

SILVER SLOPES:  
PRESERVING NORTH AMERICA'S SKI LODGES

by

WILLIAM CHAD BLACKWELL

(Under the Direction of Wayde Brown)

ABSTRACT

An examination of the unique case for the historic preservation of the ski lodges of North America. A brief history and evolution of ski resorts addresses the historic significance of ski lodges as a cultural resource. Case studies of five ski lodges provide a representative look at this unique resource. An analysis of the ski lodge as a cultural resource, its place as a twentieth century building type, and the ramifications in a preservation context concludes the argument.

INDEX WORDS: Historic preservation, Ski lodges, Twentieth century building types, Sun Valley Lodge, Sun Valley Inn, Challenger Inn, Timberline Lodge, Chalet des Voyageurs, Mont Tremblant Inn, Berthoud Pass Lodge, Mount Ashland Lodge

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## DEDICATION

Dedicated to my mother and father who, on many summer vacations to historic sites, fanned my interest in historic places.

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## CHAPTER 1

### **Introduction**

The opening of Sun Valley Lodge, replete with Hollywood stars and starlets whose presence Hannagan [the Sun Valley publicity director] had assured, was anything but auspicious. For one thing, it failed to snow, leaving guests little to do but eat and drink. For another, David Selznick had put his fist squarely into the face of another guest who, in a tipsy state, had asked actress Joan Bennett, who was sitting at Selznick's table, to dance. Hannagan, apprised in New York by long distance of this embarrassing turn of events, could hardly contain his excitement. "What do you mean the party's ruined?" he shouted. He then sat down at his typewriter to prepare his release, and wrote the headline, SUN VALLEY OPENS WITH A BANG.

-Richard Needham, SKI: Fifty Years in North America

With the lively opening of Sun Valley in Ketchum, Idaho, the birth of the destination ski resort in North America ushered in a new era in the sport's history. The destination ski resort was an untested financial gamble for Sun Valley's creator Averell Harriman. The popularity of the sport had been increasing significantly in the late 1920s and 1930s, yet the growth of the sport was primarily confined to the upper middle class of urban centers and not guaranteed to continue. Harriman's idea to build a ski resort in "middle of nowhere" Idaho relied on the new resort being about more than just skiing. To that end, he hired Steve Hannagan, the publicity genius who had turned a sleepy coastal community in south Florida into the vacation mecca of Miami Beach. Hannagan's plans included elegant dining and lodging facilities, private cabins, an unusually large and round outdoor swimming pool, and a Hollywood A-list clientele to ensure

the media's interest in the new resort. Activity would center on the Sun Valley Lodge—the recreational, cultural, and social heart of Sun Valley Resort.

Harriman's gamble on the future popularity of skiing as a winter recreational activity for the American public paid off. The years after World War II saw an enormous boom in the popularity of skiing and the number of skiers in North America. The 1940s and 1950s also saw the most prolific period of ski resort construction, from small local snow hills to the birth of the “megaresorts” beginning with Mount Snow, Vermont in 1955. The “megaresort” model, based on the premise that a successful resort needed to contain all possible amenities for skiers, continued into the 1960s and 1970s and eventually dominated the market in the 1980s and 1990s. The current ski market is estimated at upwards of 70 million skiers worldwide, with fifteen million in the United States. In the 2002-03 season, the National Ski Areas Association figures showed 57.3 million visits to US ski resorts. 1995 estimates placed the United States third in total number of resorts (at 516, behind Japan and Austria) and Canada seventh with 245.<sup>1</sup>

With so many ski resorts, the emerging dominance of the “megaresort” and a leveling off in the growth of the North American ski market, some of the smaller and mid-sized resort areas began to close their doors. Some eventually reopened, often only for brief periods, while many others remain abandoned today. It is estimated that New England has 760 abandoned ski areas<sup>2</sup>, Washington 41<sup>3</sup> and Colorado 140<sup>4</sup> with numerous other areas throughout the United States and Canada.

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<sup>1</sup> A. J. Lazard, “Gathering Stats Worldwide,” *Ski Area Management* vol. 35, no. 5 (September 1996) : 60.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremy Davis, New England Lost Ski Area Project; available from <http://www.nelsap.org>; Internet; accessed on 24 January 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Compiled by Hyak Ski and Snowboard Mountain, available from <http://www.hyak.net/lost/>; Internet; accessed on 24 January 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Compiled by Colorado Ski History, available from <http://www.coloradoskihistory.com/lostresorts.html>; Internet; accessed on 24 January 2005.

Although skiing has evolved from a sport practiced exclusively by the upper crust to a more inclusive sport encompassing the middle class, it remains primarily a sport for non-minorities. Based on a skiing demographic study of the 2002/03 season, members of racial minorities accounted for approximately 13 percent of the 57.3 million skier/snowboarder visits.<sup>5</sup> The nation's 2002 population was comprised of 32 percent ethnic or racial minorities and therefore skiing in North America is a disproportionately "white" sport. Ethnic and racial minorities have factored even less in the history and evolution of skiing, with sizeable gains in participation only coming in recent decades.

Then why are ski lodges significant in the history and culture of North America, and thus worthy of preservation? Just as the practice of history has changed over the last half-century to adopt a "sum of all parts" methodology in favor of one all-inclusive view of history, so has the determination of significance of historic properties. The National Register recognizes historic properties that are significant to a small ethnic or racial group because the history and culture of these groups contributes to the overall "American" history and culture. As such, although ski resorts represent the culture of a relatively small socio-economic group (upper class, White Americans), the evolution of skiing as a sport is a component to the broader American experience.

The ski lodge is the single most visible and defining structure of the built environment of any ski resort. It is the location of a skier's arrival to the slopes in the morning, the place where refreshment and a moment of rest can be found during a day of skiing, and either the point of departure at the end of the day or sleeping quarters to recharge for another day on the slopes. Its placement at the base of the most prominent ski run emphasizes its pride of place as every ski

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<sup>5</sup> RRC Associates. 2003. National Ski Areas Association National Demographic Study 2002/03. Boulder, Colorado.

trail on the mountain terminates in front of it. Ski lodges were designed with the single purpose of servicing every need of the skier from his arrival to departure and sometimes beyond to overnight services. The specific nature of location on the resorts and variety of uses dictated a very specific design unique to ski lodges.

Ski lodges as an important cultural resource display historic significance regarding the history of skiing and the evolution of a ski tourism recreational industry. As the single most defining structure of a given ski area, ski lodges also often hold the most significance as a representation of skiing's historical and cultural connotations. Ski lodges, like many other building types born from a twentieth century design ethos, focus on 'form following function', exhibit a unique building type based on location and use, both of which create a design unique to the ski lodge. Applying the prevailing preservation philosophies and mechanisms to other unique twentieth century building types has proven difficult and the same application to ski lodges is no different. This unique building type, designed and built for a singular purpose, poses significant problems for preservationists. Ski lodges that continue to be used as base lodges for a ski area have constantly adapted to significant changes in ski technology over the course of the twentieth century. Interior and exterior alterations to the lodge are a requisite for the continued financial viability of any operational ski area. Ski lodges in abandoned ski areas often prove difficult to adapt to new uses not associated with the ski area given the unique and specific purpose for which they were constructed.

