# Highlands of Haliburton

Scenic Winter Wonderland







On Scenic Highway 35



130 MILES FROM TORONTO
45 MILES SOUTH OF HUNTSVILLE

Lodge, Motel and Cottage Accommodation for over 200 in immediate vicinity

# <u>Acknowledgments</u>

Along with the acknowledgments throughout the booklet a very special thanks is due to a good neighbour and friend, Roy Carter.

Roy has kept my computer operating when I did things to it that caused it to roll over and play dead, doctored up my amateur attempts at picture production and has been a major help in producing this booklet.

Of course it goes without saying that none of this could have been documented without the unwavering support and encouragement from my best friend, my wife Barbara.

# Carnarvon Ski Club

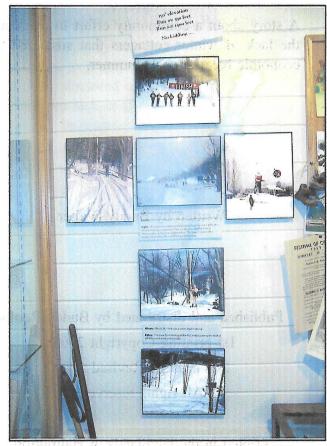
A story about a community effort to overcome the lack of winter cottagers that sustained the economic balance each summer.

Written by Buddy Walter

Published and distributed by Buddy Books
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2nd printing Revised 2009
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Printed in the Highlands of Haliburton

Camaryon, Ski Olab



Stanhope Museum Wall Display 2008

Our thanks and gratitude go to Carol Moffatt and staff for their wonderful display in the Stanhope Museum on North Shore Road.

They have preserved, with many pictures, a historical record of the development and operation of the Carnarvon Ski Club for the enlightenment of generations to come.

Many of the photos and memorabilia of the founding members were lost in the fire, and Carol has managed to gather up photos from contributing cottagers who were former members of the Ski Club.

Fred Gregory,
Founder and President,
Carnaryon Ski Club.

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Photo from the Gregory Family Archives



# Carnarvon Ski Club 1st Commercial Ski Hill in Haliburton

The second winter after leaving the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force, Fred Gregory was selling sporting goods at Premier Cycle & Sports in Calgary. He soon became manager of the ski dept. and started organizing ski tours for the Calgary Ski Club and the Youth Hostel group. A Calgary policeman on one of the tours helped Fred with a minor injury of one of the tour group, and then they planned and organized the Calgary Ski Patrol. This group of volunteers covered Turner Valley, Banff's Mount Temple and Sunshine Village, and Calgary's Paskapoo Ski Hill, (now the Olympic Village). The ski instructors covered Mount Norquay at Banff.



Photo from the Gregory Family Archives



Photo From the Gregory Family Archives



Photo from the Gregory Family Archives

The following year Fred's parents, Hazel & Jack Gregory, spent the winter with Fred in Calgary. They also started going to the ski hills every weekend and were present at the opening day at Paskapoo Ski Hill, which evolved into the Olympic Village. Fred was in charge of the Pro Shop and with his parents help outfitted customers with rental equipment. The rental agreement allowed the rental cost to be applied to the purchase price of the new rentals and every outfit was bought at the end of the first day. "Knobby" Johnson, the ski repairman from Premier Cycle & Sports, and Fred had to work all night to make up a new selection of rental ski equipment for the next day.

By the end of that winter his parents were as convinced as Fred that the answer to injecting new life into the winter economy in Haliburton was the expansion of winter sports, especially the creation of a skiing program. One previous attempt in the town of Haliburton failed because the Skyline Hill was too steep and rocky to hold snow and too dangerous to learn how to ski safely. Another attempt was doomed for failure before it got going by the choice of a south facing hill that would not hold snow with the heavy traffic of all day skiing.

