

The Bethel Ski & Outing Club and the Vernon Street Ski Tow



Vernon Street skiing—the slope and the skiers 1948

In November 1948, a group of Bethel people met to come up with a plan and the means to create a town ski area. Within less than two months, this group had organized a Bethel Ski and Outing Club, Inc. and established a ski area with a rope tow that was less than one mile from Main Street.

The story as it was reported in the Bethel Citizen goes like this:

November 11, 1948: “Winter Sports Meeting Stirs Interest – Inspecting Ski Sites This Week” On Tuesday about 25 people interested in skiing and developing winter sports met at the Community Room to discuss local possibilities. The meeting was in the charge of Wilbur Myers who was chairman of a Bethel Chamber of Commerce committee.



Locations suitable for improvement or extensive development on several local hills and mountains were considered including slopes at Middle Interval, Songo Pond and West Greenwood. Russell Haggert who operates the ski slopes in Bridgton gave a briefing on the problems encountered in developing a winter sports area, costs of building a tow and maintaining slopes as well as his experiences in meeting the desires of the skiing public.

A committee was named to go over the various sites suggested and meet at the home of John Howe (his home was on the corner of Broad and Paradise Streets) on Sunday evening.

(The **Community Room** in Bethel is shown below during a Molly Ockett Day auction in 1962. It was an essential town facility – one that is sadly lacking today.)

November 25, 1948: “Bethel Skiers Form Club Tuesday Night” An organizational meeting was held at the Community Room for local winter sports development and officers were elected. The name of the new association will be Bethel Ski and Outing Club. “A slope of Vernon Street which provides a ski run of about 900 feet has been leased and work of clearing up the cut over land was started during the weekend.”

Officers elected for the new club were: John Howe, president; Addison Saunders, vice president; Stan Davis, secretary and treasurer. There were three committees set up as follows: Finance, Richard Young, Richard Davis and Wilbur Myers; Low End Slope, Murray Thurston and Wilbur Myers will aid him in laying out the same; publicity, Stan Davis, for the present time.



The Citizen goes on to report that local skiers are very pleased at the discovery of this slope on land owned by Florence Machia. Not only is the site pleasing because of location but it is steep enough to interest the more skilled ski enthusiast. Construction of a town this season is assured. Funds will not be solicited by the new club but donations and suggestions are welcome. Material help will be accepted by the treasurer. Financial arrangements have already been made by those interested in the promotion. Officers will draw up by-laws and arrange details of membership.

The club is to be non profit and any income from operating the slope will

be reinvested in to the same. Work parties are already working at the slope nearly every day and groups will work there this Thursday morning and all day next Sunday.

December 2, 1948: “New Ski Slope Well Under Way – Tow Motor and Rope Purchased.” On November 30th there was a meeting at John Howe’s house for the officers and directors of the Bethel Ski and Outing Club. It was reported that rope and the tow motor have been bought. Also suggestions have been received from the Maine Development Commission and from winter sports organizations.

About 50 people were at work on Sunday and equipment in use included power saws and a bull dozer. (The bull dozer was provided by Addison Saunders.) Leslie E. Davis had donated posts for the tow. Needed were six Model A Ford wheels. Work groups will be at the slope on Saturday and Sunday.

Where is the Vernon Street Ski location?



Bethel Village and Vernon Street Ski Area

Also ski enthusiasts were invited to a Chamber of Commerce meeting Saturday where James Thorpe of the Maine Ski Instructors Association will be the speaker.

December 9, 1948: It was reported that a December 13th meeting was scheduled for the Community Room where the Bethel Ski and Outing Club would adopt by-laws and accept pledges of membership. All interested persons were invited to attend.

At a Chamber of Commerce meeting on December 7 it was voted to donate \$25 to the ski club. James Croteau, Carl Brown and Clayton Fossett are to arrange for free use of the ski tow this winter for town children.

The Citizen of December 16th reported a large attendance at the Community Room meeting three nights previous. Business included announcing that dues were fixed at 50 cents for those under 18 and \$1.00 for those 18 or over. Membership entitled the holder to reduced rates when using the tow and purchase of ski equipment at discounted prices through the club. Dr. Willard Boynton was appointed to chair the membership drive. Wilbur Myers was in charge of rates and tickets. Kimball Ames was responsible for concessions. The membership drive was to start the following week.