The first section of this thesis examines the history of skiing in North America and the birth and evolution of the destination ski resort. The second section examines five North American ski resorts—the history of each area, the typology, history, and current state of the resorts' base lodge, and the preservation efforts and issues surrounding the lodge. Finally, the

ski lodge itself will be analyzed as a cultural resource. Its place as a product of twentieth century design philosophies characterizes the ski lodge as a unique cultural resource requiring unique considerations. The prevailing preservation philosophies regarding treatment of cultural resources will be examined, specifically regarding the issue of adaptive use and its application to ski lodges. Finally, the consequences of being a unique cultural resource will be explored in a federal preservation framework context, particularly regarding significance, integrity and an assessment of alterations.

As evidenced by their form, location and history, ski lodges are cultural resources representing the history of skiing and the evolution from sport to recreation industry. Although lodges and the resorts they service vary in location and time, all lodges reflect a similar design and form based on location relative to the slopes and the very specific purpose of servicing skier needs. This commonality in design and form identifies the ski lodge with other twentieth century building types born from the Modern design philosophy of ‘form follows function’. Existing preservation standards and methods prove problematic when applied to other unique twentieth century building types, such as airport terminals. Ski lodges are a unique cultural resource characterized by location, use and design as defined by a specific built-for purpose, requiring unconventional considerations within the context of the prevailing preservation philosophies and mechanisms.



## CHAPTER 2

### **History of Skiing in North America**

#### Beginnings

Rock carvings depicting hunters using skis from the Neolithic and even Mesolithic periods of the Stone Age were discovered in northwest Russia and Norway, in 1926 and 1930 respectively. These carvings date the use of skis as far back as 4,500 years.<sup>6</sup> Ski artifacts have also been discovered preserved in peat bogs in Finland, the oldest of which has been determined to be 4,500 years old by carbon dating.<sup>7</sup> The use of skis has been an integral part of human culture in northern Europe and Asia from prehistoric times to modern day. However, the ski remained largely unchanged as a wooden plank with a simple apparatus to bind it to the foot until the mid-nineteenth century. The innovations created by one man, Sondre Norheim from Telemark, Norway, sped the dissemination of skiing to the rest of the world as a recreational activity. Norheim's contributions are two-fold; his technological innovations included a new binding allowing for sharper turns and a new ski shape which influenced modern designs, but he became a folk hero due to the daredevil maneuvers he performed to showcase these technological advances.<sup>8</sup> While Norheim's innovations came after centuries of ski use in Scandinavia, and even after Scandinavian immigrants had introduced the ski to America, his contribution to skiing facilitated its adoption as recreation and eventually a global sport.

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<sup>6</sup> John Weinstock, *Skis and Skiing From The Stone Age To The Birth Of The Sport* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), 17.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 23.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 112.

## Skiing Comes to North America

The history of skiing in North America began with nineteenth century Scandinavian immigrants, starting in the first half of the century and peaking in 1882, when over one hundred thousand immigrants arrived from Norway, Sweden, and Finland. The first recorded instance of ski use in North America is from 1841, when Gullick Laugen skied in Beloit, Wisconsin.<sup>9</sup> As a Scandinavian invention, an examination of the history of skiing in America must begin with its Scandinavian roots. The etymology of the word ‘ski’ has Scandinavian origins; ‘ski’ was one of two Scandinavian words used to describe the implements used to traverse snowy landscapes. ‘Ski’ described a long tool used for gliding, while ‘Andor’ described a shorter, pelt-covered one used for pushing uphill. In the earliest records, American writers commonly referred to the ‘ski’ as “Norwegian snow-shoes” or “Norway skates”.<sup>10</sup> For the American public, the distinction between ‘Ski’ and ‘Andor’ was irrelevant, however the distinction between skis and snowshoes was required early on. Scandinavians primarily used skis for transportation, and continued to do so after immigration across the Atlantic.

Other early instances of skis in America come from mid-nineteenth century California. When Scandinavian immigrants struck out to find their fortune in the California gold rush, they found the popular snowshoes, derived from Native American implements, wholly unsuited for the type of winter travel to which they were accustomed. Non-Scandinavian miners soon recognized the efficiency of the Scandinavians’ strange wooden planks in the deep snow. Skis were not only used by miners, but also for mail delivery in the high mountains, and later as recreation. Racecourses were often set up and different classes were held for women, children,

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<sup>9</sup> E. John B. Allen, *From Skisport to Skiing: One Hundred years of and American Sport, 1840-1940* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1993), 30.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

and Chinese laborers.<sup>11</sup> However, while California boasts the largest early ski culture, the foundation of American skiing lies elsewhere.

The idea of skiing as recreation, or *skisport*, also has a Scandinavian genesis. The Scandinavians did not have a word that translates to ‘*skisport*’, but rather *Idaret* (Norwegian) or *Idrott* (Swedish). *Idaret* describes outdoor physical exercise with a goal of strength, manliness, and toughness. By 1834, it had taken on moral connotations that included the purpose of striving to perfect the soul and body and, by extension, “the physical and moral strength of nations.”<sup>12</sup> This nationalistic connotation emerged at a time when Norwegians were beginning to free themselves from Swedish control, but also found its way to North America.

As Scandinavian immigrants, particularly Norwegians, settled in the northern parts of the United States, skis became the preferred manner of winter transportation, particularly in pockets of settlement in the Northeast and Upper Midwest. Norwegian settlers in Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan carried on the traditional dual role of skiing as both transportation and recreation. Skis also found use early on in these areas in winter hunting trips by Scandinavian immigrants. Colorado’s earliest records of ski use mirrors the ski history of California, originating in mining camps and introduced by Swedish miners.<sup>13</sup>

In 1886, the military issued skis to Company M of the First U.S. Cavalry, then patrolling Yellowstone Park for poachers. While the commanding officer noted the difficulties of using skis to patrol the vast expanses of the park, skiing became the primary winter diversion for the soldiers. One visiting correspondent to Yellowstone predicted future hotel interests in the area

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 34.

based on the new winter sport.<sup>14</sup> Photographs and paintings of ski soldiers in Yellowstone Park became the first introduction to skis for the majority of the American public. Frederic Remington painted the soldiers on skis on one of his visits to Yellowstone, an image reprinted in *Harper's Weekly* in 1898.