## Ski School Area 1961 - 62



Courtesy of the Gregory Family Archives

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The Stanhope Museum

Medeba Bible Camp in West Guilford did have a small ski hill in operation in connection with a summer camp, but it was restricted to their members.

Fred had three locations in mind for the first ski hill, and did some snow depth testing one winter, then took the plunge, buying two sections of field and hill property from Walter & Ross Harrison, overlooking the Carnarvon valley and highway #35 & 118 intersection. Fred leased the land to the Ski Club for one dollar a year and had planned to donate the operating recreation program to the Township once it was all paid for and fully functional.

Once the location was determined a mapping of the hill and a tree shadow chart was produced to establish the extent of clearing for the different runs. Jack Warrington, a cottager on Big Boshkung, loaned Fred a transit, and with the help of his brother in law, Ron Fennell, a detailed elevation map of the hill was completed and submitted to the Ontario Department of Labour, Elevators & Lifts Department for the tow permit. Ron had rebuilt a Fargo truck and created the small tow for the ski school hill. It was rated the best tow in Ontario for beginner skiers by the government tow inspectors. Lloyd Johnson and Fred went to Plymouth Cordage in Welland, Ontario, and learned how to do a "ten-foot" splice (actually its 20 feet). On a one

## CARNARVON SKI CLUB

C.A.S.A

Snack Ba

Pro Shop

Ski Equipment Sales & Rentals
Special Rates and Discounts for Members

Authorized dealer for Marber Bindings Greswig, Fischer, Kastinger Ski Equipment

REPAIRS (Qualified ski mechanic)

SKI SCHOOL

Class lessons available 10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday — \$2.00 per person

Private lessons available on request Special rates for members

Hill Manager: Fred W. Gregory R.R. 2. Minden Phone Maple Lake 3R21

Ski Patrol Director: Andy Murdeson

Courtesy of Gregory family archives

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inch rope the splice area has to be no larger than the rope itself and must go through a oneinch guide (no swelled area). The local Hydro splicing crew were much impressed by this and joined the work party the day the rope was spliced and installed on the second towline.

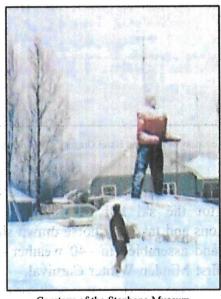


Photo courtesy of Jack and Hazel Gregory's photo archives collection

Carnarvon Garage – site where the first building for the ski hill was built in prefabbed sections and taken by horse drawn sleigh to the hill and assembled in –40 weather in time for the first Minden Winter Carnival.

Minden Winter Carnival Promotion at Highway 35.

Francis Thomas Contracting office in background



Courtesy of the Stanhope Museum and the Gregory Family Archives

The first building on the ski hill was prefabbed in the pit room of Carnarvon Garage, by Fred, his father Jack Gregory, brother in law Ron Fennell and his Uncle, Tom Vass, a retired carpenter foreman from the City of Toronto Maintenance Department.

It was then loaded on a horse drawn sleigh (Bill Cowan's) and hauled over to the base of the hill. The snow was over 6 feet deep on the flat field and Ron started digging from the sleigh while Fred took a shovel and climbed off the top of the load along a large branch of one of the old white pine trees to a point about 10 feet out on the field and jumped down into the snow. They dug towards each other and after meeting started clearing an area to erect the 10' x 20' clubhouse. Once they had enough space cleared a stove was set on the ground with a short piece of chimney and a fire started. It was over 40 below zero (-40) and their hands were warmed up many times before the building was finished. This same wood stove was the cause of the fire that later destroyed the Ski Chalet.

Fred chuckled as he recalled while nailing rolled roofing on he suddenly was waving an empty mitt covered hand. His hands were so cold that his hammer had flown out of his hand into the snow and they had to stop work long enough to dig it out. He and Ron had a good laugh and another slug of reinforced coffee then went back to work.

