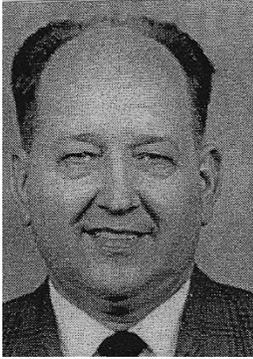


Harlan S. French



Harlan maintained a membership in the POCO Ski Club for many years and served as Ski Patrol Leader and in other organizational positions. His Ski Patrol Activities began at Buck Hill Falls during the winter of 1938/39 under the direction of Morris Siebert. About 1940 or from 1941, his patrol activity shifted to the Hazard Ski Area of Split Rock Lodge. After the construction of Big Boulder Ski Area in 1946/47, he was invited by Luther Copeland of the Palmerton Ski Club, Palmerton, PA to join the patrol activities at Big Boulder. While a member of this patrol in 1954, he was appointed to the ranks of the National Ski Patrol and assigned membership number 1387. About 1955, he was appointed to the position of Section Chief in the Pocono Mountains. In this position, he assumed the responsibility for organizing and training patrol groups in this geographic area. A few years later, after the retirement of Luther Copeland, he was appointed patrol leader at Big Boulder by the management of the ski area.

About the same time, he received an appointment as Regional Chairman of the National Ski Patrol representing Eastern Pennsylvania. As representative of the Patrol and Safety Director of Big Boulder, it was necessary to visit ski clubs and other organizations to convey information on area patrols and ski areas to promote skiers safety. While patrol leader at the Big Bolder, he developed and installed the first telephone system on the mountain for ski patrols to use, utilizing magneto type equipment from the coal mines and railroads within the infrastructure of the company that owned Big Boulder.

During his early involvement at Big Boulder, prior to the availability of commercially designed rescue toboggans, Harlan designed and built the rescue toboggans that was later used. Also with the installation of chairlifts, came the problem of knowing where faults had occurred when the lift stopped. He developed and installed a lift monitoring system on all chairlifts. Recognizing the importance of communications to expedite recovery of skiers in distress, he initially led a fundraising program to purchase personal radios offered by the National Ski Patrol System. It became mandatory for all patrolman to be radio equipped. When the management of Big Boulder announced they were considering developing Jack Frost Mountain, a cadre of interested skiers were placed in training at Big Boulder to serve at Jack Frost when it opened. Harlan also served as Safety Director at this area until the group developed enough to function on their own.

During the season of 1958/59, he was chosen to receive the USEASA Safety Trophy awarded to a patrolman for outstanding patrol activities. This trophy was later placed in the National Ski Hall of Fame with the inscribed names of those who have been chosen to receive it, one of which was Minot Dole, the founder of the National Ski Patrol System.

Harlan I spent some 50+ years Patrol and Ski Safety. Now retired, he still works in an Emeritus position. As he looks back on the hard work and hardship, it was all worth it. He hopes for thousands of skiers everywhere will tip their hats the next time they see a rescue or are helped by Patrolman.