

## The National Ski Patrol and Ski Patrolling in America Timeline

By Jeff Leich, New England Ski Museum

**1914-1918:** “As is well known, avalanches were used in mountain warfare, as we know from the events on the Austro-Italian front in the last war. It was sufficient to cause a small disturbance on the slope occupied by the enemy, for example, by firing a cannon. Thus, on the Monte Pasubio, 8,000 men were killed in this manner during one winter. On the Marmolata, one avalanche killed 300[(see Fritz Weber, “Grrramaten und Lawinen (Shells and avalanches)]. On December 16, 1916, known as: Black Thursday”, avalanches killed 6,000 Austrian and 4,000 Italian soldiers on the Alpine front. [See Gunther Langes, “Die Front in Fels und Eis” (The front in rock and Ice)]. People have learned from this vicious war practice to detach avalanches by means of mine throwers, explosives, and fire works, at a time when no danger arises for a passing railway train of ski runner, so as to relieve the slope after recent snow falls. It must be remembered that noise and agitation of the ground, caused for example by a railway train or by ski runners, may produce avalanches.”

*Dr. Paul Gut, Wintersport Accident Aid and Hygiene, Interverband Fur Skilauf, Davos-Dorf, Switzerland, 1935, page 44 (English translation by A.H. Krappe for US Forest Service Eastern Region, typescript in New England Ski Museum, 1999L.036.002).*

**1920:** “Ulrich in *Jahrbuck SSV, 1920* says: “An association making propaganda in favor of a sport is morally obliged not only to see to it that its members receive proper training for this sport, but also that in case of accident, there is first-aid to prevent disastrous results”.”

*Dr. Paul Gut, Wintersport Accident Aid and Hygiene, Interverband Fur Skilauf, Davos-Dorf, Switzerland, 1935, page 10 (English translation by A.H. Krappe for US Forest Service Eastern Region, typescript in New England Ski Museum, 1999L.036.002).*

**1929-30:** “We also learn from the same source that this winter there will be a daily patrol on the Parsenn run. We imagine this must be for the purpose of raking over the course.”

*Ski Notes & Queries, No. 40, December 1929, page 210.*

**February 19, 1931:** “I should greatly appreciate your giving me some information on the following questions. I ask them in anticipation of a ski trip to Mt Mansfield next winter. This may seem rather early to make such inquiries, but being at present confined to bed, as a result of my last ski trip, with two bad knees, I now have the time to plan and inquire, which I perhaps will not have later.”

*Roland Palmedo to Postmaster, Stowe Vermont, photocopy from Philip F. Palmedo via Rick Moulton.*

**1933:** “After two years of preliminary work there was founded, in 1933, the “Inter-Union for Skiing.”

The Inter-Union, however, aims not only at training capable skiing instructors as far as technique and teaching methods are concerned, it also tries to give them the necessary equipment so as to enable them to assist any ski-runner who has met with an accident.... Every Swiss skiing instructor is obliged to go through a first-aid course, to be at the disposal of the Alpine Rescue Stations for all winter activities and to assist injured ski-runners.”

*Dr. Paul Gut, Wintersport Accident Aid and Hygiene, Interverband Fur Skilauf, Davos-Dorf, Switzerland, 1935, page 2 (English translation by A.H. Krappe for US Forest Service Eastern Region, typescript in New England Ski Museum, 1999L.036.002).*

**1933:** “I asked Lois Perret, an attractive nurse from the local hospital if she would head the first aid committee. It did not take long for me to recognize Lois’s many virtues and I proposed to her. Two years later we were married and Miss Lois Perret became Mrs. Lois Schaefer. Lois set up the first aid committee in 1933, five years before Minnie Dole initiated activities to form the National Ski Patrol System and seven years before NSPS became official.

Lois organized a committee of four including Dot Hoyt, a high school math teacher and the club's best skier. Dot later won a berth on the 1940 Women's Olympic Team. The committee made ten individual first-aid kits. The kits were carried by ten competent skiers who were trained in first-aid by the Schenectady chapter of the National Red Cross. East first aider wore a white arm band with red cross emblazoned on it and skied with a back pack containing emergency first aid supplies."

*Norman Dibelius, Winter Sports, Schenectady Wintersports Club, Schenectady NY, 1995, page 16.*

**1933-34:** "As the winter of 1934 approached we decided to try to operate snow trains again. This time we planned to utilize the Delaware and Hudson Railroad. The previous Fall of 1933 I flew with Dr. Irving Langmuir in his open seat Waco airplane to areas within an hour or so of Schenectady. We explored the hills of the Catskills within range of the railroad and found good-looking terrain around Mt. Utsayantha new Schenevus. When the time came to make decisions, Mr. Fred Gelhooley, Passenger Agent for the D & H proposed that we consider going to North Creek in the Adirondacks.

Since I know the North Creek area very well, I enthusiastically endorsed this plan and made firm plans to go there. I formed many committees the largest being the First Aid Committee.

Since I had heard of the casualties that accompanied the Boston Snow Trains, I proposed having skiers trained in First Aid techniques equipped with toboggans, splints, bandages and other similar gear and a doctor ready for any emergency.

*Vincent J. Schaefer, "The Adirondack Snow Train, "Serendipity in Science: Twenty Years at Langmuir University, unpublished autobiography courtesy of James M. Schaefer.*

**January 16, 1934:** "It (Mt Mansfield Ski Patrol) started as a committee of the Mt Mansfield Ski Club...incorporated... with the State of Vermont, some six years before the chairlift was built on Mt Mansfield. "

"One driving force behind it was...Roland Palmedo.... His interests in the formation of a patrol had had to do with his ski trips to Europe during the 1930s, during which he had seen the Swiss patrol on the Parsenn at Davos."

"In 1934, at Palmedo's urging, the Mansfield club appointed Frank Griffin as head of a committee to establish a ski patrol for the 1934-35 season. "

Lindner, Brian and Lund, Morten, "The Mansfield Patrol" Skiing Heritage, Third Issue 1999 (September), page 32.

**1934:** "Back in the early 30s, Roland Palmedo had been more fortunate than many of us with both time and funds to ski in Europe. Having seen the Parsenn Patrol in action, he together with Charlie Lord, Craig Burt, Bill Mason, Ab Coleman and others organized I believe the first ski patrol in this country. I know that he was active in interesting other areas in undertaking the same steps. I do not think they were patrols as we came to know them later, but groups of interested local citizens willing to spot locate toboggans and be around weekends to assist any injured skiers to safety."

*"Minnie" Dole, " Memories of my Earliest Skiing Days in Stowe", page 4, photocopy of typescript in George Wesson Papers, New England Ski Museum.*

**1934:** "While skiing in Parsenne, Switzerland, Palmedo observed a Swiss Army Ski Rescue Unit, the Parsennedienst. In many conversations with Frank Griffin and Craig Burt, Sr. of the Mount Mansfield Ski Club, Palmedo described and praised the Swiss Patrol System. Before the first Skimeister Train of '34 chugged into Waterbury, Roland Palmedo had prevailed upon Mansfield Ski Club President Frank Griffin to organize the first skier assistance organization in the United States, the Mount Mansfield Ski Patrol.

...At the onstart, Mansfield's patrolmen acted principally as hosts and guides. They informed skiing guests of the trails available and their degrees of difficulty and advised novice skiers on such matters as waxing techniques. The patrollers wore a triangular yellow shoulder patch. This became a badge of distinction, and many club members volunteered to wear the patrol emblem. By spring, the leaders had learned two major points: first, a limited and educated squad would serve more effectively than the well-meaning *cavalier*

through they had attracted. Second, accidents were occurring more frequently, and first aid training and readiness were essential requirements for patrol duty.

Mount Mansfield Ski Patrol began the 1935-36 season with a sense of direction. Lord and Burt assumed full leadership. This came as a relief to the ever-busy Griffin. Completion of a Red Cross course became mandatory and the Ski Club budgeted fifty dollars for the procurement of first aid equipment.

Yankee ingenuity stretched the sum a long way. Used felt pads from a Sheldon Springs paper mill served as emergency blankets. Harry Gibbs, a Stowe carpenter, designed a toboggan which could be made from a strip of corrugated roofing at a cost of \$3.25. These iron toboggans were not only inexpensive, but they were hedgehog proof. Unfortunately, the corrugations greatly restricted maneuverability.”

*Michael Doherty, “Mount Mansfield Ski Patrol History”, page 2-4, photocopy of typescript in George Wesson Papers, New England Ski Museum.*

**March 4, 1934:** “On March 4, 1934 skiers’ prayers were answered and the first ski train headed to North Creek from Schenectady.... The first-aid committee prepared a master first aid kit that they left in a designated car of the train. The train parked on the railroad siding in North Creek all day. The designated car was identified with a large sign that read “First Aid Station.” Toboggans for transportation of injured skiers were located in strategic places on trails. Many procedures developed by SWC’s first aid committee were later adopted by Minnie Dole and incorporated into the National Ski Patrol System. SWC first aiders became members of NSPS.”

*Norman Dibelius, Winter Sports, Schenectady Wintersports Club, Schenectady NY, 1995, page 17*

**March 4, 1934** “...Lois Perret arranged to have ten competent skiers carry first aid kits in their knapsacks. In addition, a large collection of first aid gear was located at the train and a toboggan was available at the slopes. At the end of the day, prior to the departure of the snow train for Schenectady, the trails on Gore Mt. were swept by experienced skiers to assure that no one was hurt or would miss the train which left at 6 p.m.”

*Vincent J. Schaefer, “ Early History of the Formation of the Schenectady Wintersports Club”, Serendipity in Science: Twenty Years at Langmuir University, unpublished autobiography courtesy of James M. Schaefer.*

**March 4, 1934** “I had appointed a large number of committees to organize the Snow Train trip. The largest of these was a First Aid Committee headed by Lois Perret a Registered Nurse. She had assembled some of our skiers, equipped them with first aid kits, arranged for a doctor, (Dr. C.W. Woodall, also a skier), to be available, and emergency toboggan, bandages and other such first aid equipment. These were deployed at strategic locations. As departure time for the train approached, our skiers “swept the trails” to make sure that no injured skiers remained. When we headed home I checked with Lois and discovered that the most serious injury consisted of a sprained ankle!”

*Vincent J. Schaefer, Letter to Editor, February 7, 1989, unknown newspaper, courtesy of James M. Schaefer.*

**1934 & following** “...Dr. Shedd who treated Carroll Reed after his 1934 accident on the Wildcat Trail that left Reed bedridden for 19 weeks. During this time he conceived the idea of bringing an Austrian ski instructor to the area. On his recovery, Reed arranged for Benno Rybizka of the Hannes Schneider Ski School to teach in Jackson, NH, and the American Branch of the Hannes Schneider Ski School was born. When Schneider himself arrived in North Conway in 1939, "Doctor Harold" became one of his associates.

The Eastern Slope Ski Club was organized in Dr. Shedd's rambling yellow house on Kearsarge Street in 1935, and he served as Vice President for the first three years. When the ski club became affiliated with the US Eastern Amateur Ski Club in 1936, Dr. Shedd and Joe Dodge of the AMC's camp in Pinkham Notch were named delegates.

As Toni Matt finished his legendary run down Mt Washington in the 1939 American Inferno, running the feared Headwall straight along the way and nearly colliding with a sizable birch on the last turn, Dr. Shedd

is said to have greeted him with these words: "I thought you were going to give me my biggest job of work, but you came through fine. Scared the daylight out of me though".

Born in Bartlett in 1882, he graduated from Harvard in 1910, then spent several years in Boston and New York hospitals before returning to North Conway to practice with his father, also a country doctor. What trauma he treated in the teens and 1920s came mainly from farm and logging accidents, and the occasional mountaineering mishap like the Jesse Whitehead accident on Mt. Washington that gained wide press attention in 1926.

As interest in skiing accelerated in the 1930s, Dr Shedd's winters became increasingly occupied with treating sprains and fractures originating on the mountains and slopes of the region. He devised a new way to cast broken limbs that left openings to accommodate swelling, allowing patients to spend minimal time in the hospital. By virtue of his location in one of the hotbeds of skiing activity in the 1930s and 1940s he became one of the first experts in treating ski injuries in the country."

*Jeff Leich, "The Dr. Harold Shedd Challenge Cup," Program of 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Hannes Schneider Meister Cup Race, 2004, page 25.*

**1934-35:** "In his account of the first patrol discussions, Craig Burt Sr. wrote that "The principal duties of a patrolman in this first season was to inform skiers on Mansfield which of its trails were right for the particular skier's ability." The committee members were not actually urged to patrol, in other words, but to act as big brothers to the skiers."

*Lindner, Brian and Lund, Morten, "The Mansfield Patrol" Skiing Heritage, Third Issue 1999 (September), page 32.*

**No date (ca 1934-35 season):** "My recollection tells me that Roland Palmedo suggested the idea (of ski patrol), having seen the Parsenn Patrol in action. I believe it was originally instituted with the idea of just having a few people around on weekends who would be willing to lug a guy off the mountain and be sure that there were toboggans available. To the best of my knowledge there were no special qualifications, although I may be wrong. I'll be damned if I know who was the first accident victim...."

"As you know, I busted my own leg there and was finally hauled off on a piece of tin by Frank Edson who was killed within a month racing, and that is how my interest was stimulated, which eventually resulted in the NSPS. As a matter purely of interest Frank and I started up the mountain with a man who had been hired for the weekend by the Lodge to give ski lessons. When Frank found me and went down to get help of the so-called "professional" who had skied on ahead he was told in no uncertain terms "to hell with it", and the guy never came back up to assist in any way. I had the opportunity thankfully of telling him frankly what I thought of him several hours later, and I don't think he ever got another job teaching anywhere."

*Charles M Dole to J.N. Cooke, July 23, 1947, Denver Public Library, Dole Box 2, FF18.*

**1935:** "Bone Fractures and joint sprains:

Without fixation no transportation! An arm or leg that has been broken must be supported to prevent its being shaken helplessly during transportation; this support must fix also the two approximate joints.... Even if there is only a bare suspicion of a bone fracture or a sprain, the correct procedure is to take it for granted.