Figure 2.1 - Drawing of U.S. Cavalry anti-poaching patrol on skis in Yellowstone, 1886.  
By Frederic Remington, published in *Harper's Weekly*, 1898.

### Ski Clubs

The sporadic use of skis for transportation evolved into recreational use with Nordheim's binding innovations, coinciding with the peak of Scandinavian immigration. Between 1880 and 1910, local ski clubs began forming in the United States, primarily in areas of Norwegian settlement. These new ski clubs were composed almost entirely of Norwegian immigrants and

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 39.

developed as ethnically exclusive clubs. This exclusivity reflected the nationalistic undercurrents found worldwide in the latter nineteenth century, particularly considering Norwegian settlement patterns eschewed urban centers in favor of small, ethnically homogenous towns. However, ski clubs also found fertile ground in similarly homogenous, but ethnically different circles of the Northeast-- on college campuses.

Dartmouth College, ideally situated adjacent to the forested granite mountains of New Hampshire, is generally credited with founding the first collegiate outing club in America in 1909.<sup>15</sup> The goal of Dartmouth's outing club was "to stimulate interest in out of door winter sports... to have short cross-country runs weekly... [and] to hold ski jumping contests" with the possibility that "Dartmouth might well become the originator of a branch of college organized sport hitherto undeveloped by American colleges."<sup>16</sup> This bucolic setting appealed to the educated youth of the post-1890 generation, who preferred the perceived moral high ground of a countrified rural ideal to the industrial urban world in which they grew up. The Victorian romantic notions of the purity of wilderness, moral fiber strengthened through physical activity, and adventure, all came together in the post-Victorian birth of skisport. These romantic notions dovetailed with the Norwegian *Idaret* ideal. This adoption of the Norwegian romanticizing of the nature of skisport by the sons of wealthy Northeasterners opened the door to the Americanization of the sport. Meanwhile, the Americanization of skiing had taken hold elsewhere and many Norwegian-exclusive clubs had gradually lost the underlying ethnocentricity.<sup>17</sup> The completion of this Americanization of the sport was the formation of the National Ski Association in 1905, based in Ishpeming, Michigan.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 51.

By the first decade of the twentieth century, interest in skiing had extended beyond the small Scandinavian enclaves to the distinctly different world of upper class America. Ski clubs were no longer confined to college campuses and Norwegian settlements. Three notable clubs—the Appalachian Mountain Club in Boston, the Sierra Club in San Francisco, and the Lake Placid Club in upstate New York—existed as outdoor clubs for America’s elite. The Appalachian Mountain Club had a “skeeist” in their ranks in the 1880s and 1890s, and members began taking winter trips to the White and Green Mountains in New England. The Sierra Club’s interest in skiing was evidenced by its reprinting of John Muir’s accounts of his time above Lake Tahoe. By 1915, the Sierra Club opened a winter resort for its members at Lake Tahoe in California. The Lake Placid Club, the most exclusive of the three, remained open in the winter of 1904 in order for ten of its wealthy members to enjoy the benefits and fun of social skiing. Only two years later, the club had adapted to accommodate fourteen hundred winter guests. Sensing an untapped tourism opportunity, several hotels in the Northeast began offering skiing equipment for winter guests and advertising in metropolitan newspapers.

### Ski Trains and the Development of a Ski Industry

The next major step in the evolution of skiing to its modern form came in the years following World War I. The urban skiing elite in the Northeast readily adopted new ski techniques from Germany, called *Schuss*. This new style of skiing focused on speed, turning, and downhill emphasis, rather than the cross-country and jumping preferred by the Norwegian progenitors. Concurrently, new technologies accompanied these new techniques and marked the mechanization of skiing. Consequently, the center of American skiing shifted from the Midwest,

home of the National Ski Association, to the mountains of the Northeast. This move was further solidified when Lake Placid was chosen to host the 1932 Winter Olympics.

In 1928, the Boston and Maine (B&M) Railroad sent out a pamphlet to several Northeastern clubs advertising a trip “to some winter sports center whose skiing, snowshoeing, and other forms of winter activity are at their best.”<sup>18</sup> Werner, New Hampshire was chosen as the first destination in 1931 and a connection between skiing and railroads that would affect the direction of skiing as recreation and tourism industry for the next decade and a half began. By the end of the 1931 season, twelve trains had shuttled 8,371 Bostonians to nearby mountains for a day of skiing. Other northeastern railroads followed suit and, by 1936, almost 70,000 skiers had departed from New York on “snow trains”. In addition to shops on the trains, retail stores in the northeastern cities began to sell ski clothes and equipment in “Snow Train” departments. The railroad and skiing connection soon spread to Chicago, Minneapolis, Denver, and San Francisco; skiing as a recreation and an industry was spreading across the continent.



Figure 2.2- On the ski train, 1936,  
courtesy of Stan Cohen

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 104.



Figure 2.3- B&M Snow Train  
Promotional Poster, courtesy  
of New England Ski Museum

Los Angeles hosted the 1932 Summer Olympic Games, but California had also wanted to host the 1932 Winter Games. Lake Placid was chosen over California because the International Olympic Committee believed California did not have the experience to hold both events, lacked a history of skiing, and had no governing ski association. After it missed out on the 1932 Winter Games, the California Chamber of Commerce began to market the state as a winter sports paradise, with Yosemite Park as its centerpiece. Between 1923 and 1930, the February attendance to Yosemite jumped from three hundred to nineteen thousand, due primarily to its winter sports draw. Meanwhile, Colorado, Washington, and Oregon also boasted of the winter sport possibilities in their states.

The Germanic *Schuss* style of skiing dispensed with the Norwegian *Idaret* ideal of toughness, and the invention of tow ropes to haul skiers to the top of the slopes reflected this distinction. The first tow rope for skiing was patented in Switzerland in 1931. In January of



1933, Alex Foster attached two thousand feet of rope to the axle of a Dodge in Shawbridge, Quebec, the first mechanized tow rope in North America. Similar contraptions soon dotted ski hills all over New England. Aspen, Colorado and Yosemite, California expanded the idea by attaching a “boat” to the rope allowing for more people to be carried each trip. However, the greatest innovation that opened the door to skiing’s recreational tourism potential was the chair lift. The first chair lift opened in December 1936 to carry skiers to the top of Dollar Mountain at Sun Valley, Idaho.

### Birth of the Destination Ski Resort

Averell Harriman, the Board Chairman of the Union Pacific Railroad, wanted to increase ridership of the railroad and believed skiing held the answer. He hired Austrian Count Felix Schaffgotsch to find a suitable site for building a full-scale winter sports resort based on those found in the European Alps. Schaffgotsch spent the winter of 1935-36 combing the western mountains for a suitable location. He visited sites in Colorado, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, and Idaho, all of which held more problems than possibilities. Finally, he arrived in Ketchum, Idaho. There he found slopes suitable for skiing in the Sawtooth Mountains, dry snow, and a nice climate amid the sheep and cow pastures, but he continued to search for a suitable lodge site. The daughter of a ranch owner met him and asked what he was doing. When Schaffgotsch told her, she mentioned that the cattle tend to gravitate to the warmest place in the valley. When she showed him the place, it confirmed his current choice. For years, Sun Valley in Ketchum, Idaho set the standard for America’s ski resorts. Many more would follow, particularly in the decades after World War II, but for nearly a decade this new winter destination was unique.