Those at the meeting were also told that work on the slopes had progressed very well. The grand opening would occur as soon as there was sufficient amounts of snow. As an added note however, that winter, however, the first real snow storm did not arrive until January 13, 1949.

The name of the new club was announced as the Bethel Ski and Outing Club, Inc. It was incorporated as a social club for the promotion of skiing and other forms of recreation for the benefit of the people of Bethel and any others using its facilities. Although it is not mentioned in the Citizen article, Henry Hastings was elected secretary of the Chamber in 1949 and he probably did the legal work for the ski and outing club's incorporation.

December 23, 1948: "Warming hut at base of ski slope ready for opening."

Mrs. Esther Brown would have the concession at the hut for hot drinks and eats.

John Howe had sample of skis, boots, bindings and poles for sale to members at a discount.

Up to this point in December 1948 there had been no significant snow fall reported.

December 30, 1948: "Announce rates and hours of new ski tow."

The slope will open as soon as a foot more of snow has arrived. Present plans call for the town to be open Thursday evening plus Saturdays and Sundays. Probable hours will be Saturdays and Sunday from 9:30 to 12:30 and in the afternoon s from 1:00 to 4:30. Thursday evenings – hours will be 7:30 to 9:30. Rates for non members were adults all

day @ \$1.25 and half-day tickets were to be 75 cents. Skiers under 18 would have rates of \$1.00 for the full day and half day would be 50 cents.

Member rates were to be adults all day @ \$1.00 and half day for 50 cents. Members under 18 would be 25 cents in the morning and 50 cents for the afternoon with all day being 75 cents.

On January 5, 1949, the Citizen reported on Bethel Chamber of Commerce election of officers for the year: Addison Saunders was elected president; John Carter, vice president; Henry Hastings, secretary; and Louis Van Den Kerkoven, treasurer. The following week on January 13th, the Citizen headline for skiing activities read, "Bethel Chamber to Raise Money for Children's Fees on Ski Tow". Public donations for this project can be left at the Citizen office.

Then in the January 27 1949 Citizen it was noted that no snow for skiing until last weekend (January 21 and 22). Donations for children's skiing had lagged – more donations were sought. The Bethel Ski an Outing Club will assign special hours for use of the town by only children.

This was the last news item in the Citizen about the ski tow for the remainder of the winter.



View of the Bethel ski tow and ski slope on Vernon Street taken in December 1948 or early January 1949.

Stanley and Amy Davis photographed the Vernon Street Ski Tow during its construction and the opening season of 1948 and 1949.

[Click here for bookmark to the Davis photos](#)

“Mount” Vernon Street Lives On

February 5, 1950 turned out to be the ski slope’s most successful day since opening. The ski tow sold 116 tickets.

As well as the usual local skiers there were several from Rumford, Gorham, Portland, Lovell, Portland and Augusta. Snow conditions were generally good although ice spots were developing due to hard use.

Frank Nary had reported some misunderstandings came up on Saturday morning’s procedures. Children under 12 had free use of the slope on Saturday until noon.

Music was added to the ski scene. During the last two Sundays, recordings were played through an amplifier provided and set up by Mush McMillan. The Ski Club thanked Mush for the additional feature.

A week later, more out of town skiers came to the slope when the annual winter carnival of the Mt Mica District Boy scouts was held at Bethel. The Bethel Ski and Outing Club donated use of the ski tow. Seventy boys ate lunch at the Congregational Church dining room. The scouts came from Norway, West Paris, and South Paris.

Improvements Made at Ski Tow – Annual Membership Campaign on Next Week

December 7, 1950 in the Citizen - Skiers will find the tow even more interesting this year – new rope and the power unit at the top of the hill has been set back to give more room on leaving the tow. A new trail has been cut and bulldozing has improved several runs. There will be the usual warming hut, refreshments and music.

1951 News

November – Bethel Ski Tow ready for snow. The ski tow has been reconditioned and will be run on the first weekend when there is 8 inches of snow. Any person interested in operating the concession should contact Kimball Ames.