Thursday, November 8, 1962

The Haliburton County

# Carnarvon Ski Club Getting Set To Open New Ski Tow

On Friday of last week we had the opportunity of talking with Fred Gregory of the Carnarvon Ski Club.

Mr. Gregory told us they are looking forward to another great season on the ski trails. Since last winter the club have made some extensive alterations on the tow and trails. In this time a large amount of money has been spent in an effort to make Carnaryon one of the better ski sights in Ontario.

For the past several weeks bulldozers, loaders and trucks have been busily engaged grading off the new hill which will be in operation for the first time this season. Work on the new hill is just about completed and the grading has been done on the tow line

Mr. Gregory reports that there will be a day's work left after the frost gets into the ground installing the tow, pulleys and rope.

We understand that the club can now boast of having 1,400 and 1,800 foot trails for the skiers this winter.

Mr. Gregory also told us that the intermediate slope is just about finished and the beginners hill is ready and grading has been completed.

Our congratulations to Fred Gregory and the Carnarvon Ski Club who seem to have the foresight to look ahead in what they hope will be success in the future. The club hasn't had smooth sailing and they realize it is a long term investment that might take years before the profits start to show.

Everywhere you go in the Highlands of Haliburton you hear people crying the blues because the tourist season is too short. and we need something to do in the winter. The Carnarvon Ski Club are trying to do something about it. they deserve the backing of everyone in the highlands.

Some people are still pessimistic about this venture and shun the possibility of it being a success. The Carnarvon club are optimistic and they report that some of the lodges out Carnarvon way have signified their intention of staying open all winter to take care of the skiing public.

The club is selling season tickets and although they are going good, many more are invited to belong. They tell us that reservations for skiing this winter are coming in from as far away as Buffalo.

We might add here that this is the only ski tow in Haliburton county now in operation. You can see what winter sports can do for our county by making a trip to Carnarvon sometime this winter.

the profits start to show.

Courtesy of Gregory Family Archives

12' tall snowman skier at Hwy.35 and West Road, in Carnarvon, to advertise the location of Winter Carnival ski events

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Picture courtesy of Judy Carpenter - Carnarvon
Josie Miscio, local resident dwarfed by the
Carnarvon Abominable Snowman.

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and Haliburton County Echo - Thursday Nov. 8, 1962.

#### MINDEN WINTER CARNIVAL SKI EVENTS

#### SATURDAY, FEBRUARY, 2nd, 1963

10:00 a.m. -Senior Cross County - Men & Women 10:30 a.m. -Junior Cross County - Men & Women

10:00 a.m. - Children's Novelty Races - Boys & Girls

(1) 3 legged (2) Flat Race (walking) -Junior Novelty Races

7 and under 8-10, 11-13 Boys & Girls

(1) 3 legged 17 and under

Flat Race (walking or skating) Obstacle

(4) Uphill

1:00 p.m. -Senior Downhill Junior Downhill Men & Women Men & Women

After Dark-"Torch-Light" Parade

#### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3rd, 1963

10:00 a.m. -Senior Novelty

Men & Women

(1) Obstacle

18 and over

(2) Uphill

(3) Flat Race (walking, skating or running)

11:00 a.m. -Junior Slalom

Men & Women

Senior Slalom

Men & Women

Co-Sponsored by Scenic 35 Highway Association and Carnaryon Ski Club.

> Courtesy of Gregory Family Archives and Haliburton County Echo

The hill was ready for the first Minden Winter Carnival and included Downhill, Slalom, Cross-Country and a variety of novelty races including a three-legged race that was hilarious to say the least. Although the hill was ready, the local lodges were not. Most of them only had partial winterization, enough for the owner's own use. Many closed for the winter and went south.

The first year the club was operating several cottagers slept in sleeping bags on the floor of Carnarvon Gift Centre, (the present Mill Pond Restaurant). They had their cottages winterized by the second year.

Members were encouraged to help out during the summer on the work parties clearing the runs of new growth and packing earth over exposed rock shelves to save ski edges.