Never before had a resort been built from the ground up specifically to cater to America's growing ski obsession.



Figure 2.4- Sun Valley Lodge with pool in foreground, courtesy of Sun Valley Co.



Figure 2.5- Sun Valley promotional poster, courtesy of Sun Valley Co.

Sun Valley marked the maturation of America's ski obsession into a full-blown recreational tourism industry. As the ski train phenomenon demonstrated an untapped market, mountain hotels in the Northeast began to keep their doors open during the winter season. Many hired instructors from Europe to teach their affluent clientele. However, the development of Sun Valley in Idaho marked the transformation of the ski market into a ski industry. In 1938, the California Chamber of Commerce promoted the skiing destinations in the state on 250,000 brochures and five hundred billboards. Yosemite proclaimed itself as the "Snow Capital of California". Sun Valley was lauded as the St. Moritz<sup>19</sup> of America even before construction completed. Berthoud Pass in Colorado, the home of the Arlberg Ski Club, was easily accessible from Denver by train or car. While open only to club members on the weekend, during the week Berthoud "became so crowded that there was scarcely room for skiing".<sup>20</sup>

The new sport's need for more ski areas found an unlikely patron in the federal government. The Forest Service commissioned a survey to determine where additional ski trails could be cleared, and the National Park Service created an advisory committee on skiing in 1937. Works Progress Administration money and Civil Conservation Corps (CCC) labor were directed to meet this growing demand. In the East, the CCC provided the labor to clear many of the ski trails during the Depression. In the West, since most of the skiable terrain was in national parks or in national forests, entrepreneurial agencies had to cooperate with federal agencies to open the areas to skiers. The Forest Service also provided the resources, both financial and labor, to clear ski trails in the western states. The WPA budgeted one million dollars to build Timberline

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<sup>19</sup> Located in Switzerland, St. Moritz is perhaps the world's most famous ski resort and also the first winter sports destination. In 1864, a St. Moritz hotel owner offered two English adventurers a "free stay" if they could stay through the winter. Afterward, St. Moritz quickly became the winter vacation destination for adventure-minded Britons and the rest of Europe. St. Moritz hosted the Winter Olympic Games in 1928 and 1948.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 140.

Lodge on Mt. Hood in Oregon. By 1940, the Red Cross estimated the skiing population in America at two million; *Time* magazine estimated one million, while other sources put it at three million. Although the exact figure is unknown, clearly a new tourism industry had been created around skiing.

However, as a vacation destination, a ski center needed more than just slopes. Communication links, inns and restaurants, parking lots and on-site instruction also defined the ski center. Also of prime consideration was the problem of accessibility and the early development of ski centers hinged on this issue. John Allen mentions in his book *From Skisport to Skiing*, that the technological improvements in the snow clearance of roads greatly improved accessibility.<sup>21</sup> Snow rollers were replaced by snowplows, which greatly improved road clearance for automobile traffic. As the economic benefits of the ski industry for local and state economies became more tangible, city, county and state road maintenance crews took over the responsibility for clearing roads. This became particularly important after World War II when automobile use in the United States skyrocketed. The increased use of automobiles also extended the range of most vacationers, opening up new, more remote areas to skiing. The enormous increase in personal automobile use also opened up skiing to a wider demographic. It suddenly became financially feasible for the middle class to load up the family roadster for a day trip to a nearby ski resort. A sport previously held to be the domain of the upper and upper-middle classes of society now grew exponentially due to the automobile.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 159.



Figure 2.6- The road up Mount Hood to Timberline Lodge, 1951, copyright Ray Atkeson

### Post-War Skiing Boom

After World War II, the popularity of skiing blossomed like never before. Soldiers returning from duty in Italy, France, and Germany brought back fond memories of skiing trips taken on weekend passes. The exploits in Italy of the Tenth Mountain Division, trained at Camp Hale in Colorado, had been a visible source of American pride during the war. Friedl Pfeifer, a corporal in the Tenth Mountain Division, returned to Colorado after the war and started the Aspen Skiing Corporation.<sup>22</sup> The sport of skiing also became more popular as middle class Americans had more disposable income in the post-war years and many eagerly sought out the

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<sup>22</sup> Richard Needham, *Fifty Years in North America* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1987), 44.

sport that had previously been the domain of the adventurous wealthy. With all of these new ski enthusiasts clamoring for places to ski, the industry responded by opening resorts in areas previously too remote for consideration.



Figure 2.7- The Tenth Mountain Division on maneuvers at Camp Hale, courtesy of Colorado Ski Museum

Silver miners first settled the high mountain areas of Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming in the mid-nineteenth century. These settlements often had thousands of inhabitants and an infrastructure of amenities to support them— saloons, hotels, and even opera houses. In 1893, Congress repealed the Sherman Silver Act and silver became demonetized and

prices plummeted. Overnight, these settlements became virtual ghost towns with only a small fraction of the pre-Silver Act populations. After World War II, skiers rediscovered these sleepy mountain towns whose residents had turned to ranching, logging, or other activities. Ideally situated at high elevations near tall mountains and with heavy annual snowfalls, many of these towns became the high visibility ski destinations of today. Aspen, Alta, Breckenridge, Park City, Red Lodge, and Telluride are just a few of these mining towns that became ski towns in the 1940s and 1950s.

### Modernization and the Birth of the “Megaresort”

Richard Needham, in *SKI: Fifty Years in North America*, identifies the period from 1956 to 1965 as the boom era of the sport.<sup>23</sup> Skiing’s post-war popularity boom fueled this prolific period marked by technological innovations in equipment and apparel, America’s assertion of its place in world competition, and the construction of hundreds of new resorts all over the continent. This period also marked the rise of the “megaresort”, beginning in 1955 with Walt Schoenknecht’s master plan for a new resort at Mount Snow, Vermont. Schoenknecht’s plan was based on his belief that the key to a resort’s success was providing amenities for the intermediate skier on a grand scale. Pete Seibert, another veteran from the Tenth Mountain Division, shared the same belief and looked to replicate the “megaresort” idea in Colorado. Rather than retrofitting a mining town to suit his needs, Seibert expanded his search to include previously unsettled areas. He found his ideal location in Vail valley and began to purchase private land under the guise of building a rod and gun club. Construction on Vail resort began in 1962 and the initial cost was five million dollars— nearly the total value of all major American

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<sup>23</sup> Needham, p. 70

ski areas at the start of World War II.<sup>24</sup> Vail's place as the "queen of American ski resorts" owed more to its uniqueness than its size. As William Berry wrote in *The Great North American Ski Book*:

"[Seibert] conceived the Modern American Ski Town not as a retrofit mining town like Aspen or... Breckenridge, not even as a rich man's hideaway (Sun Valley); he conceived it as a place where anyone could be comfortable..."