December – News was that the Ski Club elected new officers and organized a membership drive contest. The club meeting was held at Richard Young’s home. New officers

were: President, Stanley Davis; Vice President, Richard Young; Secretary, Wilbur Myers; and Treasurer, George Lothrop.

The membership drive would be as follows: (Remember, memberships and ticket sales were the only ways money was raised to pay to operate the tow.) There would be free membership to anyone selling 10 memberships. Free use of the tow would go to anyone selling 25 memberships. A concession operator was still needed.

An electric emergency brake had been donated and will be in operation when the tow runs. The hut is ready to go for this year.

Carl Jordan attended the meeting and told the group of his experiences skiing in the ski patrol.

1952 News

Big headlines: “**Skiers Enjoy Local Slope**” January 10 news reported that Pat Murphy and family had taken on the job of operating the warming hut’s concession table. And the Sunday before a roving reporter from the Kennebec Journal had visited the slope. On Saturday, January 12, there will be junior ski races for those under 12 at the ski tow. Races are scheduled for 1:30 PM. A free bus will pick up skiers at the Bethel Spa and to take them to the slope.

In January the ski and outing club announced that prizes would be given to the most improved skiers in the under 12 class. Prizes would be free use of the tow on any operating day next winter.

1953 – 1955 News

The Bethel Ski and Outing Club arranged for classes in skiing to be coached by Gould Academy teachers Paul Kailey and Vance Richardson. Fundamentals of cross country and jumping techniques would be taught for boys only at the Gould Athletic Field mornings on Monday and Wednesday of each week. At 1:30 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays, classes for boys and girls would be held at the Bethel Ski Tow. Skiers would be grouped according to abilities. The tow would be open for general skiing as well.

Donations were essential to keep the tow running. In one news item, it was reported that Elizabeth Waldron was the winner in the sale of ski club donation tickets. She would have free use of the tow for the season. Tom Chadbourne and Tim Carter had won free use of the tow one day a week. In all \$65.00 had been donated.

1956 News

In the spring of 1956 the Bethel Ski Tow featured in the Gould Academy Winter Carnival Program. Starting on Friday, there would be snow shoeing and tobogganing races at

Alumni Field on the Gould campus. At 2:15 PM, there would be slalom and downhill races at the Bethel Ski Tow following which at 3:00 PM grade school students of Crescent Park School who wished to participate in these events were welcomed to come to the Town Ski Hill.

Preparing to open for the 1956 winter season seemed to involve Gould Academy participation more than in previous years. On December 6, the Citizen reported that the Bethel Ski and Outing Club directors and all those interested in the operation of the tow should meet at 5 PM Sunday at the Gould Academy administration building. Those attending were to discuss plans for the tow that coming winter. The following week the Citizen reported that the tow would open on Saturday weather permitting. Someone to take care of the refreshments was needed. Membership tickets and donations were being solicited and on December 22nd, there would be entertainment at the William Bingham Gymnasium. Support by young peoples' groups and those interested in skiing was urgently needed. On December 20th, the Citizen reported that the tow had opened last Saturday but it was discovered that vandals had stolen some of the rope. Ski announcements would be posted at the Bethel Spa on Main Street.

1958

In the January 6, Citizen, the headline read "OPENING VILLAGE SKI TOW". The village ski tow will be open Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Plans are being made to run the tow one night a week.

In the same issue, the Citizen reported on the election of officers for the Chamber of Commerce as follows: Dr. John Trinward and Murray Thurston were re-elected to the positions of president and vice president respectively. Charles Heywood was elected secretary and treasurer replacing Clifford Hillier. It was voted to increase dues to \$2.00 a year.

Gould Academy's Winter Carnival was scheduled for February 26 to March 1, 1958. Schedule of events that year included interclass slalom and downhill ski competition at the Town Ski Hill.