*Dr. Paul Gut, Wintersport Accident Aid and Hygiene, Interverband Fur Skilauf, Davos-Dorf, Switzerland, 1935, page 17-18 (English translation by A.H. Krappe for US Forest Service Eastern Region, typescript in New England Ski Museum, 1999L.036.002).*

**1935:** "A rather modern type of ski accident is due to collision of ski runners.

Case 13. A competitor in the ski race for ladies, in 1934, was run over by a racer a few days before the race, her skies being destroyed in the process. She herself suffered a fracture of the ankle, but the person causing the accident had not suffered the slightest harm.

An international traffic authority of the type generally adapted for motor cars would be highly desirable in places much frequented by ski runners...Unless this is done, the public authority will be fully justified in passing legislation touching obligatory liability in connection with the issuance of ski licenses."

*Dr. Paul Gut, Wintersport Accident Aid and Hygiene, Interverband Fur Skilauf, Davos-Dorf, Switzerland, 1935, page 22-23 (English translation by A.H. Krappe for US Forest Service Eastern Region, typescript in New England Ski Museum, 1999L.036.002).*

**1935:** “Nothing is worse in matters of first aid than a series of false reports...A whole chapter could be filled with geographically inexact accident reports. Mere conjectures should not be reported as facts. A small exact observation is more useful than 100 brilliant suppositions and speculations. ...In the Upper Engadine the posters of the rescue commission Upper Engadine of the SAC Bernia are visible everywhere, making possible an immediate report to the proper authorities. ...This also holds for the model Parsenn tourist and rescue service (chief: Captain Jost, Davos). In most recent years, many Alpine huts have been equipped with telephones, facilitating quick reports into the valley.”

*Dr. Paul Gut, Wintersport Accident Aid and Hygiene, Interverband Fur Skilauf, Davos-Dorf, Switzerland, 1935, page 58 (English translation by A.H. Krappe for US Forest Service Eastern Region, typescript in New England Ski Museum, 1999L.036.002).*

**1935:** “Similar complaints (first aid huts broken into) have come in from Davos, where many Canadian rescue sleighs are used for private purposes and for joy rides, to be left somewhere in the wilderness. Newly formed snow generally covers such a sleigh, so that it can be found only in the following spring...”

*Dr. Paul Gut, Wintersport Accident Aid and Hygiene, Interverband Fur Skilauf, Davos-Dorf, Switzerland, 1935, page 60 (English translation by A.H. Krappe for US Forest Service Eastern Region, typescript in New England Ski Museum, 1999L.036.002).*

**1935:** “(on) much frequented routes (on funicular railways)...professional patrols have been organized after a model of those established by the automobile clubs for the automobile roads. For particulars, address the Ski Club of Davos (Parsenn rescue service), also the tourist center of St Moritz (Corviglian SOS service), or tourist center Wengen (Kleine Scheidegg).

For big ski races, we have organized stationary comfort stations, movable health patrols, equipped both with competent personnel and suitable equipment. Particulars: First Aid Union, St Moritz, and First Aid Union, Davos. The organization has been modeled after similar organizations in connection with automobile and bicycle races on the large Alpine roads and also after the Swiss army. A telephone connecting the start with the goal keeps the chief of the organization informed of the participants who have met with an accident on the road. The chief leaves the start with the last runner, but does not stop with each casualty longer than necessary. If there are no casualties, the physicians are at the disposal of casualties among the spectators. The number of casualties among trained ski runners is very small, so that no special measures are necessary.”

*Dr. Paul Gut, Wintersport Accident Aid and Hygiene, Interverband Fur Skilauf, Davos-Dorf, Switzerland, 1935, page 61 (English translation by A.H. Krappe for US Forest Service Eastern Region, typescript in New England Ski Museum, 1999L.036.002).*

**1935:** “The somewhat delicate question as to the proper action on the part of the patient who wishes to show his gratitude, the matter is very simple. The professional ski-runner, if he is a guide, ski instructor, or ski road patrol, has a definite rate by hour or distance to go by. The amateur ski-runner should, however, wait until a decent patient will ask him what he considers fair. If the latter fails to do that, he should let it go at that, assuming that the man has plenty of worries of his own, or that he has poor breeding which, after all, is not his fault...”

He should not, under any circumstance, adapt his services to the pocketbook of the patient, for in so doing he would disregard the noble ideal of the Red Cross.”

*Dr. Paul Gut, Wintersport Accident Aid and Hygiene, Interverband Fur Skilauf, Davos-Dorf, Switzerland, 1935, page 62 (English translation by A.H. Krappe for US Forest Service Eastern Region, typescript in New England Ski Museum, 1999L.036.002).*

**1935:** “Alcohol and tobacco are poisons interfering with the nervous systems and with blood circulation. Nicotine is as habit-forming as is alcohol, especially with young people. People in training should give up both. The heating effect of alcohol is an illusion and a nonsense, which should disappear from the minds of

guides. Alcohol merely heats up the skin temporarily, but this is soon followed by an even greater heat loss...Alcohol frequently enhances the joy of life, but only in the case of artists does it occasionally increase the output.”

*Dr. Paul Gut, Wintersport Accident Aid and Hygiene, Interverband Fur Skilauf, Davos-Dorf, Switzerland, 1935, page 78 (English translation by A.H. Krappe for US Forest Service Eastern Region, typescript in New England Ski Museum, 1999L.036.002).*

**1935:** “This picture is familiar to all visitors of the Parsenn region. There are always 34 Canadian sleighs of this type ready for action (Report on the activity of the Parsenn Service SCD, 1934 to 1935). In the pocket, directions in the form of six photographs and a rope can be found. Our picture shows the rope serving to attach the sleigh to a summer guidepost. This sleigh represents the minimum equipment of a rescue station...

The Canadian sleigh is suitable chiefly for well-tracked terrains and for a smooth track. Deep snow is hardly appreciated by the patient, since a level sleigh always will sink deep into it...In the Bernese highlands and throughout the ski region of Lucerne, Canadian sleighs are used, provided with two stable mountable poles like poles of a horse-drawn vehicle, which allow it to be steered with ease and without danger.

The conductor of the sleigh, the Parsenn patrolman Marguth, is the best proof that every ski-runner may meet with an accident in the course of his career, for at the end of his fourth year and after four successful derbies, he broke his leg and thus became himself a patient, after having served hundreds of his fellow beings without distinction of political party, religion, race, and social class.”

*Dr. Paul Gut, Wintersport Accident Aid and Hygiene, Interverband Fur Skilauf, Davos-Dorf, Switzerland, 1935, page 91-92 (English translation by A.H. Krappe for US Forest Service Eastern Region, typescript in New England Ski Museum, 1999L.036.002).*

**January 2, 1936:** “Frank Edson and I decided to take our wives to Stowe over New Year’s, 1936... The drizzle was still on in the morning but we decided we had to ski. Jane and I, Frank and Jean started off in the wet for our two-hour trudge. We decided on the Toll Road route up. About a third of a mile up, the drizzle changed to rain and so we decided to turn back. I pushed off first. A hundred yards down I tried a stem christie with the weak ankle, and it failed to edge the ski properly. I took what was known as an eggbeater. I don’t remember any noise as of a snap, but I realized that I was kaput. The ankle was not of the right angle for an ankle....

“When you injured something in those days, you were strictly on your own. Ironically, Stowe had a rudimentary ski patrol, organized by Roland Palmedo, the first patrol in the country. But it was not set up to “spot” accidents. It merely had a few willing souls who “were around”. ...The two wives had gone on down to try to find help. We were only about a quarter mile up the Toll Road, but it took the two women a long, long time to get back. They hadn’t been able to find anybody right away. A Maine boy who acted as an instructor had come by, but he refused to help because “anybody fool enough to hurt himself on this dumb trail deserves what he gets.” They had finally got two men—Bob Cheesewright and Howard Black. The four of them had, in desperation, seized a short piece of tin roofing that was lying around, and they carried it to where I was lying.

...The piece of tin was so short that my leg could ride it, but my rear was still in the snow. In a half-drag, half-carry, the four of them got me down that quarter mile. Frank and Jane drove me to the hospital in Morrisville. X rays showed an ankle so severely broken that the doctors advised me to go to New York to have it set.”

*Minot Dole, Adventures in Skiing, Franklin Watts, Inc, New York, 1965, page 50-52.*

**March 6, 1936:** “We here in the East must, for the most part, hold our races and competitions down trails flanked on either side by trees. The skier who proceeds from start to finish in the shortest space of time wins, no matter how he gets there. It is becoming more and more a necessity for a racer to take desperate chances to win. The consequences of a bad spill into the trees are not pleasant to contemplate.”

*A.S.C. of N.Y. News Letter, quoted in "Controlled Skiing," The Ski Bulletin, Vol. VI, No 12, March 6, 1936, page 11.*

**1936:** "In 1936 control and supervision of racing was yet young. At that time Frank Edson was twenty-eight years old. A true sportsman in every sense of the word, his background of hunting trips in Africa and Alaska were a natural avenue to the sport of skiing for which he developed a passion. He lived skiing the year round and was forever puttering over skiing gadgets in his workshop. He was a strong advocate of controlled skiing and had no use for basher of those days. An ardent skier who showed great promise, he had not had time to develop into a top flighter. Deserving of about a third class proficiency rating, he entered his last race just because it was fun and he loved it. Never satisfied with half measures, he rode the trail all out and Dame Fate chose to ride with him. Out of control he crashed into a tree and was hurt. Patrols and skiing first aid were not then developed. Unsolicited letters from bystanders spoke in sincere and glowing words of his heroic stolidness under the handling of wellwishers. His injuries proved fatal."

"The morning that Frank died, the writer was called to his house by his wife. Under the shock and strain of the moment, with no opportunity for ordered thought other than instinct and her knowledge of Frank's philosophy, her words were prophetic in the light of present day arguments and I repeat them as accurately as I can. Slowly and laboriously she said: "I hope that some day a race can be run in Frank's memory that in no way will take away from the thrill and speed of downhill racing, but if on the course there are one or two spots where, if a racer were out of control and fell, he would crash into danger, then flags be placed to insure control at those spots.""

*Unsigned (Charles M. Dole), The Franklin Memorial Race, no date (ca. 1941 based on list of previous Edson winners in article), Denver Public Library, Dole Box 2, FF75.*

**March 8, 1936** "I advised him (Edson) against it, feeling his ability at that point was not great enough. He went anyway. After climbing the trail, he remarked to one of his teammates that his legs were tired. At one corner during his run, his edges didn't bit and he crashed into a tree, breaking several ribs. Well-meaning hands helped him to his feet, for it was cold, while others went for a toboggan. Grievously hurt, he died the next day, March 9, 1936, of punctured lungs, in the Sisters of Mercy Hospital in Pittsfield.

His death was a shock to all of us and at the next meeting of the ASC it was decided to make a study and report on the general subject of safety in skiing. It soon became known that the endeavor was under way with me as chairman of a committee of three with my club mates, John E.P. Morgan and Borden Helmer. The word "safety" in connection with skiing was taboo in those days and letters of condemnation of the idea started to arrive. I decided to check it with two hell-for-leather skiers and members of the 1936 US Olympic Team, Alec Bright and Bob Livermore of the Hochgebirge Club. Journeying to Boston, I determined they were both 100% in favor of the idea and would give it their full support. Bob Livermore later became the first chairman of the Eastern Division of the NSPS and deserves full credit for organizing the Eastern Patrol set-up. Alec Bright later accepted the appointment as a National patrolman."

*"Minnie" Dole, "Memories of my Earliest Skiing Days in Stowe", page 3, photocopy of typescript in George Wesson Papers, New England Ski Museum.*

**March 8, 1936** "On the day of the meet, under a cloudless sky, Frank Edson set off down the Ghost Trail, a run he had never seen or skied before. An eyewitness, Dorothy Maynard, recalled forty years afterward: "Edson gathered speed, lost control, failed to negotiate a curve and smacked into a tree with a sickening crash. My husband George, who headed a ski patrol covering the race, was at his side in a jiffy with a toboggan. The impact broke Edson's right arm in two places and fractured four ribs. The jagged bone ends were piercing his lungs with every breath" By the following evening, Frank Edson was dead.

Out of this tragic accident, the National Ski Patrol System was born.

The close-knit ski fraternity was appalled by the death of one of its members. Roland Palmedo asked Minnie Dole, as Edson's best friend, to head a safety committee to study the causes and prevention of ski accidents. Bombarding ski clubs throughout the country with forms and questionnaires, Dole and his co-workers were dismayed to discover that many skiers refused to cooperate, fearing that any inquiry into ski accidents would label them as "sissies" and "spoilsports".

Gretchen R. Besser, *The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow*, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 27.

**March 13, 1936:** “The Quadrangular Downhill Race, held last Sunday on the Ghost and Shadow Trails in Pittsfield State Forest near Pittsfield, Mass., under the auspices of the Amateur Ski Club of New York, between that club, the Dartmouth Ski Club of New York, Williams Outing Club, and the Mt. Greylock Ski Club, was attended by approximately 300 spectators, grouped near the two finish lines, which were only fifty feet apart. Each team consisted of fifteen men with five fastest to score. The race was run on both trails simultaneously from their common start, and was timed by short wave radio. After the first run the competitors reversed trails so that each runner covered both trails. The runs were covered with smooth, fast granular snow with some patches of damp powder. Conditions were perfect except for a worn spot on one turn on the Shadow Trail.

...In addition to the more serious accidents which marred the day, Tommy Clement of Williams, who had been among the best on the Ghost Trail, took two falls and hurt his leg on the Shadow Trail, and several other men had minor bruises, and five or six broken skis.”

George F. Maynard, Jr., “Eastern Events,” *The Ski Bulletin*, Vol VI, No 13, March 13, 1936, pages 3-4.