Vail became the model for nearly every ski resort built since its construction. Keystone, Copper Mountain, Steamboat and Snowmass, all in Colorado, follow Vail's "megaresort" plan. The investment and scale of these "megaresorts" shifted the ownership and management of ski resorts in the United States from individual owners to large corporations. While earlier resorts drew customers from the region surrounding the resort, the "megaresort" had a national, and even international, draw. In the late 1970s and 1980s, the success of the "megaresort" came at the expense of the smaller, established resorts built prior to 1965. While some of the larger ones, such as Sun Valley, adapted to this new paradigm, others could not. As a result, numerous abandoned ski areas dot the country, particularly in the Northeast and areas of the West. The New England Lost Ski Areas Project (NELSAP) lists abandoned ski areas, details the history, and collects personal recollections of skiers who visited these sites. NELSAP began as a personal crusade when college student Jeremy Davis began noticing abandoned ski areas on his ski trips.<sup>25</sup> In 1998, he began a website that became a repository for information on abandoned ski areas and personal reflections from skiers who visited them in years past. NELSAP currently lists 72 lost areas in Maine, 163 in New Hampshire, 99 in Vermont, 164 in Massachusetts, 42 in

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<sup>24</sup> Needham, p. 95

<sup>25</sup> Sonja Hakala, "Revisiting ski areas of seasons past web site honors New England's onetime resorts," *The Boston Globe*, 3 December 2000, sec. Metro/Region, p. E2.



New York (incomplete list with over 200 anticipated), 57 in Connecticut, and 4 in Rhode Island.

Other organizations have listed abandoned areas in Washington (41)<sup>26</sup> and Colorado (140).<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> <http://www.hyak.net/lost/>, compiled by Hyak Ski and Snowboard Mountain.

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.coloradoskihistory.com/lostresorts.html>

## CHAPTER 3

### **Introduction to Case Studies**

As of 1996, 516 ski areas operated in the United States and 245 in Canada.<sup>28</sup> The vast majority of these areas were constructed before 1970 with the most prolific building years between 1945 and 1965. Therefore, a significant number of ski resorts in North America already meet the fifty-year criteria for designation required by the National Register Program in the United States and many more will achieve it in the next decade. In North America, the scale and nature of ski resorts varies widely-- from smaller hills built to serve a local populace to the massive 'megaresorts' built to draw national and international visitors. The following case studies represent a sampling of these many distinct resources. Each site was chosen because it has a unique characteristic—a particular historical importance, ownership situation, management style, or evolution as a ski area—that distinguishes the area and lodge or makes it a typical example representing other resorts with similar characteristics.

Sun Valley, Idaho, the first destination resort, illustrates preservation issues found at similar large resorts owned by individuals or small corporations. The study of Timberline Lodge also shows a resource recognized for its historical value, but its significance is not tied exclusively to skiing-- its evolution to ski lodge and recognition of its historical value make it distinct. Mont-Tremblant, in Canada, has an inherent historic significance as the first destination

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<sup>28</sup> Lazard, 60.

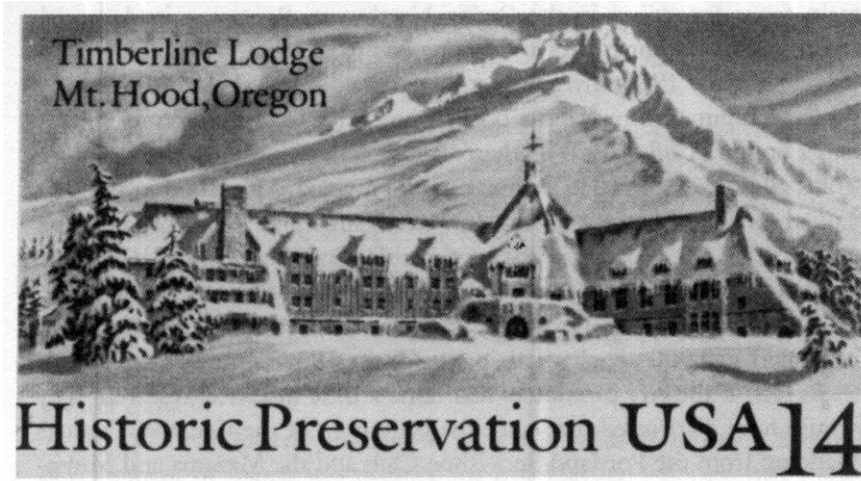


Figure 3.1- Postage stamp featuring historic preservation and Timberline Lodge,  
 Courtesy of New England Ski Museum

ski resort in Canada, and the second in North America. Tremblant was acquired and is currently managed by a corporation, which owns several resorts in North America. The multi-resort corporation is largely a product of the last two decades and represents a significant part of the ski business today. Berthoud Pass is one of the earliest ski areas in Colorado; however, Berthoud Pass also exemplifies the smaller resort made financially unfeasible by larger resorts, and highlights the tenuous relationship between ski areas and primary land owner, the United States Forest Service. Mount Ashland, Oregon represents the modest, local ski area most commonly constructed after the post-war boom but before the dominance of the “megaresorts.” Ashland’s ownership by a local municipal government with responsibility of operation delegated to a non-profit organization provides an interesting solution for other similar, and possibly defunct, local hills.

Some of these areas and lodges are unique individual examples of historic ski areas and lodges, while others share typical characteristics with other resorts. Mont-Tremblant’s owner,

Intrawest, also owns and operates Mammoth Mountain and Squaw Valley in California, Winter Park in Colorado, and Stratton in Vermont-- all ski resorts with significant histories associated with the earliest days of skiing in North America. Likewise, the ownership of a ski area by a municipal government is not isolated to Mount Ashland. The city of Reno, Nevada owns and operates the Sky Tavern resort (opened in 1945) as a junior ski school. Mount Ashland represents a possible solution to the potential available in the 600 abandoned areas in New England<sup>29</sup>, 140 in Colorado<sup>30</sup>, and forty-one in Washington<sup>31</sup>, and their potentially significant lodges.

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<sup>29</sup> New England Lost Ski Area Project

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.coloradoskihistory.com/lostresorts.html>

<sup>31</sup> <http://www.hyak.net/lost/>, compiled by Hyak Ski and Snowboard Mountain.