Wildcat Mountain Ski Area opens

On January 25, 1958 Wildcat Mountain Ski Area was officially opened in Pinkham Notch, NH. Governor and Mrs. Lane Dwinell attended the opening ceremonies. Wildcat Mountain featured a gondola – work on which had only been started the previous fall. It had been completed four months ahead of schedule. The Citizen's article about this event said, "The completion of this project only 30 miles from Bethel brings to western Maine and the White Mountains resort region one of the most modern winter sports areas in America." *This is the first gondola lift in this country.* It is said to be the first ski area in the East to be built on National Forest land.

Bethel Area Development Corporation Organized

On February 13, 1958 the Citizen's front page main headline announced the creation of the Bethel Area Development Corporation under the sponsorship of the local chamber of commerce. Officers of this new agency were local insurance executive Howard Cole, president, and State Representative, Addison Saunders of the Hanover Dowell Co., vice president. Edmund Vachon was elected treasurer and Guy Butler was elected secretary. Vachon was President of the Bethel Savings Bank and Associate Headmaster at Gould Academy; Butler was Manager-Owner of the Bethel Inn and former Executive Manager of the Maine Publicity Bureau. Elected to the Board of Directors were: Kimball Ames, Philip Chadbourne, Charles Chapin, Richard Davis, Stanley Davis, Dana Douglass, Jr., Henry Hastings, Charles Heywood, Murray Thurston, Dr. John Trinward, and Eugene Van Den Kerkoven.

The article went on to say, "Besides actively seeking new industries for the Area, the Corporation will make an intensive study of ways and means of developing more business for Bethel and its surrounding towns during the winter months to take up the slack left in its (winter) economy by a very substantial vacation-travel business during the summer."

Clearing for Sunday River Ski Area progresses

The September 11, 1958 Citizen carried an announcement that Herman Bennett and Clarence Rolfe had been hired to clear the planned ski trails and lift lines on the face of Barker Mountain in nearby Newry (one article called the location "on the outskirts of Bethel"). In the November 11 Citizen, news of progress reported that the whine of chain saws and roar of powerful caterpillar tractors were vivid indications that activity was well underway on the face lifting along the slope of rugged Barker Mountain, site of Sunday River Skiway, Maine's newest major ski development.

Bethel's Outstanding Skiers Participate in the 1959 Junior National Ski Championships.

In 1959 two familiar faces at the Bethel Ski Tow made names for themselves in high school ski competition – Melvin Jodrey and Donald Angevine.

March 12, 1959, news said that Melvin "Jig" Jodrey will leave Sunday morning enroute to Yakima, Wash., to attend the Junior National Ski Championships. He has been a member for two years of the Edward Little ski team which has held the State Championship the last two years and the New England Championship for three years. Last year he was one of four from Edward Little to go to Winter Park, Colo., to attend the Junior Nationals and his team was considered the best five man team in the United States.

Two weeks later the Citizen headline read "Bethel Skiers Rate High in Junior Championships". Congratulations to Melvin Jodrey and Donald Angevine of the U.S.E.A.S.A. team

on their fine showing at the National Junior championships held at White Pass, Washington, March 19-21. (In 1959 there was a spirit of high hopes that the Eastern Squad would do well in competition against the Western Squads. And they did.) Both Jodrey and Angevine won the praise of their coaches and opposing coaches for their extremely fine showing. Their trip to Washington as part of an Eastern squad numbering 27 boys and six girls was a stimulating experience. The results of the whole team were impressive and show that Eastern skiers are among the best in the country.

Recollections of Bethel ski tow skiers 50 years later.

Mike Thurston, Bethel

In the late forties about ten of us thought it would be nice to have a rope tow in town I volunteered to oversee it. Not knowing where to start, I went over to Cannon Mt. in Franconia, NH and made a few sketches. None of us had any money to spare so we signed a note for \$1000 with each ones liability limited to \$150. We picked out a hill on Vernon St. and made arrangements with the owner to use it if we would repair the fence in the spring. It was all cleared with volunteer labor and Addison Saunders used his bulldozer to do a little rough grading. We also built a small warming hut. The daily and nightly fee was 50 cents so it was a break even operation but in fact I think Howard Cole, the last volunteer president, had to pay a dollar or so to close the books.

