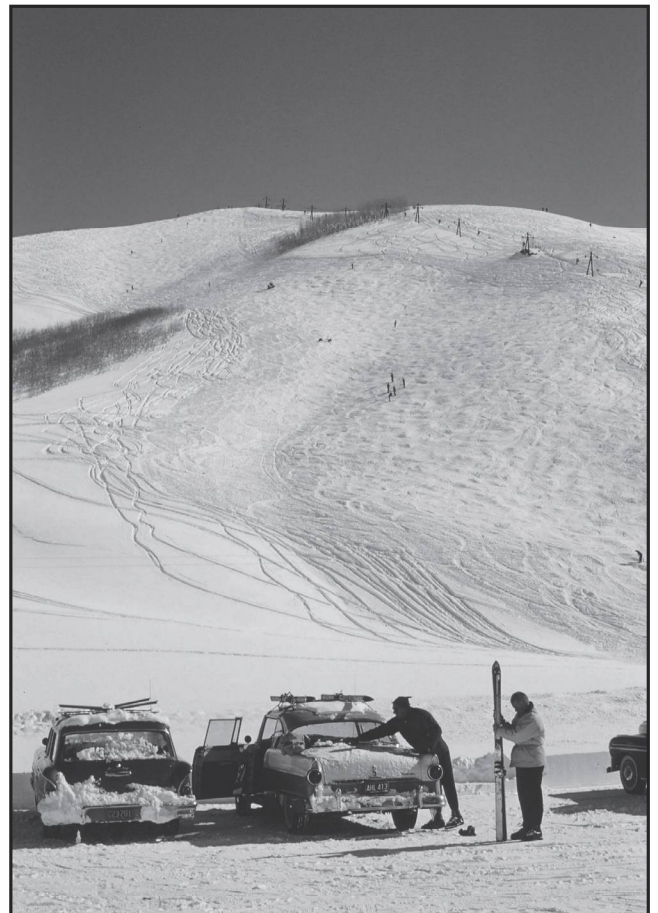


*Slalom practice used to be the norm on Roundhouse Slope - in the days when Ketchum and Sun Valley hardly left a footprint down below.*

Also of note is that 2020 would have been a year in which we held our biennial Northwest Ski Hall of Fame banquet, but that is now postponed until 2021.

Details on the 38th Annual Reunion in January 2021 and a 2021 Hall of Fame banquet will be provided in a future newsletter and/or on our website or Facebook page.

In the meantime, here's Sun Valley in the years between 1950 and 1962 via Mike Dederer's camera:



*Too much new snow on Baldy to run the lifts? One answer in the mid-20th Century was ride up one of the Valley's early lifts - on Ruud Mountain - used on special occasions.*

## REMEMBERING NOTABLE PACIFIC NORTHWEST SKIERS

### Kjell Bakke

At age 87, Kjell Bakke of Leavenworth passed on May 28, 2020, at Mountain Meadows Assisted Living Campus. Kjell grew up in Leavenworth and began skiing in 1936 when he was three years old. His father, Magnus, was his instructor. While in high school, he was a member of the ski team and competed in cross-country, jumping, and 4-way combined events.

In 1951, Kjell was awarded a four-year scholarship to the University of Washington and competed in all the Nordic and alpine events. In 1955, he was chosen to participate in the Winter Olympic training competition at Steamboat Springs, Colo. That same year, he also won a ski jumping competition held indoors at the Civic Ice Arena in Seattle. The following year, he graduated from the University of Washington with a civil engineering degree.

From 1956 to 1958, he served on the Leavenworth Winter Sports Club board of directors, and he did so again from 1995 to 2008. After a brief stint in the Army through the ROTC program, he began his career with the U.S. Forest Service at the Wenatchee National Forest, while continuing his military service in the Army Reserve, eventually earning the rank of colonel.

In 1959, Kjell received his certification as a national ski jumping judge. He judged tournaments throughout the West and was one of many ski officials from the Pacific



*Today's and yesterday's Ski Patrol headquarters once shared dual duties as the only public warming hut atop Baldy - with an inviting 55-gallon-drum wood stove, a useful device in the days of leather boots, thin nylon parkas, and 0 degrees F.*

Northwest who helped with events at the 1960 Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley. In 1963, he was on a panel of judges for the NCAA jumping championships in Gunnison, Colo., and he continued judging for NCAA events through the 1970s.

After service with the Wenatchee, Mt. Hood, and Winema (Oregon) National Forests as an engineer, he retired from the U.S. Forest Service in 1985 and returned to Leavenworth, at which time he began coaching boys and girls in jumping. With his friend Don White, he helped found the Leavenworth Ski Hill Heritage Foundation and went on to oversee construction of 15- and 25-meter ski jumps for the training of youth. He helped start the Bakke Cup, an annual Nordic combined tournament that fosters local competition for the community.

In 2012, Kjell was inducted into the Northwest Ski Hall of Fame and continued to promote a ski museum to be located in Leavenworth.