**March 13, 1936:** “The icy trail conditions over the week-end increased the toll of accidents. Last Sunday, when the Quadrangular Race was held under the auspices of the Amateur Ski Club of New York, on the Ghost and Shadow Trails, Pittsfield State Forest, three New York snow-train skiers were injured, near Pittsfield, Mass. Franklin Edson 3<sup>rd</sup>, of the Amateur Ski Club, left the trail and hit a tree, suffered a broken arm, several fractured ribs, and internal chest injury. He was placed in St. Luke’s Hospital, under the care of Dr. Clement F. Kernan, but as a result of the injuries, died on Monday. It seems that no one witnessed the accident, but that Edson had been seen going very fast shortly before. Apparently he couldn’t make a curve and hit a tree at full speed. I believe it is the first fatal downhill skiing accident in this part of the country. In the same race Duncan H. Read, also of the Amateur Ski Club, broke his right leg while running the Ghost Trail, and was cared for by Dr. M.H. Walker, at the House of Mercy Hospital, Pittsfield. Charles Watkins of Glen Ridge, N.J. suffered a fractured left tibia, but after receiving aid, returned to New York on the snow train with his leg in a cast. Since icy places on the trails are inevitable in spring weather, the only possibility of reducing the number of accidents lies in more careful, controlled skiing. So let’s give up striving for dash and abandon temporarily and try for control and safety.”

P.T.O., Jr., “New York Notes,” *The Ski Bulletin*, Vol VI, No 13, March 13, 1936 pages 10-11.

**March 27, 1936:** “On the ninth of March last, Franklin Edson, 3<sup>rd</sup>, died as a result of injuries sustained while racing as a member of the Amateur Ski Club team at Pittsfield, Massachusetts. To speak of him only as a skiing enthusiast is not the true fact—he literally loved the sport. Quiet by nature, skiing seemed to offer a medium that touched off the spark of every adventurous instinct that he had, and he was born to adventure, for in his twenty-eight years, his travels led him from hunting big game in the Congo to shooting Kodiak bear in Alaska. It was only natural that as he married and settled down, skiing with all its myriad thrills should catch his fancy. Once his interest was aroused, it knew no bounds. Clever with his hands, his work bench was transformed into a ski shop, and there he made his own rucksacks, invented and made ski poles with interchangeable tips to meet varying snow and ice conditions, and was forever puttering about and improving skiing gadgets, for they always intrigued his inquisitive mind.

He was a perfect skiing companion. If on the trail someone needed a piece of string, Frank had an oddment; if screws came out of steel edges, Frank had a few extras and fixed things up; if the lunch fire was backward about starting, Frank got it going. A good skier with nerves that knew no fear, he was destined to be one of our best. To have him taken is an unspeakable tragedy—but to those of us who were privileged to know him, it somehow seems natural that he should have run down the long trail on his skis. Of all the ways to go, he would have chosen that, and I for one shall always like to think of him as climbing on a clear, cold day, just ahead around a bend in the trail, occasionally turning and hallooing us on to perfect snow fields—higher up. And so Ski Heil, Frank.”

From A.S.C. of New York News Letter, “Franklin Edson, 3<sup>rd</sup>,” *The Ski Bulletin*, Vol VI, No 15, March 27, 1936, page 4.

**1936:** “Founded in 1936, the Otter Ski Patrol is the oldest continuously registered patrol in the National Ski Patrol System. Originally the Otters patrolled at Pico, Killington, High Pond in Brandon, and Bird’s Eye in Castleton.... The founders of the patrol were Abe Porter, George Peck, Ken Day, Henry Collin and Roy Chase, all First Aid instructors from Rutland.”

*Donna Martin, “Otter Ski Patrol,” The Killington-Pico Paper, February 19, 1976, page 5.*

**1936:** “When I became president of National Ski Association in 1936, I went to Washington DC to an Olympic meeting, because I then became a member of the Olympic committee. While I was there, a friend of mine named Bob Monahan, who later went to Dartmouth as their Forester, was connected with the US Forest Service. He took me around. I saw the Chief of the Forest Service, I had a meeting with the assistant director of the National Park Service, and when I was having lunch with Mr. Demaray, who was the assistant director, he was keenly interested in the ski situation, not that he was a skier himself, but he did say to me, “What is your association doing about all these skiing accidents that we read about in the paper?” Well, at the time, I had very little to tell him, except that I did know about these patrols, up in Stowe and on the Thunderbolt Trail in Pittsfield, some of these areas, they always had a couple of fellows that would go up and see if there was anybody still on the trail. I told him that was something I was extremely interested in.”

*Roger Langley, tape recorded interview with Arthur F. March, January 30, 1980, New England Ski Museum.*

**November 22, 1936:** “...the Proctor Mountain lift was completed and employees were offered free test rides. ...Florence Law, secretary to the manager of Sun Valley, volunteered for the first ride on the new chairlift. Law had come from New York to do the resort’s books for the Union Pacific, and had married Rollie Law, who worked on the landscaping. A fuse was blown and she was reportedly stuck in midair for several hours until the lift could be started again.”

*Wendolyn Spence Holland, Sun Valley: An Extraordinary History, The Idaho Press, Ketchum ID, 1998, page 202.*

**November 22, 1936:** “...in mid-test, a fuse blew, leaving a group of lady volunteers swinging dizzily from their chairs. By the time the last passenger had been brought down, the lift was working again, but none of the girls was about to get back on. None, that is, until the valley’s new manager gave his secretary, Florence Law, a choice of two rides: up Dollar Mountain on the lift or out of town on the next train.”

*Ezra Bowen, The Book of American Skiing, Bonanza Books, New York, 1963, page 128.*

**1937:** “Eighty four year old Hank Lewis, who holds National #78, was the first patroller on Mt. Hood—in 1937. “The Wy’east climbers and Nile River Yacht Club had cabins near Timberline before the lodge was built,” Lewis recalls. “We got tired of seeing injured skiers with no one to take care of them. Wy’east President Everett Darr (National #18) and Barney McNab (National #17), who was captain of the Yacht Club, prevailed on the Forest Service to do something.

The Forest Service hung a ‘tin buzzard’ –a sheet metal pin resembling its bronze badge—and paid me \$10 a weekend,” Lewis continues. “The hours were from early morning til everything was done. I supplied my own equipment, borrowed an old, roll-nosed toboggan from the Wy’east cabin, and took a first aid course in Portland. The first year, I was the ski patrol on Mt Hood.”

The Mt Hood Ski Patrol was formally organized in the spring of 1938, with Barney McNab as first president, Hank Lewis as patrol chief, and some 50 members. In October, McNab was appointed the fist chairman of the NSP’s Pacific Northwest Division.”

*Gretchen R. Besser, “The Mt Hood Ski Patrol; A Unique Entity”, Ski Patrol Magazine, Vol 13, No 1, Fall 1996, page 14.*

**February 10, 1937:** “During the present season we can get acquainted with one another, gather criticism, assist in case of accident, and gradually find out what it is that we need to know. ...

Suggestions

Until we can secure uniform first aid packages, provide yourselves with adhesive tape, bandage, and a small bottle of iodine for the skier; and with thongs and such other mechanical repairs as you wish to carry for the skis.

Keep a record of complaints, unusual requests, and accidents. In the case of accidents record to whom they occurred, the cause, and the kind of assistance was rendered, if any.

Since we cannot immediately hold first aid demonstrations as a group, at your first opportunity consult a doctor individually or in such groups as you may arrange to get first aid suggestions....

Toboggans will be ready to be distributed to all points shown on the map before the end of the week. These toboggans are not yet furnished with first aid equipment, but will serve as an immediate means of transport.”

*Craig Burt, “To the Members of the Mt. Mansfield Ski Patrol,” photocopy of typewritten letter in George Wesson papers, New England Ski Museum.*

**April 4, 1937:** On racecourse of first Franklin Edson Memorial Race in Tuckerman Ravine: “Great quantities of snow had fallen and blown into the Ravine during March. A large cornice had formed at the top of the Headwall and this had fallen leaving a perpendicular cliff of snow below the gap used in entering the Headwall. Except for some shallow snow slides, no avalanches had occurred and the scene was thus set for a grand collapse. On Friday Walter Prager and his Dartmouth contingent tried to start the slide with a few dynamite tickles, but the towering mass was not in a mood to move.”

*US Eastern Slalom Championships and Franklin Edson Memorial Race, Amateur Ski Club of New York News Letter, Vol IV, No. VII, April 28, 1937, page 2; Denver Public Library Dole Box 1, FF 4.*

“The following are excerpts from a letter from Dan Hatch, General Manager of the Dartmouth Outing Club, re Edson Trophy Race: “... The CCC had a counter on the trails and they tallied 2,800 people at the event which I think is an all-time high for attendance at that sort of an event in the White Mountains. And best of all, there was not a single injury among the whole field of competitors.”

*US Eastern Slalom Championships and Franklin Edson Memorial Race, Amateur Ski Club of New York News Letter, Vol IV, No. VII, April 28, 1937, page 5; Denver Public Library Dole Box 1, FF 4.*

**November 30, 1937:** “The Committee of the Amateur Ski Club of New York has been asked by the Central First Aid Committee of the USEASA to make a study to correlate information, and make a report on ski patrols from those sections having patrols already functioning. The purpose is three-fold. First, to gather information and make it available for those centers wishing to form patrols, in order that they may benefit by your experience; secondly, to coordinate all ski patrols along the same lines, possibly to be advised by a central governing body; so that thirdly, gradually through experience, publicity, and general education of the public, an esprit-de-corps will be built up within the patrols to make them into a real ski constabulary that will command the respect of all skiers, and make the job one of honor and service.”

*Charles M. Dole to Franklin E. Griffin, Stowe, Vermont, Denver Public Library, Dole Box 2, FF83.*

**December 2, 1937** “The committee is aware that in only a few places has adequate rescue equipment been installed, and that although most thoughtful skiers recognize the importance of accident prevention and of training in winter first aid, not many know just what form this should take. ...The skiing centers that have pioneered in the field of rescue work and accident prevention may be looked on as experimental laboratories. Pinkham Notch, Stowe and a few others have already proven and disproven the worth of methods.”

*DeWitt Hendee Smith, MD, Safety and First Aid Committee, USEASA, Report for 1936-37, New England Ski Museum accession number 2004.027.004.*

**December 7, 1937** “Dr. DeWitt Smith of our Club here in New York has asked me to write to you as being the doctor who has probably handled as many, if not more, accidents attributable to skiing than any doctor in our Eastern territory.

You may know that a Committee of the Amateur Ski Club was asked by the Central Committee on First Aid of the USEASA to make a study of ski patrols, gathering information from those patrols already existing, and make it available for all future patrols. We on the Committee feel that the most important purpose of the patrol is that all its members should be educated in first aid, participating on accidents that may happen while skiing, together with definite knowledge of rescue work. It is hoped that all patrols will eventually be coordinated along the same lines and advised by a central patrol committee, so that all may receive the same training. I believe at the present time, the only avenue to general lecturing in first aid is through the American Red Cross, and that these lectures cover every type of first aid. I am wondering if you think it feasible or possible to draw together information that could be given in a series perhaps of three to eight lectures, that would deal with accidents common to skiing, to be given to patrol members and those generally interested, and if you do feel that this is feasible, would you be willing to personally undertake the job of at least designating the subjects which, in your opinion, you think important. If this could be done, I could then turn it over to doctors in various localities that perhaps you or your colleagues might recommend, and they could cover these subjects alone.

I hope that you will appreciate the fact that we are groping for information, and trying to do a job that will be helpful to all in the skiing world; in any case, I will greatly appreciate your reactions to the above suggestions.”

*Charles M. Dole to Dr. Harold Shedd, New England Ski Museum accession number 2004.027.004.*

**March 1938:** “I was hired as head ski patrolman, and in summertime work they called it the head guide. At the top of the mountain we had a group of boys that were all uniformed, and they met every (tramway) car that came up the mountain, and they gave them a little speech when they got off the car, then they took those that wanted to walk around the perimeter of the mountain, the Rim Trail we called it, they took those people right around and brought them back to the terminal.... I’m sure it was the first paid ski patrol in the United States... this being something new, we were all more or less amateurs in first aid. I had worked for the telephone company a little previously, and I had taken a standard first aid course, but that’s all the training I had at the time, and we sort of improvised a lot in the beginning. ...We had regular toboggans that were manufactured at that time that were used for recreation, and we took those toboggans, 8-foot toboggans, and reinforced them with rails along the side to make them stiff, and then we tied a tope to the front and a rope to the rear, in fact there was two ropes in the front and two ropes in the rear, and when we had an accident we started the toboggans down the slope, and there was a man on the front straddling the front of the toboggan in the snowplow position, and then we had a patrolman that used the rope from the rear. He was the brake...That went on for a good many years, then they developed some shafts that were built on the front of them and they were made out of steel, of course they were very heavy, and then soon after that they developed a brake they attached to the rear of the toboggan made of steel also, and there was a rope on the rear of the toboggan that was attached to that steel brake, it was a piece of steel that had a lot of teeth on it, when you pulled on the rope you pulled that set of teeth down into the snow. It worked and it worked good.... In the first years the ski patrol was the maintenance patrol also, they done all the conditioning of the ski trails. I had about a dozen on the ski patrol at that time, we usually split up that group, half of them were working on the ski trails all the time, and the other half were doing ski patrol work. We done all the maintenance work with shovels. ...Usually after a weekend, we started in Monday morning fixing all the trails so they’d be in shape to ski again.... We used to have time trails here every Wednesday on Cannon Mountain trail, that was one of the reasons we went out on Monday, to get the Cannon trail ready. We worked Monday and Tuesday shoveling all the way down the whole two miles and a third, then Wednesday we had the time trials. ...Roland Peabody, the first manager of the Tramway, was very interested in the National Ski Patrol, and he insisted that all the members of the Cannon Mountain Ski Patrol go onto the National Ski Patrol...I was one of the first that belonged to the National Ski Patrol, I had Number 88, which was along in the first year in that organization. They were doing a splendid job at the time, and for a good many years they were the forerunners in getting first aid installed at all these ski areas that started around the country. “

*Ken Boothroyd, Audiotape of interview with Arthur March, 9-27-1988, New England Ski Museum Collection.*

**March 5, 1938:** “...when I was asked to be the referee of the National Downhill and Slalom championship races at Stowe, Vermont. And I was bunking with Ed Newell, who was the setter of the downhill course

and the slalom course. And Ed said to me, "Did you see the arrangement they have here for taking care of any possible accidents?" I said, "No, what is that?." "Well," he said, "every now and then you come along and you come to a tree that has the round top of a tin can with a number on it. Each one of these numbers represented the number of a team of two fellows who were supposed to report there with a toboggan and other kinds of first aid equipment. And these were evenly spaced from the summit to the bottom of the trail. I was watching this the next day when the downhill race was in progress, I was extremely fascinated to see these fellows working. They also kept people from running across the course...I found out that the head of this arrangement was a fellow they selected who was called, his nickname was Minnie, Charles Minot Dole, a member of the Amateur Ski Club of New York. And I talked with him later on during the day, and he was trudging up the hill....Minnie stopped and I introduced to him, we started talking, and I was telling him what a wonderful setup this was and I thought that the NSA should be doing something along this line on a national basis. He was quite interested and though it was fine. And I suggested, "well, would you be interested in doing anything with it in a national way? I could appoint you chairman of a ski committee on this if you care to." "Let me think about it. I'll talk with some of my friends down at the lodge tonight, and I'll see you tomorrow. Meanwhile, would you care for a drink?" And I said, "Of course." "Well, all I have is Vat 69" Well, I said, "That's good enough for me"

The next day I did see Minnie, and he said he was quite interested. He said, "do you already have a national ski patrol committee?" I said "no we don't, but if you become chairman we will have one." "That's fine" he said, "I talked it over with quite a few fellows like Bob Livermore, even Dick Durrance. Roland Palmedo wasn't too keen on this. He thought I'd better think it over before I get involved in anything like that."