Donald Cross, Greenwood

Writing about the beginning of Ski Mt Abram: Yes, we were all skiers. We lived beside the ski slope on Vernon Street. We had used that hill before 1943, when we all went into World War II, made jumps there, etc., so we all liked to ski.

Donald Angevine, Bethel

Don Angevine recalls skiing at the Bethel Ski Tow on Vernon Street from the time it opened until Sunday River opened for skiing in the winter of 1959-1960. The warming shack, tickets and snacks building was located where he has drawn it in the photo above. He also recalls that when he first went there to ski, just after entering primary school (1948) Mike Thurston was basically the store-keeper for the tow—selling tickets, running the operation, etc.

I realize now that I did not mention that the "drive" end of the rope tow was at the top terminal end in a small shack. I'm thinking that the original was gasoline motor driven -- but I am not sure -- but may have been replaced later by an electric motor, perhaps supplied by Phil Chadbourne, as surplus from the mill.

Also, though not a skier himself then, Phil Chadbourne was quite interested and involved I think, as Mary (his wife) was a skier. He used to take Bobby and myself with Mary to Bridgton sometimes too, and Mary took the two of us to Cannon Mountain in Franconia at least once. Bob Chadbourne might be a good resource too.

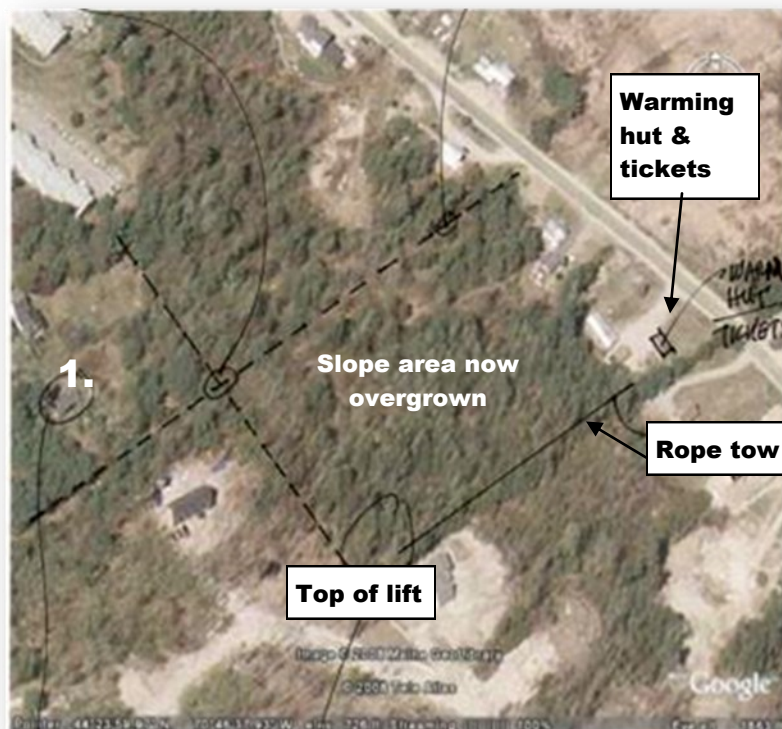
Don said that Vance Richardson at Gould looked after recreational skiing by the Gould students and he was often at the Bethel Ski Tow with students. Don recalls that he skied in some of the intramural competitions while he was a Gould student. However, Gould ski team members did not practice at the Bethel Ski Tow—alpine alpine ski training was done at Swan’s Corner near the ski jump.

Roger Adams, West Simsbury, CT

Our son, Bo, is the President of the New England Ski Museum in Franconia, N.H. One of the staff members is interested in "lost or no longer in existence ski areas" in New England and is making a presentation on what he has come up with at their next meeting on June 7th. That's "how come" the interest in the history of the Bethel-Vernon Street slope.

When Ad (Sonny) Saunders and I were in the 7th and 8th grade, we thought we were pretty hot stuff being on the ski patrol with little red flags taped on our ski poles!

Diagram right by Don Angevine on Google Earth image



Dwight Lord, Hopkins, MN

Traveling on skis from my house on Mason Street, through Crescent Park property, to a point where I went down through the woods to end up at the top of the Vernon Street Ski Tow.