The highlight of the Winter Carnival Events was a Torch light parade, after dark, performed by the Ski Patrol and Club Members holding red highway accident flares out at arms length from them to avoid sparks on their clothes and skiing in a serpentine path down to the field from the top of the big rope tow. Highway 35 was blocked with cars and people watching this event.

#### RED CROSS SKI RACES

February 16th & 17th, 1963

Children's Novelty Races - Boys & Girls 7 & under

(1) 3 legged

8-10, 11-13

(2) Flat Race (walking

Junior Novelty Races - Boys & Girls 17 & under

(1) 3 legged

(2) Flat Race (walking or skating)

(3) Obstacle

(4) Uhill

Senior Downhill - Men and Women

Junior Downhill - Men and Women

Senior Novelty - Men & Women 18 and over

(1) Obstacle

(2) Uphill

(3) Flat Race (walking, skating or running)

Junior Slalom - Men and Women

Senior Slalom - Men and Women

"Torch-Light Parade"

Courtesy of the Gregory Family Archives
and the Haliburton County Echo

Fred Gregory with two rescue toboggans he donated to the Ski Patrol.



Courtesy of the Gregory Family Archives

The Ski Patrol consisted of Andy Murdison and son "Nipper", Helen & Lloyd Johnson, Sharon Parish, Ian Douglas and Fred Gregory.

The tow operators were Ron Fennell, Edson & Michael Johnson.

The First Minden Red Cross Ski Championships were held during the 2nd Minden Winter Carnival, with several "Class C" racers from the Collingwood ski hills taking part.

# Carnarvon Ski Club

Carnarvon ski club was pleased to again have Don Gillies, well known choreographer and dancer with the Wayne and Shuster show and a number of officials and competitors from one of Canada's top olympic gymnastic clubs. including Dave Sandy, well known olympic gymnastic coach and his wife.

Everyone enjoyed excellent snow conditions and are looking forward to skiing with Don again this week end when the club will play host to personnel from CFTO-TV, Toronto.

Courtesy of the Gregory Family Archives and the Haliburton County Echo

Most of the first family members had cottages in the area, Pawson, Cherry, Warrington & Murdison to name a few. Some of the locals were Don Finn, Carolyn Coburn, Sharon & Bill Parrish, LeCraw family (General Store, Norland), Doris & Ian Douglas, Paul, Cathy, Jim & John MacBrien, Norma & Bill Douglas and Bob Chambers, to name just a few of the first skiing members.

During its short life the Club acquired over 300 members.

The Ski School instructor, Fred Gregory, taught over 300 skiers. Two of his students that learned to ski here and that stand out in Fred's memory were a local doctor's wife, and an internationally renowned dancer on a CBC weekly program. Both had private lessons and became good skiers. Free Saturday morning classes for local kids often included free rental outfits as well, including skis, boots, poles, and hot chocolate & cookies.

One of the first snowmobiles in Haliburton showed up at the hill one day and after a short ride on it Fred realized a new era was being ushered in. With a great surge in ice fishing extending the use of cottages, the need for winterization for the formerly summer only buildings kept the local builders busy. With the snowmobiles and their summer cousins the 4 wheeler ATV's, this country was really opened to year round tourism and justified the continuing increase in water front land values.

# Winners of the Red Cross Open Ski Meet -February 16-17, 1963



Courtesy of the Stanhope Museum and the Gregory Family Archives

All efforts to purchase more land to extend the number of runs and scope of the program was objected to by locals who thought it was a shame to have all the nice coloured leaves removed from the hill by cutting down the trees.