...Minnie was enthusiastic, and from then on, I think that Minnie and I corresponded probably at least once a day, sometimes two or three times a day. I was a constant visitor at Greenwich where he lived. I spent many times with him in New York, he was a member of the Yale Club right near Grand Central Station....Minnie at one time was the manager of the club, apparently Yale Club members had to take turns at running the place.

Minnie got a group in Greenwich. One of them was John EP Morgan, one wonderful man. He was a salesman I believe for those small planes, Piper Cubs, and he was a good fundraiser. We decided we had to get in contact with the American Red Cross. Being a national organization the NSA was looked up to as something of importance. And when we got in touch with the American Red Cross, we got the top man., Dr Thompson. He said, I'd we glad to help you work on a plan so that you can work up a training guide, and an examination for future ski patrolmen. It developed from this. A lot of it was done from Minnie's home and it was done at my home up here. To say that Minnie actually started the National Ski Patrol is not correct, because I did. To say that Minnie made the ski patrol what it is today, is an absolute truth, because without him, it wouldn't have gone very far. I don't know what would have happened otherwise. Anyway, Minnie really loved the job, it became to him really an obsession. I don't think he did anything else. I'll tell you frankly, he was a most wonderful chap.

...I was responsible for giving Minnie the name. Minnie said, "I don't like the name National Ski Patrol committee." "Well" I said, "I don't blame you Minnie, it's something more than that... I think National Ski Patrol System would sound pretty good." "God, that's it," he said."

*Roger Langley, tape recorded interview with Arthur F. March, January 30, 1980, New England Ski Museum.*

**March 5, 1938:** "My post was just above "Shambles Corner" where a huge oak tree had to be skirted. A sharp wind blew the snow flurries in swirls and the mountain was veiled by low clouds. Roger Langley approached me and I offered him a gulp of the Vat 69 which I had stowed in my kit, contrary to the rules. Roger was delighted, for he was as cold as I.

"You know," he said, "this patrol you've put together today is terrific. I've been standing here thinking what a wonderful thing it would be for skiing if we could organize such patrols on a national basis. If I appointed you chairman of a National Ski Patrol Committee, would you take it?"

I had no idea of what I was letting myself in for, but I said, "I'll sure as hell try."

We sealed the deal with another sip of Vat 69.”

*Minot Dole, Adventures in Skiing, Franklin Watts, Inc, New York, 1965, page 62-63.*

**March 7, 1938 (actually March 5):** “The idea of a National Ski Patrol was conceived by Roger Langley on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1938. Location—half way up the Nose Dive Trail, Mount Mansfield, Vermont. Temperature—minus five degrees. Wind velocity—50 miles an hour. The writer, trudging up the trail to see that the Patrol for the National Slalom was all set, glimpsed a pair of flailing arms below a set of ruddy cheeks, and paused. It was only Roger restoring circulation. The subject of a National Ski Patrol was broached, and the committee was formed on the spot. David Parsons of Manchester Vermont, who helped the writer organize Patrols for the National Races, was rounded up and appointed Vice-Chairman. The subject was discussed before the week-end was over with Dick Durrance and Don Fraser, both of whom endorsed the general idea and expressed their willingness to serve on the National Committee.”  
*Charles M. Dole, “Report of the National Ski Patrol Committee”, no date but probably 1938 or 1939; New England Ski Museum accession number 2006.137.048 (photocopy).*

**March 5, 1938 & following** “It was back in 1938 that Dr. Kraus, a young Viennese orthopedist, who had served as physician for several Austrian Olympic teams, entered this correspondent’s office at the New York Times...The following weekend, we took Hans to Stowe, Vermont, for the National Alpine Championships. He wound up serving as the medical advisor for these all-important games and was on hand when Roger Langley, president of the National Ski Association, so impressed with the work of the improvised patrol, headed by Minnie Dole, established the National Ski Patrol Committee.

Dr. Kraus continues to be very active in the National Ski Patrol System, having earned his badge in 1944. He has been the national medical advisor for the Eastern Ski Patrol System, medical advisor to the ...Belleayre Ski Patrol.

Through his established and innovative orthopedic and therapeutic exercises, Dr. Kraus has brought back many outstanding competitive skiers, as well as recreational skier, to their former physical ability after suffering serious injury. Buddy Werner, Toni Matt, Lowell Thomas and Billy Kidd were some of the distinguished ski figures that this transplanted Austrian was credited with returning to their skiing was of life.

*Frank Elkins, “Dr. Hans Kraus,” Nomination to US Ski Hall of Fame, New England Ski Museum collection.*

**March 8, 1938:** “I wish to announce at this time the establishment of a National Ski Patrol Committee and at the time ask for your help with the work of this committee.”  
*Roger Langley to National and Divisional Officers, Club Officers and Members (of NSA)*

**1938:** “The job of setting up a nationwide organization sat squarely on Minnie Dole’s shoulders. He spent every evening from dinnertime to midnight that first year, pounding at his typewriter to coax and cajole the elite of skiing to join his National Ski Patrol. “It was a backbreaker, literally and figuratively,” Dole acknowledged. “I never could have done it without Roger Langley’s help. He knew every name in skiing.”...For publicity purposes, it was a major coup to enlist as National Patrolmen the mainstays of the most recent (1936) Olympic squad—Dick Durrance, Alex Bright, Bob Livermore, Al Lindley, and Betty Woolsey. Minnie Dole also persuaded such well-known figures as Don Fraser, Charlie Proctor, and Norwegian ski jump champ Alf Engen to join the cause. The cachet of their combined prestige gave the fledgling organization its stamp of authority in the skiing world.

Olympian racer Bob Livermore assumed major responsibility for setting the NSPS on its feet. Under Minnie Dole’s chairmanship, he took on the title (and unending chores) of national Vice Chairman, in addition to running the Eastern Division practically by himself.”

*Gretchen R. Besser, The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 30.*

**1938:** “A standard system of first aid was obligatory. From the outset, the National Ski Patrol utilized the American Red Cross program. Dr. Laurence M. Thompson of the ARC was enlisted to write a special edition of “Ski Safety and First Aid” with emphasis on winter problems for Ski Patrol training; he became the first Medical Advisor of the NSPS, preceding Dr. Whitman Reynolds of Greenwich, Minnie Dole’s own first aid teacher. The National Ski Patrol System and the American Red Cross have worked closely ever since. ...

Dole recognized that any organization, especially one relying heavily on volunteers, needs a program of incentive and reward. He established two grades of patrollers, Locals who remained at specific areas and Nationals who ranged from mountain to mountain, often providing the only rescue assistance for miles around.”

*Gretchen R. Besser, The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 31-32.*

**1938:** “Finances were a headache from the outset. Minnie Dole started the National Ski Patrol with a \$50 contribution from the Amateur Ski Club and a \$100 loan. These funds were soon as exhausted as he was. The NSPS might have foundered before it was halfway launched had it not been for the rescue efforts expended by John E.P. Morgan (#11), the first Ski Patrol Treasurer. A 1917 graduate of Harvard, a Naval Lieutenant in World War I, and the man who had engineered the world’s first chairlift at Sun Valley, John Morgan had a quiet, persuasive personality with the knack of smoothing ruffled feathers and getting what he wanted. He was Minnie Dole’s fiscal savior and right-hand advisor.

After struggling to keep going on the voluntary contributions of patrol members and a few private benefactors, Dole and Morgan decided it was time to enlist support from the skiing public—those who benefited most from the Ski Patrol’s existence. One of Morgan’s first moves was to proclaim National Ski Patrol week in February 1940. ...But the stolid masses failed to budge. Morgan’s membership push netted all of \$2,711.85—“hardly enough to pay for putting on the drive and but little for increased administrative and educational work” as Minnie Dole ruefully commented.”

*Gretchen R. Besser, The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 37-38.*

**April 18, 1938:** “Skiing has grown in popularity so rapidly that safety has not been able to keep up with it. It is at about the same stage of development as swimming was twenty years ago—thousands of enthusiasts with little or no training, and no Life Guards, Life Savers or waterfront control...

At present the ski trails are not regularly patrolled except when special competitions are being run, and in many of the ski fields there is no provision for medical or first aid care of the injured...

The commonest accidents are factures and dislocations. Fractures of the lower leg predominate, and sprains of the ankle and knee. ...

The greatest problem is the transportation of the badly injured –getting them down off the mountains to the road where they can be loaded into an ambulance or truck for the trip to the hospital. Toboggans are used more than any other method in the White Mountains. ...The standard toboggan is too flexible, and on rough trails causes pain to the patient. Some experiments have been tried in reinforcing toboggans with steel strips to give greater rigidity without too much addition of weight.

On the upper slopes, the loaded toboggan can be brought down at good speed with three or four men on skis, with ropes to guide and control the speed. On the steep narrow trails the same ropes are needed, but the men abandon skis and use “crampons”—spiked steel frames attached to the shoes, giving a solid purchase on icy slopes. Six men make a good rescue crew.

First Aid classes should be promoted in the ski clubs, prior to the coming winter season, if possible. The members of these clubs are many of them the younger society set and an interest in Red Cross First Aid should give them an interest in general Red Cross activities which has great future possibilities.

Great care must be used in dealing with the ski clubs and ski enthusiasts not to emphasize too strongly the danger of accidents in skiing. They like to have the public think that it is not a dangerous sport. But after all, four broken legs in a week on one mountain is pretty high.”

*L.M. Thompson, MD to Mr. Enlows: Report on visit to Mt. Washington Ski Field, April 18, 1938, Denver Public Library Dole box 1, FF7.*

**1938:** “When the Ski Patrol was organized in 1938 I was, let’s see, I was 16 or 17...and I joined the ski patrol at that time...while I was still in high school...National Ski Patrol as a local patrolman with the Worcester Ski Club (on Mt Wachusett)...As an organization, it was very haphazard. I know there were toboggans there, but I have no idea how they got up on the mountain. ...There was very little training... I had my first aid, started basically at the YMCA when I was 12 years old....I’ve had a First Aid card all the way up til 1995, when I finally let my instructor card lapse....It was very very meager in directions at that time. I don’t recall any accidents at that time, I was never on any when I was serving with the Worcester Ski Club.

*George Wesson, New England Ski Museum interview, May 1, 2007.*

**1939** “In the summer of 1938 Earle (Dwelly) and Roger (Blackman) became friendly with Phil Robertson, the newly appointed manager of Cranmore Mountain. Cranmore officially opened in 1938 although prior to the development of the South Slope there was a rope tow operated there by Carroll Reed.

Earle stayed and discussed with Phil the fact that he and Roger were exactly what Cranmore needed for a first ski patrol. In those days it was highly unfashionable to even admit the possibility of being seriously injured (which made the lives of early patrolmen very interesting), however it was realized that this eventuality would have to be faced adequately. There was also never any thought of salary: the mere thought of compensation for aiding a skier in distress was unheard of!

The opening weekend of the Skimobile saw only slight snow cover—conditions were “rocky, stumpy and bumpy.” Earle, with help, hauled 30-35 injured off the mountain and delivered at least half that number to the Memorial Hospital. After so many trips, Dr. Harold Shedd remarked “What the Hell’s goin’ on up there?””

*Judy Smith, “Earle Dwelly: In the Early Days of the Ski Patrol,” Mt. Washington Valley Signal, Volume 10 Number 9, February 26, 1972, page 2.*

**1939** “Kraus met (Hannes) Schneider in 1939, while skiing in New England and the two men became lifelong friends. Most of Kraus’ early patients came to him at Schneider’s urging. Then Schneider recommended that Cookie (probably James Negley Cooke—ed), a prominent amateur ski racer who had injured his knee, should go see his friend.

Cookie hobbled into Kraus’ office with his leg in a thick plaster cast from hip to toe—the handiwork of a local surgeon, Cookie reported to Kraus, who had told Cookie that he would be disabled for months while his knee healed. Kraus made a sound of disgust, removed the cast, and gave Cookie several immediate mobilization treatments. After a few days, Cookie was healed.

A few days after this Kraus was treating a patient who knew Cookie. The patient remarked, “It’s amazing what you did for Cookie. After just a few days too! Here he thought he was going to be stuck in that cast for months, and with you, it’s off after several days and he’s walking around fine. Not only that, he’s skiing this weekend at Sun Valley, racing no less.”

...Cookie played a pivotal role in Kraus’ life. All the Northeast skiers soon learned of Cookie’s stunning recovery. It was a real start for Kraus’ practice in the US. Kraus could at least afford to move back into his boarding house. And he earned the nickname “The Ski Doctor.”