*Lunch and the view were worth it, but a good morning of skiing often made for a tiring climb to the Roundhouse. On the menu? A cup of hot water flavored with tomato catsup and with oyster crackers on the side.*

## REMEMBERING NOTABLE PACIFIC NORTHWEST SKIERS

### Dave Gossard

Dave Gossard, sometimes known as “Father Crystal,” died at age 90 on June 7, 2020. For Dave, skiing was the highest calling. He was born in Seattle in 1930 and grew up in Enumclaw, Wash., and first took to skis at Cayuse Pass in 1936. Later, as a young man, he held several jobs, including one at the Farman’s Pickles plant in Enumclaw, a now-long-closed plant Crystal skiers still can see as they drive to the mountain. Dave also was a timber cruiser, working for the White River Lumber Company and for its successor, Weyerhaeuser.

In 1951, he accompanied Mrs. Chauncy Griggs and timber company engineers to Corral Pass on a scouting mission for a new ski area, an initial trip that, with many twists and turns, eventually led to the selection of Crystal Mountain and its opening in 1962.



*The 1950 Christmas holidays meant a cold early-morning hour’s wait to ride the Lower River single chair. Fumbling to keep the cozy canvas cape on, you had to be careful not to drop your poles in the Big Wood River just seconds after you boarded your chair*

Dave started college at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma but transferred to the University of Washington for his last two years. After graduation, he spent two years in the Army at Fort Ord, Calif., where he was known as “Hungry.” Once discharged, he traveled to St. Anton, Austria, and spent the winter skiing and working on his technique. Returning to Seattle, he entered Law School at the University of Washington.

After his legal education, Dave left for Aspen and taught skiing in Fred Iselin’s Ski School. Returning later to his home state, he had teaching stints over several seasons at White Pass, Hyak, and Ski Acres, and he became a fully certified ski instructor in 1962, the year Crystal opened.

Dave, who practiced law for several decades, became an early shareholder in the new resort, buying stock in 1963, and regularly attending annual shareholder meetings. He played a key role in helping negotiate the sale of Crystal to Boyne USA in 1997 and in ensuring all shareholders could retain their lift privileges under the new ownership.

Skiing is also how he met Carolyn Carpenter, who became his wife on Christmas Day 1959. They had three children between 1963 and 1966 and Crystal Mountain is where all three children learned to ski. The family eventually became members of Crystal Mountain Skiers Inc.

In all, Dave served two years on the Crystal Mountain board of directors and then eleven years on the board of the Crystal Mountain Founders Club, where he was a driving force behind the Founders Club project to produce the history book, “Crystal Mountain, Built by Skiers,” in 2012 for the area’s 50th anniversary. We are going to miss seeing Dave’s smiling face on the slopes at Crystal Mountain.



*Warren Miller films Christian Pravda on Ridge Run, a frequent photo setting for Sun Valley’s racing elite. Sometimes, too, after Lower College became a main run, you might see ski entrepreneur Howard Head over there with a host of Sun Valley instructors testing a variety of bases for future Head Skis.*

## REMEMBERING NOTABLE PACIFIC NORTHWEST SKIERS

### Corky Fowler

Corky Fowler, a multi-talented, renowned skier and instructor known for fostering the early growth of American freestyle skiing, died April 16, 2020, at age 76 in Bozeman, Mont. He was born Carey Fowler in Seattle in 1944 and grew up skiing at Snoqualmie Summit, starting on his mom’s old cross-country skis. He mowed lawns to make money to pay for his sport, went to Bellevue High School, and helped teach skiing for Doris and Joe Harlacher at Ski Acres and Snoqualmie Summit on weekends.

Corky graduated from high school in 1962 and traveled to Sun Valley to participate in a hiring clinic for new instructors. With some conditions and a place to live provided by an older instructor, he was signed on by Sigi Engl as one of the youngest instructors in the Sun Valley Ski School.

Corky initially proved very successful in teaching younger skiers on Baldy. He continued teaching there through the 1960s, when business was good. Among his his later regular clients were Joan Kennedy; James Garner’s wife, Lois Clarke; and Susie Busch of the Anheuser-Busch Brewing Company.

It was during this time he developed his signature move, the full-layout forward flip, being one of the first Americans to master the move. With his acrobatic moves and ease at hot-dogging down the slopes, Corky landed roles in Warren Miller’s and Dick Barrymore’s films. He also performed stunts for a Frankie Avalon movie, “Ski Party.” In 1969, he traveled to France with the Hart Ski Team to ski in the Roger Brown movie, “The Great Ski Chase.”

Three years later, Fowler became director of skiing at Utah’s new Snowbird resort and spent the next 12 years promoting that Utah ski attraction around the world. In 1985, he left Snowbird, stopped skiing, and settled in Los Angeles and then Colorado Springs, where he passionately pursued work in art as an advertising agency creative director.

In 2009, Corky returned to skiing and moved to Montana to teach at Bridger Bowl Ski School for two years. Many of our Ancients probably remember Corky from his early days sking in the Cascades or from his hot-dogging down the slopes at Sun Valley in the 1960s.

~ Kirby Gilbert



Corky Fowler leads Sun Valley brother and sister duo Nigel Jones and Julia Webb Jones in the 1960s. Photo courtesy Nigel Jones.

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