The strongest supporters, volunteers & investors were;

Hazel & Jack Gregory

(Carnarvon Garage & Greg's cabins);

Fred Gregory (Carnarvon Gift Centre & Canoe Rental);

Joan and Ron Fennell (Carnaryon Marine);

Helen & Lloyd Johnson (Happyland Campsites) and their kids, Susan Gray (Johnson)-snack bar,

Michael & Edson Johnson-tow operators,

Albert Fox tow operator and artist who created the Club Loga & Letterhead;

Jack Mattson (Scarborough Amateur Athletic Association & former Scarborough Police Youth Club gymnast)

Mae Halse & her father;

Bud and Muriel Medley

(Carnarvon Bowling Alley);

Eileen & Earl Crawford (Hart Lodge);

Audrey & Gerry Heywood (Valley-Hi Resort);

Linda & Lyle McKnight

(McKnight's Haulage and Excavators, Ltd);

Lyle handled the drilling and blasting for the rope tows;

Francis Thomas built the road (past the driveway to the McKay farm) to the top of the Ski School hill, about 500 feet;



Courtesy of the Gregory Family Archives

Bob MacBrien built and donated a wooden slat roller with metal pipe handle that was either pulled behind a skier or pushed in front when skiing downhill, to help pack the loose snow after each snowfall. The packing had been done previously by side stepping up the hill on skis and sliding back down to start over, overlapping the first packing.

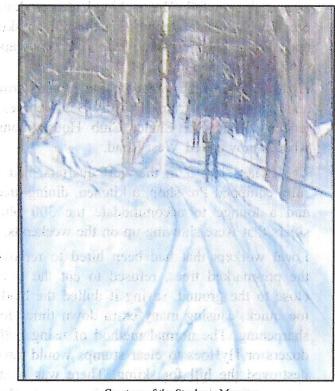
Hydro lines, which ended at the Misco farm, and phone lines from highway 35, were extended to the Ski Chalet Club House along what is now called West Road.

The chalet slept 5 in the staff quarters, had a fully equipped Pro shop, a kitchen, dining area and a lounge to accommodate the 300 plus skiers that were showing up on the weekends.

Local workers that had been hired to remove the pre-marked trees, refused to cut the trees close to the ground, saying it dulled the blade too quick, causing many extra down times for sharpening. The normal method of using bulldozers or HyHoes to clear stumps would have destroyed the hill for skiing. There was scant inches of earth over a network of roots that covered bedrock shelves that would not have held the snow on a busy ski hill.

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Courtesy of the Stanhope Museum
and the
Gregory Family Archives

Fred was determined to show them that it could be done so he went to Toronto and bought a Husquavarna chain saw, the first automatic self oiling model. All previous saws required pumping the oil lever while you were cutting to prevent the blade overheating. A trip to the west-end War Surplus outlet and a Bren Gun Carrier was added to facilitate one-man clearing of the ski runs, this was later purchased by the Martin brothers and is still among their collection of war vehicles at their family farm on Buckslide Road.

Maurice Windsor (Carnarvon Lumber) donated the use of a truck and driver, allowing Max McKay, one of his employees, to go to Toronto and bring back the Carrier on a flat bed lumber truck. Jack Gregory, owner of Carnarvon Garage, contributed the services of his two mechanics, Vernal "Benny" Harrison, and Eric Cross, who serviced the Carrier and delivered it to the Ski Hill ready for use. (Eric had driven a similar vehicle during WW2)

After cutting the 6 inch to 2 foot stumps, left by the workers who had been fired for refusing to do the work as instructed, the tree clearing went smoothly. The Carrier was driven to a downhill position, from the tree to be cut, and parked. The tree was cut with no more than a 1" stump and dropped across the Carrier. When the tree

### Spring Skiing Fun at Carnarvon



Courtesy of the Stanhope Museum and the Gregory Family Archives

#### SKI CARNARVON SPRING SKHING AT ITS BEST 20"-30" BASE

NEW CLUB HOUSE, SNACK BAR, PRO SHOP, IDEAL FAMILY SKI HILL. 350' BEGINNERS' SLOPE WITH SEPARATE TOW

CHALLENGING 1,200' RUN FOR THE BETTER SKIERS, WITH HIGH-SPEED TOW.