Part of my equipment included an attachment to a ski pole which grasped the rope.

Gee, didn't they serve terrific hot meals in the warming shack? (Just kidding)

I entered Gould Academy in 1958, and from that point on, for the next 4 years, my memories consist of being a GA ski team manager/assistant manager (with Paul Kailey?), and moving on to Sunday River Skiway.

Connie Thurston, Bethel

Two names that quickly come to mind are Ad Saunders and Dick Young. Mike learned rope splicing from Jim Spinney (Mary Jane Gaudreau's father). Apparently the rope needed splicing often and Jim was the emergency splicing expert. I remember a girl who was skiing there got caught in the rope as she neared the top of the slope. She was flapping her arms and screaming at the top of her lungs – but was thankfully rescued before getting to the pulley wheel.

Norm Ferguson, Hanover

I remember skiing on the Vernon Street lift in 50 or 51. The Gould coach was Mr. Ireland or Vance Richardson. We were out there to practice skiing and to improve our skill. The ones that I remember that were there are Addison (Sonny) Saunders, Ray Chase, Roger Adams and Jerry Emery. The one thing that stands out in my mind is the skiing of Mel Jodrey, Arlan's brother. He was probably 12 at the time. He was a fantastic skier and could keep up with the older boys.

Nancy Carver Stickney, N. Salem, NH

It was I believe an activity started by the local Bethel Chamber of Commerce. Mrs. (Ginny) Cole would remember as her husband was very active. These gentlemen actively worked and ran the tow every Saturday and Sunday. My

step-dad Kimball Ames sold the tickets. I remember paying 50 cents. I don't remember if it ran all day or just half a day. I would have to guess that it was in 1946 or 47 that they were running it.

That Christmas my sister Catherine and I received Ski outfits and assumed that we would be wearing them out to do our sledding on the Bethel inn Golf Course. Stan Davis, who was married to Amy, surprised me later that day with a beautiful pair of army issue skis that he refinished with bindings, along with a new set of poles and I was all ready to go.

I don't recall having lessons or any instruction specifically at the time. But I think Wilbur Myers and others who did ski helped us out. One of our first activities was to side step up the slope to help pack the hill. Mary Anne Myers and I used to tag along behind the high school boys, my brother Lee, Donald Lord and others trying to copy what they were doing.

If we were ready we could ride out to Vernon St. with Dad Ames. He had the tickets and took his responsibility seriously hence he always left on time.

If we missed our ride, we would leave our Broad St home wearing our ski boots and carrying our skies and poles on our shoulders, up to the top of Paradise St. We then cut diagonally across the big field past Bobby Blake's house going into the woods behind the Coburn farm and bushwhacking along a trail through those woods (which seemed as long as the big field) to the top of the town tow.

Then we'd race down the hill to see who would get their tow ticket first. After that it was a race to see how many runs you could get in before the tow operator let you know when the last ride of the day would be. At that point we'd grab a ride up to the top and re-trace our steps through the woods (Very dark) back across the huge field to Paradise St where the skis came off. There the street lights were on and we carried the skis in your arms to home on Broad St.

Only once did I not heed the last ride call and found myself having to climb back up to the top then through the very dark and scary woods and on to home all by myself.

The Vernon Street Town Tow provided me with enough skiing skills to continue on enjoying the sport through college and later with my own family as

they were growing up skiing.

Jan Lord Mott, Cary, NC

As my brother, Dwight Lord, stated, the trail from our Mason Street house cut through the many pines and rocks to the top of the ski hill on Vernon Street. It wasn't a straight shot, so many small turns having to be maneuvered. When my boyfriend, Don (now my husband) visited one Christmas from college I led him through the woods and we laugh over the problems a boy from Long Island with no skiing experience had navigating the trail. First off he was in borrowed (Lee Carver) boots and skis. At one point we picked up a little speed - enough to have to snow plow to slow down a little. But Don didn't have the mastery of this skill and he ended up hugging a tree with each ski straddling the tree!

When we reached the top of the hill the first order of business was to side-step most of the surface until it was skiable. Oh, what energy we had then!! Then we would spend most of the day there. Although it wasn't the biggest or best ski slope, it was enough for me to become a pretty good average skier and store some nice memories in my mind.