*Susan E B Schwartz, Into the Unknown: The Remarkable Life of Hans Kraus, iUniverse, Inc, New York, 2005, page 68.*

**1939 (second year of operation of Cannon Tramway):** “The pulling cable to the tramway came off of what they called the bicycle wheel at the top of the mountain. It simply left a lot of sag into the pulling cable, and of course when that sag developed it automatically shut the tramway down so the cars were stranded out on the line. And then we went about getting the people out of the cars. Each cars was equipped with ropes that they let down through a trap door, and all the people in the cars were let down on these ropes, and then they were met, those near the Valley station walked down the tramway line, and those that were up above walked down the Cannon ski trail. Everyone arrived at the bottom safely, no one was hurt.... In each car they had a rope that reached from the car to the ground at any point that the car happened to be. Also in the car was a boson’s chair, and in the center of the car there was a trap door, and above that trap door there was a pulley. When this accident occurred, we let out the rope, attached it to the pulley, and employees from the tramway, went so they were below each car and when they were ready, they handled the people coming out of the car, one at a time. And each passenger was let down to the ground.”  
*Ken Boothroyd, Audiotape of interview with Arthur March, 9-27-1988, New England Ski Museum Collection.*

**December, 1939** “Baldy, as it was even then referred to, opened in December.”  
*Wendolyn Spence Holland, Sun Valley: An Extraordinary History, The Idaho Press, Ketchum ID, 1998, page 249.*

**December, 1939** First ski patrol at Sun Valley hired. Eusebio “Sebby” Arriaga was the director, at \$75 a week, a blue parka, room in the Pine Chalet along with the ski instructors, and board. Previously, with lifts on Dollar, Ruud and Proctor Mountains, all low, wide-open hills, there was apparently no need for patrollers. Most skiers were in ski lessons, and the European instructors most likely needed to know first aid to obtain their home country credentials. Arriaga had a little first aid training, and worked with an ARC First Aid manual.  
*Nelson Bennett, personal communication with Leich, 5-11-2007.*

**December 16, 1940** Nelson Bennett’s first day as patroller at Sun Valley. On 1-9-1941 he was appointed patrol director. When he started at Sun Valley, the patrol’s routine was established; he speculated that Friedl Pfeiffer and Sebby Arriaga collaborated to develop it. Patrol inspected lifts, skied trails, had communication via lift terminals with a summit headquarters which was manned at all times. Accidents were handled with ‘pleasure’ toboggans, and patients in toboggans were downloaded on chairlifts with specially made brackets if they were located above the tops of one or two of the series of three chairs stacked vertically. All open trails were swept at the end of the day. There were several lift evacuations while Bennett was at Sun Valley. None of the lifts had backup power, and all were electric drive. When the power went out, evacuation was needed. The chairlifts on Dollar, Ruud and Proctor Mountains were low, so low the paths of chairs was sometimes shoveled, so evacuation was not a critical issue. When the chairlift system went in on Baldy, with some chairs 40 feet off the ground, ropes were required. Bennett was a climber and familiar with ropes. Patrollers tied a loop in a rope with a bowline on a bight, placed the rope over the cable by throwing it or climbing a tower (though he used a bow and arrow for a leader line later at White Pass), and the passenger placed the loop around the chest and under the arms. Bennett recalled one evacuation on #1 Lift in which a chair was located over the Wood River. He tied himself into a rope and went hand over hand along the lift cable to the chair, where he tied the passenger in. A second rope from the passenger to a patroller, Lew Wood, on the bank was used to bring her onto the riverbank as she was lowered. In another evacuation, a toboggan with a patient was downloaded on the lift and had to be lowered.  
*Nelson Bennett, personal communication with Leich, 5-11-2007.*

**November 17, 1940:** ““I remember that very clearly,” said Sepp. “It was my birthday. The lift got stuck. There was 49 newspapermen dangling in the air for over an hour. Blinding snowstorm. We had to pull them down with ropes, like the Wolga-schiffer.””  
*Ezra Bowen, The Book of American Skiing, Bonanza Books, New York, 1963, page 159.*

**November 17, 1940:** “On its first day of operation it was found to be grossly underpowered. Each chair was loaded but everyone soon realized that the lift was moving slower and slower. It finally stopped with the first official rider, “Nose Dive Annie” Cooke somewhere around halfway up the mountain. The lift

didn't reverse and no techniques had been worked out to evacuate passengers. Eventually, they tied a rope to the bottom chairs and teams began manually pulling the lift backwards so that passengers could get off. For the rest of the season, they loaded only every third or fourth chair."

*Brian Linder, "History of Lifts at Stowe Mountain Resort," 2001, page 2, monograph in New England Ski Museum collection*

**ca 1940-41:** "The (Mt Mansfield) Lift certainly wrought changes. Business in all lines boomed and, from officiating at an occasional race and hauling out a few unfortunate skiers, the Ski Patrol developed into an extremely busy and important organization. There were new problems to be solved and new procedures to be devised. Just as we were getting "in the groove" the war came to add new complications, among them a shortage of manpower."

*Luther S. Booth, "Light Powder Snow With Some Crust," American Ski Annual, 1943-44, page 47.*

**1940:** "Stowe answered the call with thirty strong and patriotic skiers (to the 10<sup>th</sup>). This left the local patrol short of help. It was decided to hire a full-time professional patroller, Fritz Kramer who became Stowe's first professional patrolman in 1940. He gained notoriety by being the first patrolman to lead a toboggan down the Nose Dive Trail single-handedly."

*Michael Doherty, "Mount Mansfield Ski Patrol History", page 8, photocopy of typescript in George Wesson Papers, New England Ski Museum.*

**January 31, 1941:** "North Creek has what appears to be a very conscientious ski patrol. It is well organized and is one of the few patrols which is paid for its services. ...it is composed of 14 patrolmen who patrol all trails and slopes over a weekend."

*"Break Your Neck and the Patrol will Take Care of You, Ski News, Vol 3, No 10, January 31, 1941, page 6.*

**February 18, 1941:** "First, let me preface my remarks concerning the Finnish troops with the observation that there at least (and here too I suspect) the strength of the ski troop is not so much in its concentrated organization, but rather in the unpredictable initiative of each member. The Finnish skiers were their own armies, their own general staffs, and many is the boy who tackled and downed a tank with no more weapon than a log of wood or a gasoline filled bottle tied to a hand grenade.

Therefore I should think that it would be wise for the Army to encourage initiative and self-reliance rather than strict mechanical discipline among its ski troopers. ...

I would urge anyone who is seriously contemplating building up some "Alpini" in this country to remember that we have several fellows who already know a lot about it and who might well be in at the top of the heap. Specifically I think Walter Prager and Jack Durrance are probably the best men in the country to be at the head of a mountain division. There is little use wasting all the time and energy teaching a bunch of southerners how to ski. I should think that the army would call in the thousands of experienced skiers, send them to a good training place in Colorado, and from them build the nucleus of an expanding winter defense force."

*Dave Bradley to Charles M. Dole, February 18, 1941, New England Ski Museum accession number 2006.137.045 (photocopy).*

**No date (probably 1940-41 season):** "...found no such bashing on Cannon Mountain last week end...It just isn't done on Cannon and if attempted the ski patrol organized by Roland Peabody, ski kannonen and general manager of the aerial tramway, puts a stop to it. Refusal to comply with a reasonable request results in banishment from the tramway and the trails—they are all very polite...but they mean what they say."

"This Uphiller was pretty much impressed by the entire patrol setup on Cannon. The patrol of twelve experts is fully equipped. Every important trail is run at about half-hour intervals. Each trail is divided into segments, numbered or lettered with black on orange signs on the trees; and fifteen telephones, interconnected, permit a patrolman to report an accident and designate its location from any of these phones. Special ski toboggans equipped with chemical, self-heating pads and blankets, traction splints, thermos kits, etc are immediately forthcoming. By the time, never more than an hour from any point, the

injured skier arrives at the base station infirmary, a doctor and ambulance are waiting. Needless to say these patrolmen are thoroughly trained in rescue and first aid work. And particularly noticeable is their invariable courtesy.”

“*Safety Patrol Guards Skiers on Mt Cannon*”, *Ski News*, *New England Ski Museum accession number 2006.137.048 (photocopy)*

**No date (about the time of the war):** In fact, we developed the first toboggan with a brake on it, and first to develop the brake, actually, was one of the rigger foremen at the mountain. His name was Bill Condit. He never got any credit for it but he was the one that really developed the brake because before that, you took the person --injured person down and you had four ropes and you stemmed like hell and hoped you could hold the toboggan. This was --this was on a – spring loaded and I – I think it was spring loaded with a – what was the rubber that they used to put around our ankles to hold the heel down?... was a superdiagonal on there for a spring.

And you pulled down on one rope on this metal stanchion that came out of it. You pulled down on the rope and it pulled this metal piece down that was shaped like that, with teeth in it, and the teeth dug into the snow. And you could hold onto about anything or any degree of snow difficulty. “

*Roger Peabody, New England Ski Museum interview May 20, 2004, Megan McCarthy, Jeff Leich.*

**Post-1940-41 season:** “I think it is fair to say that more progress has been made in the development of the National Ski Patrol System during the 1940-41 season than in any previous year. The first two years of necessity were spent merely on national organization, with as much effort as possible being given to the building of divisional activities. Last year the emphasis was placed upon the development of the Ski Patrol as a national system of ski patrols.

...I can say without prejudice that the Eastern Division has made the greatest strides, at the same time understanding the reasons why. The territory is far more concentrated and thus the opportunity for reaching more sections is made easier. However, Divisional Chairman Bob Livermore realized that it was necessary to appoint more section chiefs to reach and organize new areas and he was able to impart his enthusiasm and ideas to them. The result is that the Eastern Division started the season with 60 patrols and ended with 111 patrols.

There has been a rising clamor from our good friends, the females, for some time asking recognition in the Ski Patrol System. I have always been in favor of this, but realizing the experience of the cigarette companies I have always shied away. When women took up smoking it doubled the business of the companies.... However this year we have decided to go ahead and now all women who pass the first aid and skiing requirements of the National Ski Patrol System are eligible for membership in local patrols and to wear the blue badge.”

Charles M. Dole, *Annual Report of the National Ski Patrol System*, no date, *New England Ski Museum accession number 2006.137.049 (photocopy)*.

**November 11, 1941:**

“1. There are 1,974 injuries reported.

2. There are not as many active skiers in the U.S. as has been estimated in the past. The figure is about 1,000,000.

3. There was one skiing death. The skier was crushed in an avalanche.

5. The ankle is the most vulnerable part of the body and is followed by the knee.

7. Inexperience, Fatigue, Lack of Control, Weather Conditions, Terrain are factors in order of importance making for accidents.

8. The best-controlled accident statistics give a ration of less than five accidents of all types per 1,000 skiers...

9. Type of skiing equipment has little influence on the severity of accident.

10. Some of the worst injuries resulted from faulty tow or lift equipment.

*Whitman Mead Reynolds, Medical Report, National Ski Patrol, New England Ski Museum accession number 2006.137.049 (Photocopy)*.

**No Date (In those Early Days):** “Tom Ludwig once told the writer: “In those early days , we used eight-foot hickory sports toboggans with the front end curled up. They had no handles or brakes. One of the ways to slow a toboggan down was to put a handful of rocks in a triangular bandage, knot it, and then tied the whole thing under the front of the sled, so that when you pressed down. you had a brake of sorts. Later, someone got the idea of taking a chain from an oversized truck wheel and using it as a brake; then somebody else thought of welding little hedgehog-like links in the truck chain. That’s how equipment evolved, little by little, with everybody contributing ideas.”

...Many persons or patrols take credit for creations or innovations whose provenance is impossible to validate except by good will. Thus, the Anthony Lakes Ski Patrol claims it is the originator of the first-aid belt; Roger Peabody considers himself responsible, with Hans Thorner, for devising the first metal handles on a toboggan, following the Swiss custom of bringing hay down from the uplands on a cart with hickory shafts; the Belleayre Ski Patrol of New York, through the insistence of Dr. Hans Kraus, used the first backboard in the country, etc.”

*Gretchen R. Besser, The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 37.*

**Probably late 1940 or early 1941:** “Bob Bates is correct in remembering that I was the great enthusiast for the Bramani (or as they are now called Vibram, from the name Vittorio Bramani) soles. I was climbing in Switzerland just as the war started. A Swiss friend of mine had the new-fangled soles on his boots and I made fun of them. He stood the teasing for just so long and then, looking at my feet, insisted that we must just about have the same size feet and that we were going to change. I was amazed to see how they held on rock and snow, how much more they cushioned your feet than the old Tricouni nails had, how quiet they were...Then came the war and we all got to work in Washington. I was a strong advocate of Bramani soles, but we had no idea of how to get a pair...

After the test was over, we descended to Pinkham Notch. There in the AMC hut as I walked in I caught sight of a pair of the long sought boots. The wearer was a Central European, Swiss or Austrian I think, living in this country. I believe we let him make his climb before we clamped onto the boots. He very generously let us have the boots and at long last the rubber companies has a real model on which to base their pilot models. I have forgotten who the gracious owner was, but lots of members of the 10<sup>th</sup> can certainly be grateful to him.”

*Adams Carter to Mr. (probably Hal) Burton, March 31, 1966, Denver Public Library Dole Box 8, FF43.*

**1940-41:** “With a realization that the very backbone of the System is the large number of scattered Local Patrols, an effort was made last winter to embrace them within the National System. The result is gratifying, for 89 Local Patrols, composed of approximately 1500 Patrolmen have already registered. These, together with 300 National Patrolmen, make a strong basis to start our third season.

National Patrolmen are required to have 40 hours of First Aid training before being eligible for appointment. All other Patrolmen have been urged to take this training and large numbers have done so.

Whereas the Local Patrolman’s chief responsibility lies mainly in his own locality, the National Patrolman’s responsibility never ceases. He is a roving Patrolman. Whenever he skis he must be on the alert to help and cooperate not only with the Local Patrol but with all skiers.