UPHILL CAPACITY 1,800 PER HOUR

ON HIGHWAY 35—10 MIN. N. OF MINDEN

Sat. nite —Bowling, Dancing, Twist and Limbo Contest

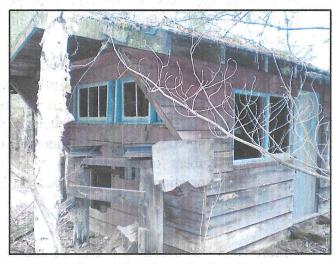
Courtesy of the Gregory Family Archives and the Haliburton County Echo

was chained to the Carrier, it was driven down the hill and the tree unchained and cut, split and piled. The sale of over 105 face cords of firewood helped pay for the equipment. A few shovels of earth mounded over the stump helped create small "moguls" and prevented catching an edge while skiing.

The Bishop brothers in Haliburton asked Fred to look at the hills at Sir Sam's proposed location and let them know if it might be suitable for development.

He thought it would make an excellent year round venue for a summer & winter playground area and told them so. Fred and his friend, Jozo Weider, owner of Blue Mountain Pottery & Ski Hill in Collingwood, had been among the founding members of the Ontario Ski Tow Operators Association, and encouraged ski hill development in any suitable location.

Unfortunately a fire at the end of the third season destroyed the Ski Chalet and the dreams of the Club founder and members. The Ski Club fire was the fifth major commercial fire that year that the Insurance Company was liable for. As a result of the company's losses the insurer cancelled all commercial insurance policies north of Lindsay. The Ski Club suffered a greatly reduced pay out for their losses, receiving nothing for the Pro Shop equipment that had not been specifically named.



Courtesy of the Gregory Family Archives

The Pro Shop machinery and rental equipment was essential to the operation of the hill, and being unable to raise financing to replace them the Club had to fold. A one-room replacement clubhouse without rental and repair facilities could not accommodate the carloads of skiers that showed up, and they were directed on to Hidden Valley in Huntsville, which had just opened.

When Sir Sam's got under way a few years later Fred was a Senior Construction Superintendent and Contracts Administrator for Campeau Corporation and decided his career came before another attempt at community service. He has held on to the property for sentimental reasons and hopes someday to see some quality homes built on the hillside where so many kids learned to have fun.

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Courtesy of the Gregory Family Archives

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Courtesy of the Gregory Family Archives

GREG'S CABINS
Cottage and Dormitory Accommodation

Walking Distance to Ski Tow

R.R. 2, Minden, Ont. Phone Maple Lake 3R21

VALLEY-HI RESORT R.R. 2, Minden, Ontario

Lodge and Annex After Ski Lounge Dancing, Skating, Sleigh Parties

Excellent Meals Served in Dining Room Snack Bar

It's MEDLEY'S at CARNARVON For Tops in Entertainment Bowling (with automatics) Open All Year Danelng with Orchestra during Summer

Dancing with Orchestra during Summe Make Friends and Meet Friends Where Highways 35 and 530 Meet

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Low Cost Automobile Finance See our Real Estate Listings. Farms, Acreage, Cottages, Homes and Businesses Phone Minden 23

OLAN'S MOTEL

On Hoskung Lake R.R. 2, Minden, Ontario Three Miles North of the Ski Tow

Open Year Round (capacity 22)

Restaurant Ice Fishing Huts for Rent

McKNIGHT'S HAULAGE AND EXCAVATORS, LTD.