Like most kids I wasn't aware who was responsible for building this recreational spot, but we owe a lot to those involved who did it out of a love for the sport.

Arlan Jodrey, Bethel

Florence Machia owned the hill side property where the ski facilities and rope tow were built. Clearing the Machia land of trees did not set too well with the Cross family that owned the adjoining property.

When the project got underway, Winifred (Pete) Baker, manager of Bennett's Garage and Chevrolet dealership on Main Street, seemed to be the most actively involved in cutting trees and brush plus burning cuttings to clear the slope. Alphonse (Al) Baker, his brother who lived on Paradise Street, worked with Pete in clearing the hill. Neither Baker was a skier. Al's son Ronny also worked with his father at the ski slope.

Arlan's father, Walter Jodrey, was one of the other early volunteers who spent a lot of time working with the crew who set the ski area up for business. Walter and Pete Baker both had jeeps that were used to drive up the

rough slope where they were clearing brush. Walter had a war surplus jeep and Pete had a new Willis Jeep.

The drive mechanism and pulleys to operate the tow rope were homemade affairs. The large main pulleys were Model A truck wheels. The upper pulley tower was located about where Paradise Ridge Street is located on the side of Paradise Hill a little more than half-way to the top from Vernon Street.

Skiing on the Vernon Street slope involved individual tramping sideways with skis to pack the trails – actually the entire skiable surface. (No such machine as a groomer.) There was not a steep pitch to the ski area. There is only about a 100 foot drop in elevation from the top of the slope to Vernon Street. This situation shows up best in a photograph of the ski area. There was a fairly deep ravine between the properties where a skier could get more speed.

Rope slicing was called for quite often. Roderick “Mush” McMillan was the master rope splicer that Arlan recalls. Mush had learned rope skills in the Army and had trained other soldiers in handling and repairing rope. (1)

After the “ski lodge”, which meant the warming hut where snacks and tickets were sold, was built and the ski facilities were in operation, Edwin (Eddy) Brown and Durwood Mason, who lived at the Steam Mill, were the mainstay workers in the lodge selling lunches and taking tickets.

Other “local boys” who skied there a lot were Bobby Blake, Russell Nutting and Carleton Brown.

Irving Lee Carver, White Bear Lake, MN

I remember skiing there in '48/'48, and '48/'49. Don Lord and I somehow got on the ski patrol and so could ski free. It was the first tow I can remember using. Gould (usually Wilbur Myers) used to run a bus over to the tow at Bridgeton on some Saturdays, but I can't remember what years those were. Howie Chivers was ski coach when we started at Gould ('45/'46). He went to Dartmouth and was replaced by Vance Richardson, I believe. We used to ski the hill at Sunday River if we could get a ride. Miss Stallwood would load up her (?) station wagon (a woodie like Shasta - maybe it was Shasta??!) and take 5 or 6 of us out there. It was all walk up and ski down, but great for getting your legs in shape! That is really about all I can remember about it, but we really enjoyed being able to ski with a tow!!

Epilogue

In hindsight, the Bethel Ski and Outing Club's eagerness and ambition to find, develop and operate a Bethel town ski area and tow clearly served as dress rehearsal for the future, larger ski enterprise at Sunday River in 1958. In the case of developing a plan for Sunday River in 1958, the need for outside financing resulted in first establishing a corporation that was eligible to receive government funds - the Bethel Area Development Corporation. Many of the same people who were involved with the Vernon Street Bethel Ski Area repeated the ski area generation process at Sunday River. With only volunteer labor and donations of equipment as well as a general lack of money to invest in Sunday River, one can readily see how Sunday River's initial development was a repeat of the same methods by the same people that had come together to open the Bethel Town Ski Area in 1948. Sunday River was Vernon Street, Version 2.0.

In 2005 when Mike Thurston wrote his memoir of Sunday River's Skiway's beginnings, he started by describing the incentives, people and steps involved in creating the Vernon Street Ski Tow.

Ski area photos below and on following pages were donated by Amy (Mrs. Stanley Davis from her family album.