...The very heart of the National Ski Patrol System is its voluntary nature. There are a small but increasing number of commercial developments that elect to have paid Patrolmen in their areas. Because the National Ski Patrol System is interested in the welfare of all skiers, we have elected to include paid Patrolmen in the System in order that they as individuals may contribute valuable ideas and the areas where they are employed may have the benefit of the work of the Patrol System.

Local patrols are divided into two groups. The Senior Patrolman is awarded the badge with the orange cross, designating him as a First Aid trained man. Junior Patrolmen are designated as such by an orange badge which contains no cross, signifying that they have not as yet taken their First Aid courses.”

*C M Dole, Ed Annual Report of the National Ski Patrol System, 1940-41, National Ski Patrol System, New York, 1940, pages 5-15.*

**November 15, 1941** “...the activation of the Mountain and Winter Warfare Board and a reinforced battalion of the 87<sup>th</sup> Mountain Infantry, commanded by Lt Col Onslow S Rolfe, at Fort Lewis, Washington. These organizations were later joined by a battalion of pack artillery. The original personnel were men with previous mountaineering or ski experience already in the army. Additional volunteers were recruited by the National Ski Association.

The aid given by this association in regard to equipment and technical training had proved so valuable that on 1 March 1941 a formal contract was drawn between it and the War Department calling for the continuation of these activities. With the activation of the mountain troops the contract was broadened and one of the principal duties of the National Ski Association became the selection and recruiting of highly specialized personnel with qualifications as skiers and mountaineers.”

*Captain Thomas P. Govan, “Training in Mountain and Winter Warfare,” Study No 23, Historical Section, US Army Ground Forces, 1946, pages 5.*

**1942:** “The word research conjures up a picture of a laboratory full of exotic equipment and staffed by scientists. There is such an avalanche research establishment in Davos, Switzerland, the Swiss Federal Institute for Snow and Avalanche Research, founded in 1942. It was the culmination of formal studies that had been going since the early 1930s.”

*Montgomery M. Atwater, The Avalanche Hunters, Macrae Smith Company, Philadelphia, 1968, page 34.*

**October 1942** “...a detachment of 10 officers and 16 enlisted men was sent in October to Camp Edwards, Massachusetts and from there to Lincoln, New Hampshire. Its mission was to instruct certain personnel of the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in the fundamentals of assault rock climbing and elementary mountaineering. These men in turn began teaching their newly acquired skills to the remainder of the division under the supervision of the group from Mountain Training Center.”

(Endnote to above: “The purpose of the program was not primarily the training of the 36<sup>th</sup> Division but was a part of an elaborate intelligence plan to persuade the Germans that an invasion of Norway was in prospect. The deception succeeded and caused the Germans to move troops to the north for at the exact moment that US and British troops were moving towards North Africa for the 1<sup>st</sup> invasion. Interview of Second Army Hist Off with Col L.A.H. Jones, AcofS, G-2, Second Army, 1 Jun 44. Col Jones was formerly AcofS, G-2, Icelandic Comd.”).

*Captain Thomas P. Govan, “Training in Mountain and Winter Warfare,” Study No 23, Historical Section, US Army Ground Forces, 1946, pages 7, 17.*

**1943:** “By spring two additional regiments, the 85<sup>th</sup> and 86<sup>th</sup>, had joined to form the 10<sup>th</sup> Light Division, officially activated on July 15, 1943, 15,000 strong.

Word reached the National Ski Patrol that volunteers were needed—2500 men in 60 days. By hurriedly circulating memos to all patrolmen and visiting the Eastern colleges in person, Minnie Dole recruited an unexpected 3500 men within the deadline. Everyone who joined the mountain troops was a volunteer and almost all were screened by the NSPS, the only civilian agency authorized by the War Department to recruit specialized personnel.

...Dole and the NSPS were adept at cutting through red tape to ensure that men assigned to Camp Hale actually arrived there. Many ex-mountaineers still recall with amazement the ease with which Minnie Dole unsnarled snafued orders and had them transferred to Colorado from the swamps of Louisiana or the flatlands of Texas.

...To ensure that only top personnel enlisted, the NSPS required each applicant to submit three letters of recommendation testifying to qualifications of “exceptional stamina.” The Army was satisfied to rubberstamp the decisions of the NSPS as final.”

Gretchen R. Besser, *The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow*, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 47-48.

**1943:** “The 87<sup>th</sup> Infantry was in fact shipped to the Aleutians in August 1943 to rout out Japanese troops supposedly entrenched on the island of Kiska. The “Kiska fiasco” as it came to be called, was no laughing matter for the men who waded ashore in the gray dawn of August 15, their faces smeared with green and brown greasepaint, to storm the beachhead under cover of a pea-soup fog. As they scaled the cliffs above the narrow landing beach and scoured the wind-whipped tundra for an elusive enemy, reputed to be 10-12,000 strong, no one knew that the Japanese had slipped away two weeks before. The fog made visibility impossible, and it was a tragic mistake when a company of US soldiers, fearful of ambush, opened fire on their invisible comrades, shrouded in the mist.

Gretchen R. Besser, *The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow*, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 50.

**1944:** (On Homestake Peak, west side) “I do think I came to just as I hit the snow. And they say you swim, you start swimming because you can’t breathe. From that time on—this was about 9:15 in the morning—and we were headed back to camp for breakfast, second breakfast now, because we had started out about 2:30--3:00 o’clock that morning. 1:30, about 1:30 we got to the hospital the next day...

I could see it 30 feet away (an avalanche slope), all you had to do was look up, I told him (his officer, a Lt in Company B, 90th), “you damn fool” and a lot of other language, “look at this, 14 or 15 acres, all clear, and look at that stump up there”... you know the 7 Sisters at Loveland, what I was looking at I called the 3 Brothers, there were three of them... and I said “how is he going to get us across here”, but he came back and said, no, we’ll go down there...

At one time I had a group, and we were blasting avalanche areas before we went up there, both with the 60 mm mortars and 81 mm mortars, we used both, depending on how close we could get....”

George Wesson, *New England Ski Museum interview*, May 1, 2007.

**June 6, 1945:** “Our War Department contract which has allowed the NSPS to exist and expand during the past five years is to conclude on June 30, 1945. This then is the end of financial assistance. Now the NSPS has been carrying on since its birth without funds and entirely by volunteers. My next job is to put it on a firm financial basis so that it can continue to operate on a national scale and be supported by all skiers who benefit from its existence. To accomplish this it is going to take funds. I figure \$30,000 would allow us, who have worked on this project for so long, to put it on a self-supporting basis. Where this sum is coming from I don’t know but it seems to me that a few people of wealth who are fond of the sport, who want it to continue, and who could be brought to see the great good the NSPS has done and can do in the future for skiing, might be induced to make a gift of this sum. You see the NSPS is a voluntary non-profit organization not subject to taxes and the Treasury Department has ruled that gifts to us are deductible from personal income tax. In these days of high taxes certain individuals might be interested in doing something very constructive for skiing and actually have it cost them very little.”

Charles M. Dole to Mrs. Ann Cooke, Stowe Vermont, *Denver Public Library*, Dole Box 2, FF17.

**1945:** “...The contribution of the National Ski Patrol System was crucial to the very existence of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. In the end, the Ski Patrol office had processed the applications of 10,634 enlisted men and sent 376 officers and graduates of OCS to Camp Hale.”

Gretchen R. Besser, *The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow*, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 53-54.

**Fall 1945:** “When I arrived in the fall of 1945, Alta was in its seventh season....Already, too, avalanches had mowed down one of the shelters and taken the life of a skier....I heard about the job at Alta from my friend Sverre Engen. I got it, but not from any surpassing merit I possessed. There were dozens of better-qualified ski mountaineers in the Tenth, which hadn’t been deactivated yet.

Supervisor Koziol made it plain that he, as the Forest Service's custodian and sponsor of the first truly alpine ski area in the United States, was not prepared to accept any European-style casualty list. I was there to prevent such a thing.

The program was not popular with anyone. The operators were there to make money, the skiers were there to ski, and both of them resented the authority of some bureaucrat to close the area because he had a notion that it was dangerous. ...As for equipment, I had a set of thermometers, a stake for measuring snow depth, and a bundle of signs that read:

Closed Area  
Avalanche Area"

*Montgomery M. Atwater, The Avalanche Hunters, Macrae Smith Company, Philadelphia, 1968, pages 4-8.*

**1947-48 and after:** "We had them quite often (lift evacuations). One of the simplest (techniques)...the skier at that time was a well-versed person who knew how to take care of themselves, male or female. The apparatus used at Mansfield while I was there was the simplest thing you could possibly have: a rope with a triangular unit...all you did, you dropped your skis to the patroller...you put both feet in that triangle, held onto the rope, and you slid down, because the patroller at the other end of the rope ...just body weight took them down.

With Charlie Lord there, I imagine they started very early.  
*George Wesson, New England Ski Museum interview, May 1, 2007.*

**1948:** "...I still remember my first avalanche blasting expedition. Mel Walker, the highway foreman, and I took a whole box of dynamite and touched it off on the highway under Mt. Superior. The echoes bounced energetically from mountainside to mountainside. Nothing else happened.

The second effort was more productive. By one of those strokes of fortune, the Wasatch National Forest had a large supply of a wartime demolition explosive known as tetrytol. It was specially designed for shock power. By shock power I mean the speed at which the explosion occurs; rate of detonation is the technical term...Thus was revealed to us at the start, by accident, a principle of avalanche control unknown at the time that we might not have learned for years: the vibratory effect of a very fast explosive is more important than blowing a hole in the snow.

...Knowing little about the nature and effect of tetrytol, I tossed the whole haversackfull onto the (Rustler) Face, about twenty pounds. ...Like a buck startled out of a covert, a slab avalanche sprang into the air and went bounding down the slope...And I stopped shooting off tetrytol in twenty-pound lots. Four was ample.  
*Montgomery M. Atwater, The Avalanche Hunters, Macrae Smith Company, Philadelphia, 1968, page 50..*

**February 26, 1948:** "It looks like I am in the middle again, with Joe Dodge and the National Ski Patrol. I am in favor of only having qualified patrolmen on the patrol but Joe thinks that there are a good number of skiers who ski in Pinkham who know what to do in time of an accident. We had agreed that the patrol man would not wear a regular National Ski Patrol System badge, but I would find out if we could have a Mt. Washington Ski Patrol badge or Mt. Washington Patrol badge. Would you please let me know what you think of these last two patrols. "  
*Henry "Swampy" Paris to Charles M. Dole, February 26, 1948, Denver Public Library Dole Box 5, FF30.*

**March 1, 1948:** "I am afraid I will have to let you settle the patrol situation in Tuckerman's with Joe Dodge. As far as I am concerned, I certainly don't want any patrolman wearing the NSPS badge if he is not fully qualified and up to date on our required standards. I am sure that you will agree with this. If Joe wants to have other men working as patrolmen for him that is entirely up to him. It seems a great shame that he doesn't realize how necessary it is to have full first aid training in order to do a proper job.

It is becoming more and more a practice to have skiers serve a definite apprenticeship in a local patrol before they are even recommended as National Patrolmen. In the old days I admit that there were certain

appointments as National Patrolmen that surely were not deserved but I am hopeful that we can break away from that angle for good.”

*Charles M. Dole to Henry “Swampy” Paris, March 1, 1948, Denver Public Library Dole Box 5, FF30*

**May 13, 1948:** “The Mt. Washington Volunteer Ski Patrol is formed, although it is still small but will grow when we get the right patrolmen. Joe Dodge is Director, Bill Putnam is Secretary and authority on snow conditions. He is a member of the Harvard Mountaineering Club and lives in Springfield. He is not a patrolman but has had some First Aid. Am trying to get him to renew his card. I am chief patrolman and Treasurer.”

*Henry “Swampy” Paris to Charles M. Dole, May 13, 1948, Denver Public Library Dole Box 5, FF30.*

**May 17, 1948:** “...I believe with Howard (Moody) that the paid professional patrol is the absolute answer for all areas who cater to the public in sizeable numbers. It means that they will not only be on the spot when needed, but that they may be counted upon. In addition, because of their practice in both skiing and the handling of toboggans and first-aid, that they are adept.

As you know, I have always welcomed professional patrols in the NSPS from the day the first one was formed feeling that we are all trying to accomplish the same end and that we can learn much from them as well as perhaps our being of some benefit to them. The volunteer patrolmen, by the very nature of his being a volunteer, is in most cases never going to be as proficient as the professional patrolman who is working at the job day in and day out. On the other hand, the majority of skiing areas cannot afford to maintain patrols that will be large enough to adequately service the areas. The volunteer, therefore, in my opinion will always serve a useful purpose.

...Howard’s thought that he has seen volunteer patrolmen who in his opinion are not proficient enough touches a very soft spot with me. I know this to be the case and I am seeking a way to rectify it.

...I have written to Howard thanking him and congratulating him on his thoughtful and intelligent report and I sure hope that the Mt. Mansfield area will continue to keep statistics and have reports made in the future on the basis of this one.”

*Charles M. Dole to Roland Palmedo, May 17, 1948, Denver Public Library Dole Box 5, FF26.*

**July 1948:** “It (NSPS) was already a corporate entity with tax-exempt privileges (Minnie Dole had pulled off that coup in July 1948, with the sponsorship of the New York Ski Council and five dedicated patrollers exemplified by Ken Littlefield, a World War I combat veteran who was the first Regional Chairman in the country, originated Trail Sweep, and in 1949 won the Eastern Amateur Ski Safety Trophy). NSPS membership numbered 193 patrols and 3500 registered patrollers on its tenth anniversary in 1948. Headquarters has long since overflowed Minnie Dole’s private den in Greenwich and his office in the Graybar Building in New York, and now moved to Denver for the convenience of the next National Director, Ed Taylor, who took over the reins (or chains) of office in 1950.”

*Gretchen R. Besser, The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 56-57.*

**1948-49:** “In late winter, Alta was the site of the first avalanche training school in the Western Hemisphere. As the only full-time professional avalanche man in the United States at that time, I made up the curriculum, prepared the exhibits, and was almost the only instructor.