## CHAPTER 4

### **Sun Valley, Idaho**

#### History

Averell Harriman worked his way up through the railroad his father had taken over in the 1890s. By 1935, he was in his mid-forties and the Chairman of the Board of Union Pacific Railroad. On trips to Europe, Harriman noticed the popularity of skiing vacations among Europe's bankers and businessmen. He decided that a destination ski resort may be the solution to the challenge of increasing railroad ridership in the Western states. The ski trains, so popular in the Northeast and, by 1930, in major metropolitan areas in the West, were a testament to the untapped market. Harriman hired the Austrian Count Felix Schaffgotsch, familiar with Europe's finest Alpine resorts, to find a suitable location for America's first destination ski resort.

Schaffgotsch searched the western states in the winter of 1935-36. Each site visited had different problems. Aspen was too high, Alta was too close to Salt Lake City, Mount Ranier and Yosemite were on public land, and the Wyoming highway department could not guarantee clear roads to Jackson Hole. Schaffgotsch returned to Colorado disappointed and ready to tell Harriman of his lack of success. He had left word with Union Pacific's Idaho area representative to wire him if he thought of any more suitable locations. The Union Pacific freight agent and Schaffgotsch's Idaho guide, Bill Hynes was having a drink with Joe Simmer, Idaho's director of highways, who asked Hynes if he had shown Schaffgotsch the Hailey and Ketchum area.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Needham, 19.

Realizing this obvious omission, Hynes wired Schaffgotsch of one more potential site. When Schaffgotsch arrived, he liked what he saw. The area in Ketchum was situated next to the Sawtooth Mountain Range, had dry snow perfect for skiing, and a mild climate.

Schaffgotsch wired Harriman urging him to visit, remarking that the area “combines more delightful features than any other place I have seen in the United States, Switzerland, or Austria for a winter sports resort.”<sup>33</sup> The Union Pacific Board agreed to follow Harriman’s vision of a destination ski resort and purchased ranch land near Ketchum. However, Harriman knew that the key to success for a resort catering to a largely unknown sport in the middle of nowhere would require an exceptional marketing campaign. Ironically, he found the right man for the job in Steve Hannegan, the man who had successfully promoted Miami Beach as America’s premier summer resort. Hannegan arrived at Ketchum to survey the place and later remarked, “All I could see was a goddamn field of snow. I thought they must be crazy. This is strictly ridiculous.” But as he walked around, the sun came out, “It began to feel pretty good, so I opened my coat. Then I took it off. Pretty soon I opened my vest. Then I began to sweat...” and so the new resort came to be named Sun Valley.<sup>34</sup> In 1977, R. Earl Holding, the owner of several resort hotels across the country, purchased Sun Valley. Holding is the current owner of Sun Valley Resort.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

## Sun Valley Lodge



Figure 4.1 - Sun Valley Lodge, courtesy of Sun Valley Co.

The Sun Valley Lodge, designed by William Thomas Wellman and Gilbert Sullivan Underwood<sup>35</sup> and constructed in 1936, was the centerpiece of the new resort at Sun Valley. The four-story hotel has a ground plan of approximately 360 feet by 150 feet and is constructed of reinforced concrete, including the interior partitions. The concrete exterior retained the texture of the wooden formwork. Coupled with an ochre brown stain, this rusticated effect gives the

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<sup>35</sup> W. T. Wellman was the chief architect for Union Pacific Railroad from 1919 until 1951. G. S. Underwood is most famous for his contributions to the “Rustic” architecture of the National Park System during the 1920s and 1930s. However, his contributions to early ski lodge design are perhaps as important as he designed Sun Valley Lodge and contributed on the design for Timberline Lodge. Underwood also worked under the Federal Architects Project during the Depression and designed more than twenty post offices, two federal buildings and the U.S. State Department building in 1939-40. From William H. Sontag, *National Park Service: The First 75 Years* (Washington: Eastern National Park and Monument Association, 1990).

appearance of rough sawn lumber siding. The National Register nomination form prepared by the Idaho State Historical Society in 1989, lists many original features retained, including multi-paned, double-hung sash windows, double Y-plan east and west wings, and the original heated swimming pool. Significant alterations by 1989 included the replacement of the original shed-roofed porch with a compatible gable-roofed porte cochere and a deck added to the rear of the lodge.<sup>36</sup> In the winter of 2004, Sun Valley renovated guest rooms in the Sun Valley Lodge.

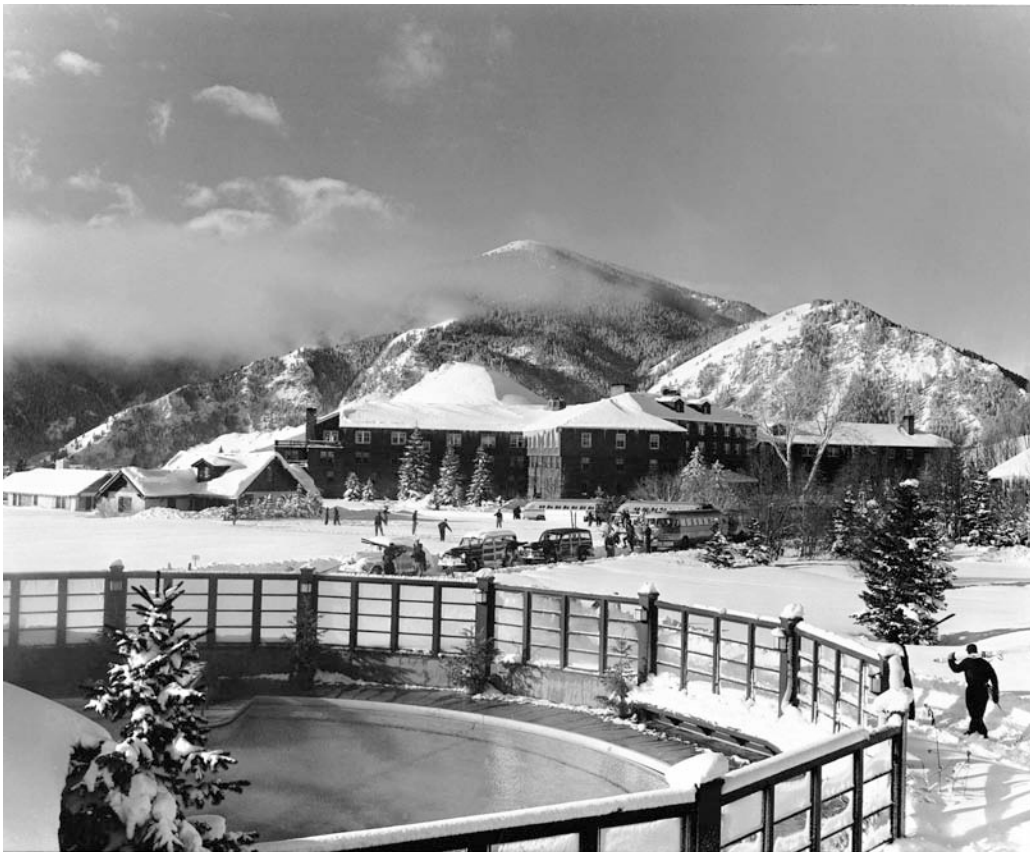


Figure 4.2 - Sun Valley Lodge archival photo, courtesy of Sun Valley Co.