Excavating, Hauling and Buildozing

Minden Phone 95W1

MATABANICK INN—R.R. 2, Minden
Heated Accommodation — Good Food
Three Miles from Ski Hill Fish Huts for Rent

LFL CHICK INN RESTAURANT—R.R. 2, Minden Full Course Meals and Snacks Three Miles North of Ski Tow

FRANCIS THOMAS—Excavating and Bldg. Contractors Sand and Gravel, Road Material and Trucking R.R. 2, Minden Phone Maple Lake 13-23

LORALEA LODGE—ATRO Resort
Open All Year—Seven Miles North of Ski Hill
On Highway 35 Rooms, Meals, Good Accommodation

# Highlands of Haliburton

Scenic Winter Wonderland







On Scenic Highway 35



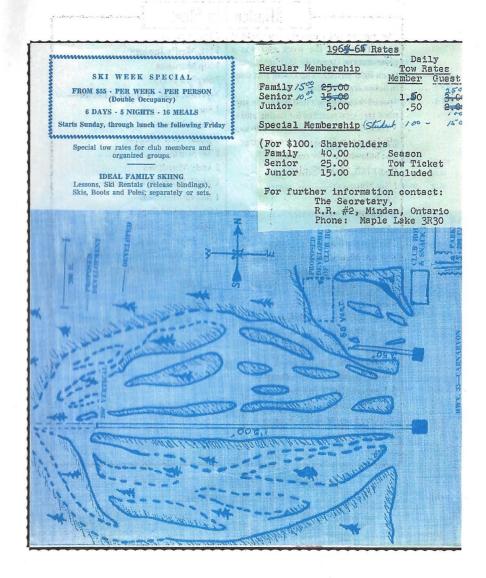
130 MILES FROM TORONTO 45 MILES SOUTH OF HUNTSVILLE

Lodge, Metel and Cottage Accommodation for over 200 in immediate vicinity

# Courtesy of the Gregory Family Archives



"Hot dogging" Jeff Fennell overshooting the high wires. A Grandson and a Great Grandson of two of the Carnarvon Ski Club founders, Jeff is now flying high at Sir Sam's Ski Hill.



# Minden Ski Meet

The Minden red Cross ski meet held at Carnarvon over the week end was a great success. One of the highlights was a torch light parade. The skiing was done in below zero weather. Special thanks go out to Bulova who supplied free stop watches for timing and to Alcock, Laight and Westwood who supplied numbers for skiers free of charge The following are the results: Downhill, Men's Senior-1 Nip Murdison 2 E. W. G. Gillings Downhill, Men's Junior-1 Paul Pawson 2 Robert Herlihey Slalom, Men's and Women's-Tie, Andy Murdison, Fred Gregory Novelty, 3-Legged, Men's and Women's Senior-1 E. W. Killings, Trev. Pawson.

2 Gerry Haywood, Greg Gregory.

3-Legged, Boys and Girls-

1 Paul Pawson, Nip Murdison. 2 Robt. Herlihey, Stephen Berry. 3-Legged, Girl's Junior— 1 Sue Cox, Jennifer Murdison.

Novelty Flat, Men's Senior-

1 Andy Murdison

2 Fred Gregory Flat, Men's Junior-1 Nip Murdison 2 Stephen Berry Novelty, Flat, Women's Junior-1 Sue Cox. 2 Carol Pawson Uphill, Men's Senior 1 Nip Murdison 2 Andy Murdison Uphill, Women's Junior-1 Bonnie Murdison 2 Barbara Giddings Highest Total Points-Men, Fred Gregory. Boys, Nip Murdison.

Girls, Barbara Giddings.

Courtesy of the Gregory Family Archives and the Haliburton County Echo

# Other Articles and Publications of Interest

A Year in the Life of Alfred Walter "Pop" Moore - 1906
The Stone Men of Haliburton
Early Scouting in Haliburton
Carnaryon Ski Club

# Other Publications in Progress

The Gregory-Moore Connection Vol. 1, 2 & 3

Vol. 1 - The Early Years of the Moore Clan

Vol. 2 - A Year in the Life of Alfred Walter "Pop" Moore

Vol. 3 - The Gregory-Moore Connection

The Scarborough Police Youth Club

Buddy's Musings

Herbs by Herb

For further information about any of the above,
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