The highlight of that first session was a visit from Andre Roch of the Avalanche Institute, a delightful personality and a gifted scientist...It was thanks to Roch that after his visit the Forest Service set up research stations at Stevens Pass in Washington and at Berthoud Pass in Colorado.

...I found that there were no words to describe some of the methods and discoveries. I had to invent a technical language: snowfall intensity (S.I.), precipitation intensity (P.I.), direct-and delayed-action avalanche, soft slab, contributory avalanche factor, snow-settlement ratio, protective skiing.”

*Montgomery M. Atwater, The Avalanche Hunters, Macrae Smith Company, Philadelphia, 1968, pages 42-43.*

**1949:** Sun Valley toboggan design finalized after several seasons of experimenting.  
*Nelson Bennett, personal communication with Leich, 5-12-07*

**January 1951 and preceding:** “In these early days of avalanche control in the Western Hemisphere, our only means was to ski the slopes themselves. If they didn’t slide with us, presumably they wouldn’t with anyone else. In the light of present knowledge and technique it was pretty crude.

Our method of avalanche busting on skis was to work in pairs. We would approach the avalanche path as high as we could get. While one man took his cut at the slidepath, his partner watched from a secure position under a rock, behind a tree. From a secure position, in turn, the first man would watch his partner take a cut, going farther down. No one has yet invented a faster way of opening up a ski area after a storm.”  
*Montgomery M. Atwater, The Avalanche Hunters, Macrae Smith Company, Philadelphia, 1968, page 17.*

**1951:** “In 1951 Atwater was able to bring artillery into the picture. Almost as soon as the military weaponry began their assault on the Little Cottonwood Valley did the murmurings of the imminent obsolescence of both the guns and their warheads begin.”  
*John Brennan, “Pitching Explosives: A Short History of Avalaunchers”, The Journal of Explosives Engineering, September/October 2006, page 16.*

**1951 (based on Brennan article above):** “I wanted artillery. What infantryman doesn’t?...Koziol pulled in Salt Lake City; Herbert pushed in Washington. One day there was a message from the Supervisor’s office: prepare to entertain the Utah National Guard...The National Guard came in two huge six-by-sixes and one jeep, towing what turned out to be a World War I French 75.

Artillerymen love to shoot. Captain Elkins of the Utah National Guard blazed merrily away, hit every target I offered him, and begged for more. As a demonstration, it was a complete success. From the highway in front of the Forest Service garage, the 75 could shoot 180 degrees...almost the entire ski area, from one position. On foot, to cover the same amount of ground often took three days.”  
*Montgomery M. Atwater, The Avalanche Hunters, Macrae Smith Company, Philadelphia, 1968, page 59.*

**1951:** “For a number of years, (Dr. Hans) Kraus was Eastern Division Medical Advisor. One day in 1951, he was called to an accident involving a young man with a neck injury. Since there was no backboard available, Kraus dismantled a trail sign and strapped the patient to it. Dave Hill was brought down safely, operated on for a fractured cervical vertebra, went back to skiing, and eventually joined the Belleayre Patrol. After this incident, backboards became standard equipment for the ski patrol.  
*Gretchen R. Besser, The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 142.*

**October 1954:** “...at the USEASA convention in Philadelphia, a system of toboggan tests was devised in an attempt to improve the existing situation. Two choices were then made available to all patrolmen in the Eastern division of the NSPS; take the test, or sew on a retired patch. Nothing much happened, however...”  
*Austin Macaulay, “History of the Professional Ski Patrol Association”, ca. 1980, 2-page brochure, NESM 2004.096.001.*

**November 1, 1954:** “Do you have a First Aid Room or Shelter? Yes with X-ray available on weekends.”  
*National Ski Patrol System, Patrol Information Questionnaire for Registered Patrols, Mad River Glen Ski Patrol, photocopy of questionnaire in George Wesson Papers, New England Ski Museum*

**1958:** “The professional attitude of the Mansfield Patrol led to disagreements with the NSPS in the late fifties. Considering the task of patrolling on Mount Mansfield more difficult than at most areas, the MMSP was hesitant to accept National volunteers’ services. When volunteers arrived at Stowe’s patrol station they were “wrung out.” a patrol leader would ski with the National to determine his capabilities and sense of commitment. If a competent visitor agreed to work at Stowe frequently, he should be invited back. Too

many volunteers fell short of Mansfield's stringent demands; and Stowe began to accept only the services of their own seasoned veterans.

This cantankerous Vermont attitude pervaded Stowe's relationship with the National System. The NSPS devised standards of skiing and medical treatment capabilities which would allow their volunteers to serve nationwide. Stowe's seasoned professionals would not accede to these standards. The disagreement over standardization came to loggerheads in 1958. The National would no longer approve the use of traction splinting. Mansfield, long striving for greater proficiency standards, terminated their National membership."

*Michael Doherty, "Mount Mansfield Ski Patrol History", page 10-11, photocopy of typescript in George Wesson Papers, New England Ski Museum.*

**ND (winter of 1958?):** "I started the thought of a professional ski patrol organization along with John King, when we were sweeping one night at Mt. Mansfield. We had a long wait because we had to wait for two people to get down to this point...I said, "John, what do you think of the paid patrol organizing a professional organization, not for the money, but just for the grouping, how the different patrols work, so we can exchange; don't ever bring up payment, pay, or anything like that. This is just to get together with people doing the same job as an organization so we can compare"."

*George Wesson, New England Ski Museum interview, May 1, 2007.*

**1958:** "For a long time, the NSPS was the troublesome stepchild of the National Ski Association...Severance was a painful jolt, as it often is within families of like temperaments and conflicting interests, but in the annals of history (the skirmishing and ill will by now forgotten), the NSPS achieved separate status in 1958 under National Director William Judd."

*Gretchen R. Besser, The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 56.*

**1959:** "As in every voluntary organization, enforcement of a high level of standards often becomes lax in localized spots. Unfortunately, this has occurred in certain eastern areas within the past few years, and has resulted in some professional patrolmen feeling that the volunteer patrolmen were not capable of the same effort and skill that the professional was."

*William R. Judd (Director, NSPS), "The Ski Patrol Story: Chapter Two", USEASA Eastern Ski Annual, 1959, page 197.*

**May 1959:** "John King offered a detailed proposal for the establishment of a USEASA committee whose purpose would be the examination and approval of ski patrolmen eligible and capable of working with or being hired by paid patrols in the larger areas."

*"Atlantic City Convention", USEASA Eastern Ski Annual, 1959, page 50.*

**Fall 1959:** USEASA appointed a committee to carry out this program under the chairmanship of John King, then Patrol Leader at Mt. Mansfield, Stowe Vermont. This committee was to form the "Approved Patrol of the USEASA".

*Austin Macaulay, "History of the Professional Ski Patrol Association", ca. 1980, 2-page brochure, NESM 2004.096.001.*

**1960** "In 1960 in Squaw Valley, the US became the first country in 32 years of Olympic history to cover the Games with a volunteer ski patrol: 48 men and 3 women proved their mettle in dramatic fashion when they patrolled the North American Championships in 1959 in a dress rehearsal for the Olympics. They squelched the skeptics, upstaged the US Marines, and made blister history in the process.

*Gretchen R. Besser, The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 123.*

**April 11, 1960:** "...First Aid, ski, and toboggan tests were held at Stowe, VT. The following two years exams were held at Cannon Mountain and Wildcat."

*Austin Macaulay, "History of the Professional Ski Patrol Association", ca. 1980, 2-page brochure, NESM 2004.096.001.*

**1960:** "At the 1959 USEASA convention, a letter was presented to the delegates stating that in most of the major Eastern ski areas employing paid patrolmen, a problem existed in securing competent, well-trained personnel. A committee was appointed at the convention to organize a "USEASA Approved Ski Patrol" for the purpose of training and regulating patrolmen.

The committee consists of Chairman John King, Mt. Mansfield Ski Patrol; Austin Macaulay, Cannon Mt. Ski Patrol; Don Garnett, Cranmore Mt. Ski Patrol; Dr. Glenn MacDonald, National Life Insurance Co., Montpelier, Vt.; Raymond Amiro, American Red Cross; and Perry Williams, Snow Ridge, NY. In January of 1960 patrol leaders from the interested areas attended a meeting and agreed to issue apprentice cards to those persons whom they felt met the requirements of the USEASA Approved Patrol committee, i.e.: experience, first aid training, toboggan handling, skiing ability, and proper attitude toward the public. After serving an apprentice period of one season at one of these areas, the apprentice would be qualified to take the USEASA exam.

At this time, the committee voted to waive about a dozen men into the USEASA Patrol whose years of experience in patrol work make it unnecessary for them to take the exam.

On April 11, an exam was held at Stowe, Vt., the Mt. Mansfield Company acting as host. There were 23 candidates from four areas--the majority of whom were veterans of several years of patrolling. The candidates were required to run through certain basic ski maneuvers and to handle two different types of toboggans. The examination also served to establish what revisions should be made in order to formulate a more sound procedure for future tests."

List of 37 USEASA Approved Ski Patrolmen, 1960-61, follows. Most are from the North Conway, Stowe, or Franconia areas.

*John King, "USEASA Approved Ski Patrol", USEASA Ski Annual, 1960-61, page 101.*

**1961 (Summer and following):** "While Atwater was experimenting with a variety of alternatives, each had their drawbacks. In the summer of 1961 one of Atwater's supervisors showed him some product literature of a pneumatic baseball pitching machine. The wheels began turning and after several conversations with the machine's inventor, Atwater was able to view a demonstration of the first Avalauncher late that same year.

Frank Parsonneault was the genius behind both the pitching machine and the Avalauncher. His full time job was as a fixtures engineer for Douglas Aircraft but on the side he was an inventor. What made both machines work was a valve that would allow for the almost instantaneous release of compressed gas. By the late 1950s, many Major League teams were using Parsonneault's "Fireball" pitching machine."  
*John Brennan, "Pitching Explosives: A Short History of Avalaunchers", The Journal of Explosives Engineering, September/October 2006, page 16.*

**Spring 1962:** "...at the USEASA convention, legislation was passed in the form of a power play. Suddenly, The Approved Patrol was out of business."

*Austin Macaulay, "History of the Professional Ski Patrol Association", ca. 1980, 2-page brochure, NESM 2004.096.001.*

**ND:** "At a meeting at Haystack, we were having an Approved Ski Patrol meeting, and we got the answer from National. Within a week or week and a half we had been to the proper lawyers, we had been to the proper state officials, and PSPA was formed."

*George Wesson, New England Ski Museum interview, May 1, 2007.*

**ND:** "Some members of the committee regrouped, and after considering many possibilities, formed our present organization of professional patrolmen at a meeting at Mt. Sunapee, NH."

*Austin Macaulay, "History of the Professional Ski Patrol Association", ca. 1980, 2-page brochure, NESM 2004.096.001.*

**1962:** “Charles W. Schobinger of Denver, a member of the 1960 Olympic Ski Patrol and recipient of the Purple Star life-saving award, took office as National Director in 1962. His six-year term witnessed a revamping of NSPS structure and an upgrading of standards. It also marked an era of unprecedented growth for the Ski Patrol, which almost tripled in size, from 5,000 to 14,000 members.

Schobinger demanded uniformity in patrol standards from coast to coast. He set up an extensive testing and training network, with nationwide seminars to exchange information. He instituted such regulations as prohibiting drinking on duty, exacting a ten-day minimum, and insisting on sign-in times and regular hours.

...Recognizing the growing importance of the professional ski patroller, Schobinger initiated Advanced Ski Patrol Technique clinics designed primarily for full-time paid patrollers. Inaugurated at Vail in April 1965 through the efforts of professional patrollers Don Almond of Aspen and Larry Benway, Assistant PL at Vail, the clinics proved so successful that they were held annually throughout Schobinger’s term of office and beyond.”

*Gretchen R. Besser, The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 64-65.*

**Late summer 1963:** "...a nucleus of full-time Eastern patrolmen indicated they felt that the excessive size of NSPS and the Eastern Amateur Ski Association had resulted in insufficient interest in the problems of the full-time ski patrolmen. As a result, they formed a group known as the Professional Ski Patrol Association, Inc. ...The group claims examination standards twice as tough as those of NSPS which are already considered fairly stringent".

*"New Ski Patrol Group", Ski Business. Spring 1964, pages 164-165.*

"Making it appearance amidst plenty of criticism is a newly-formed organization, the Professional Ski Patrol Association, Inc., recently formed at Stowe, Vt., by a group of full-time paid patrolmen....Asked why he felt the National Ski Patrol system did not fulfill the requirements of the professional patrolman, Hitchcock indicated that his group felt the NSPS was too hamstrung by bureaucracy to serve the needs of a full-time, seven day-a-week professional patrolman.

NSPS national director Charles Schobinger, however, sees no such crying need for the professional organization...

At present the PSPA is made up of approximately 60 members, most of whom are located in Vermont and New Hampshire. The group's primary aim is to upgrade the standards for a professional patrolman, and maintain their standards at the highest level. The PSPA candidate must pass a two-day test which is almost identical to the test required of NSPS candidates. The professional association claims, however, that their test is given under much more demanding circumstances and the element of judging is much stricter.

*"Pros Form Own Patrol", Skiing News Magazine, December 1963, page 11.*

**September 1963** “By September of 1963, it was clear even to Burkley that Kennedy was cured. Kennedy’s muscles were so strong and flexible, Burkley declared, that Kennedy could execute “a series of exercises which would do credit to a gymnast.” Evelyn Lincoln concurred, noting in her bestselling 1965 autobiography, “It was due to Dr. Kraus’ persistence that the trouble in the President’s back almost vanished”. Nearly thirty years later, in a letter she wrote to Kraus from her home in Chevy Chase on July 29, 1993, Lincoln added that it was due to Kraus that Kennedy, for the first time in his life, could fully play with his children.

...Over the course of a single term, most Presidents age far more than the four-year genealogical period: FDR, Johnson, Nixon, Carter all come to mind ...Renowned Presidential historian Michael Beschloss noted an unusual thing about Kennedy. Without knowing anything about Kraus or his treatments of Kennedy, Beschloss wrote that Kennedy was a rare American President who looked better at the end of his term than at the beginning.