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<sup>36</sup> *Sun Valley Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, prepared by Idaho State Historical Society (Jennifer Eastman Attebery). January 6, 1988, sec. 7, p.1



### Sun Valley (Challenger) Inn



Figure 4.3- Sun Valley (Challenger) Inn archival photo, courtesy of Sun Valley Co.

The Challenger Inn, also designed by G. S. Underwood and Co., was completed a year after Sun Valley Lodge to provide extra accommodations. It is a two-story hotel with an L-shaped plan, designed in an Alpine village style duplicated throughout North America at later resorts. Like the Sun Valley Lodge, construction of the Challenger Inn relied on reinforced concrete for the structure. In accordance with its Alpine chalet style, the exterior concrete walls were stuccoed and the gable roof clad in wood shakes. By 1989, additions had been made to the north and east elevations, which the Idaho Historical Society deemed compatible in its report.

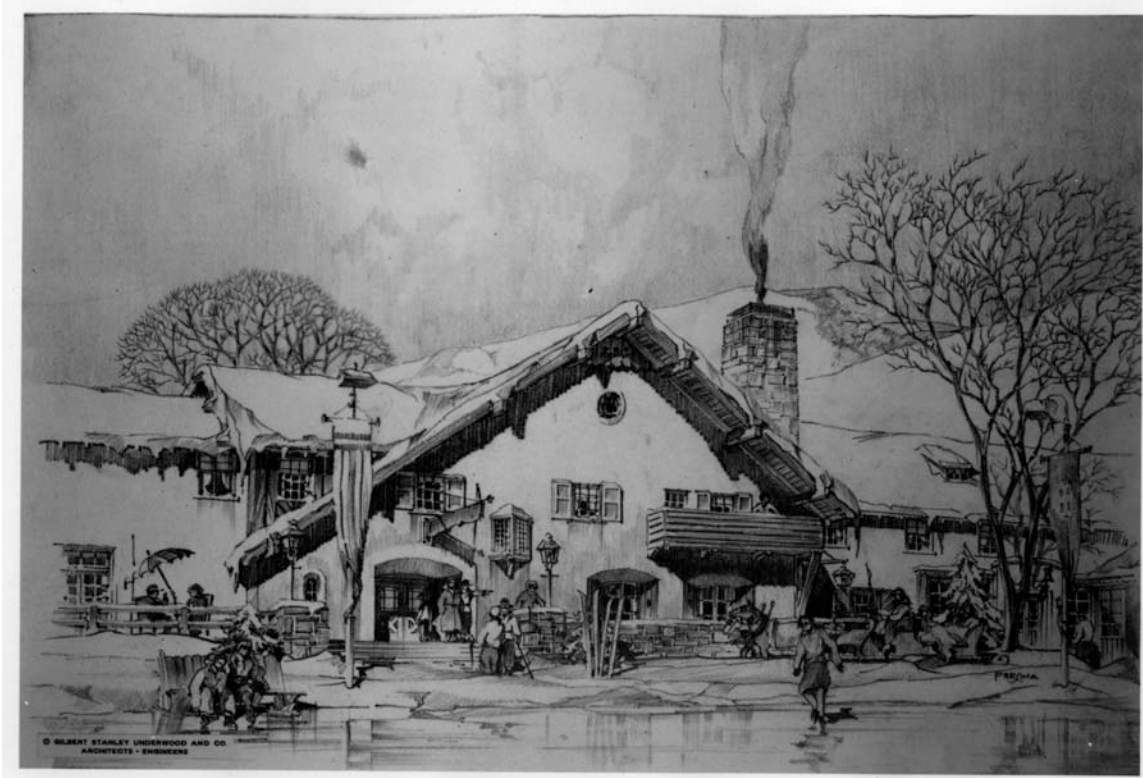


Figure 4.4- Architectural Drawing of Sun Valley (Challenger) Inn, courtesy of Sun Valley Resort

### Other Historic Structures

The original nomination for the National Register was a district nomination and included several other structures from the first phase of construction between 1936 and 1939, the suggested period of significance. The contributing structures include the Opera House (1937), the Harriman Chateau (1937-38), the Jeffers Cottage (1939), a 1939 cottage, the Aspen Cottage (1938), the Skiers' Chalet (1938), and the Ice Skating Rink (1939). Additionally, eight structures in the proposed district were deemed non-contributing, but all were considered compatible with the original structures.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *Sun Valley Historic District National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, sec. 7, p.2,3*

### Preservation Efforts and Issues

The 1989 Sun Valley Historic District proposed by the Idaho Historical Society was approved for inclusion in the National Register, but subsequently rejected due to the owner's objections. This nomination highlights the broader issue of public misperception of what a National Register listing entails. The general manager of the Sun Valley Company, Wally Huffman, said his company's reasons for rejecting the nomination involved the restriction of its ability to make free decisions regarding future development and that "the company would have to give up some ownership of the buildings."<sup>38</sup> Huffman also stated the company planned to continue to maintain the historic integrity of the resort as demonstrated by past improvements. Another newspaper article quoted Shannon Besoyan, a Sun Valley spokesman, "we understand [listing] could carry with it some restrictions on remodeling and development. It may even mean giving up some ownership of some of the buildings."<sup>39</sup> Ann Swanson, then grant operations analyst for the Idaho state office, tried to clarify the effect of National Register listing in the same article, but by then it was too late. Perhaps if this effort to clarify the effects of National Register listing to the Sun Valley Company had occurred earlier in the process, the outcome would have been different. From a resort owner's perspective, concern over any restrictions to future development by the owner is understandable given that the Sun Valley continues to be a for profit enterprise.

From the 1989 nomination and refusal, the prevalent preservation issue at Sun Valley is the chronic misperception of National Register designation and preservation legislation leading to the owner's fear of infringement or restriction of a ski area's profit-generating ability.

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<sup>38</sup> Chris Jensen, "Sun Valley Lodge Eligible for National Register," *Idaho Mountain Express*, 29 March 1989.

<sup>39</sup> Dan Gallagher, "Sun Valley Co. turns down historic place status for lodge," *Post-Register*, Idaho Falls, 2 April 1989.