*Susan E B Schwartz, Into the Unknown: The Remarkable Life of Hans Kraus, iUniverse, Inc, New York, 2005, page 198.*

**1964:** “To counter the argument among some pros that they could do without the NSPS, he (George Wesson) and a few colleagues—among them Casey Rowley, Patrol Leader at Stratton Mountain, Dexter Galusha, head of the Albany Red Cross Chapter, and Wayne Doss, a college professor—hand-tailored the NSPS “Certified” program, aimed at, but not restricted to, the professional patroller. The program began as a pilot program in the East in 1964 and was adopted nationally four years later. ...The Certified exam exacts a standard of performance in all areas of patrol work, including leadership, that is several notches above the highest test administered by the NSPS—the “Senior” test, which, in opposition to the “local” or “basic” requirement, permits visiting privileges within a patroller’s home division.”  
*Gretchen R. Besser, The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 66.*

**ND (probably 1964):** “Casey Rowley, Patrol Director at ...Stratton, he and I used to get together...they hated to see the two of us walk into a meeting of PSPA or Certified because they knew the two of us would ask questions...We were running an exam to get more Senior examiners for ski and toboggan handling (for National), both on the committee, and we both helped form the committee. On this particular exam day, each region was allowed two persons to go as the main candidates, and two as backup. ... We noticed a lot of the fellows here (alternates) should have been over here with us (main candidates, in the exam).”

Rowley and Wesson insisted on switching alternates for candidates in about 20 cases, and encountered resistance from NSPS. The NSPS Board was meeting at the same time at Stratton. Their point prevailed and they picked their candidates.

“We got going, we had a great time shuffling, we got down below....Chuck Schobinger came out of the door (National Director), and he had a beeline for the two of us...I said to Casey, “We’re going to be kicked out of National by the boss himself.” Chuck come over, reached in his pocket, took this sheaf of papers out, and said “George, I’m going to give you this, read it, and do what you think about it.” It was a report, a complete report, of a committee that had been working on the Certified program. We didn’t really read it until after the day was over....My head was swimming. I knew exactly right away who was going to do the examining at the first exam. ...The first ski and toboggan exam was going to be done by PSPA. The Eastern Division members would have to be good enough to get to their exam...That’s how it worked out. They (PSPA) examined the ski and tobogganing four years...  
*George Wesson, New England Ski Museum interview, May 1, 2007.*

**February 1964:** "In reference to your article (Skiing, Dec 1963) mentioning the formation of the Professional Ski Patrol Association may I state that the only criticism to date is by Mr. Schobinger. The major areas in Vermont, and the New Hampshire Area Managers Association all wholeheartedly back our organization.

Mr. Schobinger admits that the NSPS professional arm needs strengthening. It has needed strengthening it hasn't received for so long that longtime pros and NSPS section chiefs Austin Macaulay (PSPA President) and George Wesson (PSPA Examiner), both instrumental in PSPA's formation have resigned their NSPS duties in disenchantment.  
*Bryan Hitchcock, "PSPA Here to Stay", Skiing News Magazine, February 1963, page 7.*

(“I did stay (with National) once I got in, I never did get out of National, but I let them know with that meeting in 1963, I told the Eastern Division director...don’t come up and tell me how to run my ski patrol...”)  
*George Wesson, New England Ski Museum interview, May 1, 2007.*

**ND (during Schobinger’s tenure):** “Under Chuck Schobinger’s administration, (Dale) Gallagher, (Bob) Heapes and (Whitney) Borland set in motion the machinery for an avalanche program that the NSPS could administer to its members, with specific requirements and curriculum. Schobinger has said, “The greatest trained cadre of avalanche experts is in the Ski Patrol. There area few hundred trained people in the Forest Service but several thousand trained men and women in the NSPS. And Bob Heapes is responsible for instructing more people in avalanche awareness in this country than any other single individual”.”

Gretchen R. Besser, *The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow*, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 112.

**ND (ca. 1968):** I think on the fifth year...after the PSPA meeting I said, “were any of you aware of what was going on today?” ... I said “do you realize that every one of those examiners on the skiing and tobogganing were PSPA members and Certified NSPS members?” ...This is what I was working for—to get PSPA to the point where they realized that the Certified program is for the amateur, non-paid patroller  
George Wesson, *New England Ski Museum interview*, May 1, 2007.

**1968:** “For eight years after Schobinger stepped down in 1968, NSPS leadership remained in the hands of Harry Pollard (#66) of New Hampshire, a man whose skiing career—begun in 1917—spanned every aspect of the sport...

As National Director, Pollard attempted to keep the Ski Patrol in the public eye by visiting over 500 areas personally. One of his most important contributions—visible internally in the hierarchical organization of the System—was to mandate proportional voting by divisions on the NSPS Board of Directors.

During Pollard’s tenure, the Junior Ski Patrol program came to the fore.”

Gretchen R. Besser, *The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow*, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 67-69

**1968:** “The NSPS first ran a pilot program for Nordic ski patrollers in 1968 in the East, which had the heaviest concentration of cross-country skiers at the time. The program, as developed by David P. Hodgdon of Massachusetts, proved so successful that it was adopted by the NSPS on a national level during the 1974-75 season.

Hodgdon was already a downhill patroller, versed in cross-country skiing, climbing, mountaineering and S&R, when he inaugurated the Nordic Ski Patrol. Seconded by a handful of x-c enthusiasts like Bill Frenette, Gordon Spencer, Nathan Fawcett, John Frado—who organized the first ski touring center with a fully-staffed and equipped Nordic ski patrol, in Northfield, Massachusetts—and Demetri Kolokotronis to handle PR, Hodgdon amplified the Nordic patrol concept from a promising idea into a purposeful activity.  
Gretchen R. Besser, *The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow*, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 90.

**1970:** “Larry Collins III, a past president of PSPA East was the driving force in organizing PSPA West. As a student at University of Colorado in Boulder, he did the essential groundwork while skiing around the west. His efforts led to the first exam held at Winter Park in 1970....After about three years PSPA West was off the ground and on their own.

Far West PSPA was also started around 1970”.

Austin Macaulay, *“History of the Professional Ski Patrol Association”*, ca. 1980, 2-page brochure, NESM 2004.096.001.

**June 1975:** “Meeting held in Denver, attended by FWPSPA, PSPA-W, PSPA-E, and NSPS Professional Certified Committee members. As a result of the meeting, standards were set in testing procedures and reciprocal agreements were reached. This made it possible for members to transfer from one organization to another without repeating exams already taken...Each transfer also had to meet the by-law requirements of the new organization. The name given to the watchdog organization was Certified Professional Ski Patrol Affiliation.

The CPSPA is made up of two representatives from each of the four recognized professional patrol organizations in the country. It meets once a year to insure the best possible standards in testing and to accept any newly formed professional organizations that can meet the requirements.”

Austin Macaulay, *“History of the Professional Ski Patrol Association”*, ca. 1980, 2-page brochure, NESM 2004.096.001.

**1976:** “Charles Haskins of Sacramento, Chief Deputy Treasurer for the State of California, took office as National Director in 1976....Although his tenure was the shortest on record (two years), Haskins made his mark on the Ski Patrol in a number of ways. ...As National Treasurer, Haskins sparked a building fund drive that was as spectacular as a September snowfall. From 1973, when he made the initial payment on a \$50,000 building at 2901 Sheridan Boulevard, Denver (appraised at considerably higher value), until a mortgage-burning party in June 1976, Haskins cajoled contributions from hundreds of individual members and ski patrols.

...Perhaps Haskins’ most innovative (and controversial) decision was to appoint women to prominent positions in his administration. He was determined from the outset to name a woman as Assistant National Director.

*Gretchen R. Besser, The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 70-71*

**December 2, 1980:** “Donald Williams of Michigan, a former Director of the Central Division and winner, in 1982, of the Minnie Dole Award, succeeded Haskins as National Director for a four-year term, beginning in 1978. Williams made it his prime priority to obtain the Congressional Charter for which Haskins had lobbied hard but in vain.

...In a cliffhanger worthy of Hitchcock or Spielberg, Congress passed the NSPS Charter in the eleventh hour before its year-end adjournment, and Jimmie Carter signed the bill into law...

Don Williams expanded the NSPS horizons internationally.”

*Gretchen R. Besser, The National Ski Patrol: Samaritans of the Snow, The Countryman Press, Woodstock, VT, 1983, page 74-75.*

**April 8, 1983** “In response to your letter dated April 4, 1983, we have the following ammunition on hand:

Tuckerman:	3,350
Depot:	4,704
Total:	8,054.

This should be enough for the 1983 and 1984 spring season.

*Gary W. Carr, District Ranger, Androscoggin District to Forest Supervisor, Memo re: Avalanche Control Ammunition, New England Ski Museum collection.*

**1987-88:** “As of the 1987-88 ski season, the Winter Emergency Care program will become the first aid standard for the National Ski Patrol. ...The field trials of the new courses conducted last fall in each division were highly successful, with few problems identified....Dr. Warren Bowman, national medical advisor, is writing the Winter Emergency Care textbook.”

*Carol Smith, “WEC Course Voted in as NSP First Aid Standard,” Ski Patrol Magazine, Vol 3, No 3, Spring 1987, page 30.*

**1992:** “Recently, the national office began communicating with NSP national officers, board members, and volunteer staff through the use of the Genie online service and its electronic mail features. Use of electronic mail has grown substantially throughout the world, and the ski patrol usage thus far, though limited, indicates it can have substantial benefits for NSP telecommunications using a personal computer and Genie.

*Marc Bond, “The Ski Patroller’s Guide to Electronic Mail,” Ski Patrol Magazine, Vol 8, No 2, Winter 1992, page 23.*

**January 1994:** “The NSP Board created a snowboard action team in July 1993 to review snowboard patrolling and the feasibility of a National Ski Patrol training program for snowboard patrollers.

The action team, consisting of members of the NSP Board, snowboarding patrollers, and PSIA snowboard instructors, reported to the board in January 1994 that snowboarders could effectively operate unloaded and loaded toboggans under many snow and terrain conditions and also perform many other traditional patrol

activities. The action team also advocated snowboarding patrollers be evaluated by the same criteria used for patrollers on traditional alpine skis.

The board of directors accepted these recommendations as well as a recommendation to appoint an assistant national ski and toboggan advisor for snowboards to direct the program and develop training materials. In April, National Chairman Jack Mason appointed me to that position.

The board of directors unanimously passed these proposals at the 1994 annual meeting.”  
*Keith Underwood, “Boarder Patrol: Training Program Underway”, Ski Patrol Magazine, Vol 11, No 1, Fall 1994, page 22.*

**1995:** “When the *Wall Street Journal* gives front page treatment to something, you can generally assume that the something has arrived. The *Journal* article “Bikes Give Ski Resorts Summertime Lift” appeared on July 7, 1994, and carried the news to its affluent readers that mountain biking “has invaded at least a quarter of US ski resorts.”

Well, yes it has, and it’s hardly news to ski patrols. The match of mountain biking with the lift facilities of a ski area had a certain inevitability...

At Sandia Peak, the patroller supplies the bike and mandatory helmet, and the area furnishes a Sandia Peak T-shirt with the NSP cross on the back. Our patrollers also carry radios and emergency care supplies. A bike duty day runs from 10 am to 4 pm, plus sweep.

Those eligible for the bike patrol include all patrollers, regardless of NSP membership classification, as well as alumni members. All must have current OEC and CPR cards.

...The bulk of these (injuries) are characterized as “road rash.”...Among the more serious injuries that bike patrollers at Sandia Peak have treated are fractures of the clavicle, a ruptured spleen, and various leg fractures....Difficulties occur in 1) being informed of the injury and the accurate location of the patient, 2) getting to the patient by bike or other means in a timely manner and (after on the hill treatment), 3) transporting the injured person off the hill.”

*John Shunny, “The Bike Patrol: Child of the Ski Patrol Doing Nicely,” Ski Patrol Magazine, Vol 11, No 3, pages 20-22.*

**2005:** “At the NSP’s Annual Meeting in June 2005, three divisions submitted proposals suggesting that changes be made in the areas of association governance, marketing, medical insurance, equipment pricing, education courses, and corporate image, among other issues. The board referred the topics to committee for further review and created a Governance Task Force to address specific concerns raised by the divisions. However, a group calling itself the Patroller Committee sought more immediate action and in July launched a petition drive to amend the NSP’s Articles of Incorporation with respect to the nomination process, election process, and term limits for NSP board members. In August, four NSP members filed a lawsuit against the NSP, seeking to prohibit the organization from conducting its regularly scheduled board election and, instead, poll members on the proposed amendments.

Complying with court rulings and a settlement agreement, the NSP board amended its bylaws and a special election was held—in which each active NSP member was given the opportunity to vote for a slate of 10 nominees, with the five top vote getters filling the available seats. With 16 percent of the membership casting ballots, Bela Musits, Jim DeWeerd, David Ginley, Harold Heacock, and Clark Noble won seats on the board, their three-year terms commencing on March 1. In addition, new policy regarding term limits and the makeup of the nomination committee was adopted.

That’s not to say, however, that the governance changes came to pass with no fall-out. In September, the NSP board terminated the employment of longtime NSP Executive Director Stephen Over, naming Mark Dorsey as the interim executive director, effective January 1, 2006. In November, Board Chair Bill Sachs resigned, and in accordance with the NSP bylaws, was replaced by NSP Treasurer Ron Plumer until a new

chair could be elected at the Midwinter meeting in January 2006. At that meeting, Dick Everett was elected to serve as NSP board chair...

The turmoil, however, did not abate with these administrative transitions or the special election, as two NSP board members—Ron Plumer and Larry Acord—resigned their positions in February.

Plumer tendered his resignation from the board on February 28, citing disappointment with voter turnout and a personal threat against him and his family as the primary factors influencing his decision to leave.

Expressing frustration over recent events and disillusionment with the board's current relationship with division directors and their boards, Acord also tendered his resignation....  
*"NSP Emerging from Tumultuous Year of Change," Ski Patrol Magazine, Vol 22, No 3, Winter 2006, page 54.*

End