Although the original nomination was refused due to the owner's misperceptions of the results of listing, the same erroneous perceptions persist today. In a phone conversation, Jack Sibbach, the current Director of Sales, Marketing, and Public Relations at Sun Valley, expressed the same reservations to any designation based on restrictions of use and future development. In spite of this reluctance toward designation, the policy of Sun Valley as stated in 1989 continues to be one of alterations that respect the historic nature of Sun Valley. Significant alterations and renovations, including the most recent at Sun Valley Lodge reflect this corporate policy of highlighting the resort's history. This emphasis is also visible in Sun Valley's promotional material, which showcases the resort's status as "the American Original" through historic photographs and postcards. In the *2004-05 Sun Valley Resort Guide*, these historic images almost outnumber contemporary photographs and the place of Sun Valley as North America's first ski resort is referenced on almost every page.<sup>40</sup> Clearly the resort takes pride in its historic status and uses it effectively in marketing the area, which makes the continued reluctance to embrace any form of designation all the more confounding.

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<sup>40</sup> In the *Sun Valley Resort Guide* (2004-05), out of sixty-two images, fourteen were historic photographs or postcards and fifteen showed one of Sun Valley's historic structures. Four out of fourteen text sections mentioned the historic nature of Sun Valley and one section was devoted entirely to it.

## CHAPTER 5

### **Timberline, Oregon**

#### History

The history of winter sports at Mount Hood in Oregon stretches back to the earliest instances in North America. The first claim of an ascent at Mount Hood occurred in 1854, with the first documented climb in 1857. Pioneers in the late nineteenth century skied on Hood's lower slopes on wooden planks. By 1914, the Mazamas Mountain Club held regular winter ski trips to Hood.<sup>41</sup> In 1928, the main road leading to Mount Hood was kept cleared of snow for the first full winter and the Portland Winter Sports Association fervently promoted it as a skier's paradise.<sup>42</sup> However, the history of skiing on Mount Hood contains one singular event that to this day outshines all others, the construction of Timberline Lodge.

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) provided most of the impetus for opening the Whitman National Forest to skiing. At Anthony Lake, a development typical of the Depression era, the CCC had the lake readied for skating, a 1,500 foot tow rope built, fifteen miles of road cleared of snow, and plans developed for a guest lodge and cleared slopes, contingent upon government funding. The funding came and \$246,893 of Works Progress Administration money was budgeted in 1935 for the construction of Timberline Lodge.

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<sup>41</sup> Louis Dawson, *Wild Snow: A Historical Guide to North American Ski Mountaineering* (Golden: The American Alpine Club Press, 1997), 75.

<sup>42</sup> Allen, 141.

Work began on Timberline Lodge on June 11, 1936 and provided five hundred jobs for unemployed workers, who lived in tents nearby. The final cost estimate in 1936 ended up at \$955,642. But in the end, the project ended up costing \$1.2 million dollars and was dedicated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on September 28, 1937. From the beginning, the lodge was viewed as a tourism draw for the state with an emphasis on winter recreation. The initial developmental plan reflected an emphasis on skiing and tourism as the greatest potential growth areas.<sup>43</sup> In Roosevelt's speech at the dedication, he predicted, "many, many people from this country are going to come here in the west for skiing and tobogganing and various other forms of winter sports." Many of the local proponents of the lodge were skiing enthusiasts or owned businesses that would profit from its use as a ski area. Area promotional campaigns served to link Timberline Lodge with skiing in the public's mind.

The 1938 management plan kept ownership of the building in Forest Service hands and Timberline Lodge, Inc. was formed to lease use of the lodge. The Timberline Lodge saw immediate success as a ski resort, yet after World War II the limited accessibility of the old lifts caused a drop in visitation. In 1952, Elston Ireland, a Portland restaurant owner, and theatre owners John and William McFadden bought the company. Ireland, who was particularly fond of the lodge, focused on restaurant operations while the McFaddens operated the hotel side. Ireland soon wanted out of the partnership when he became aware of the McFaddens' plans to include illegal gambling operations to supplement income. In December 1952, Charles Slaney bought out Ireland and the McFaddens, but continued the illegal operations, even adding prostitution. In 1955, less than two decades after construction, the lodge was so neglected and so mismanaged by Slaney that the Internal Revenue Service shut the lodge down for nonpayment of utility bills.

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<sup>43</sup> Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Historic American Buildings Survey, *Timberline Lodge, Timberline Trail, Government Camp vici, Clackamas County, OR* (1994), 20.

The Forest Service, still gun-shy from experiences with the prior owners, undertook a search for a new operator. After searching through 150 applicants, a transplanted social worker from the East Coast was chosen to reverse Timberline's fortunes.

Recently moved from New York to Oregon at the age of twenty-nine, Richard Kohnstamm fell in love with the lodge despite its current state. "It was kind of a dump," recalls Kohnstamm. "Litter was everywhere. Draperies hung in tatters at broken windows. Hand-hewn chairs were broken, their rawhide upholstery eaten away by rats. The handwoven upholstery was in shreds. Sewage and water-supply systems were antiquated."<sup>44</sup> Kohnstamm arranged a long-term lease with the Forest Service and began borrowing money. By 1960, skiers were returning to Timberline, providing a much needed financial boost to the area. Timberline Lodge was given National Historic Landmark status in 1977. In 1981, Timberline opened a second lodge facility to supplement the original lodge's accommodations. Since then, Kohnstamm's company has built three new lifts and a year-round swimming pool. By 1987, Timberline Lodge had become Oregon's second most popular tourist attraction, drawing more than 750,000 visitors each year.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Susan Stanley, "Rescue on Mount Hood: Against all odds, a onetime New York social worker and his thousands of dedicated 'Friends' revive Oregon's monumental Timberline Lodge," *Historic Preservation*, March-April 1987, 68.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

## Timberline Lodge



Figure 5.1- Timberline Lodge archival photo,  
courtesy of Salem, Oregon Public Library Historic Photograph Collections

Timberline Lodge represents a unique work of Depression-era construction, as reflected by its National Historic Landmark status. It also stands as a reflection of the architectural and handiwork styles of the Pacific Northwest. This regional influence is also found in the materials, almost exclusively from the surrounding area. More than 400 tons of stone were quarried for



buttresses, stairways and chimneys, local firs and pines were used for columns and rafters, and native oak, pine and cedar were used for floorboards and paneling.<sup>46</sup>

The design of Timberline Lodge was a cooperative effort between U.S. Forest Service architects W. I. Turner, Linn Forrest, Howard Griffith and Dean Wright with the architecture firm of Gilbert Stanley Underwood and Company, Los Angeles, California acting as consultants. Forest and Turner had the most influence in the design and style chosen for the lodge.<sup>47</sup> Influenced by the nineteenth century Picturesque style, European chateaux and alpine architecture, and Frank Lloyd Wright's "organic architecture", Forest and Turner sought to develop a new style fusing these influences into a unique American alpine style with heavy Pacific Northwest influences.<sup>48</sup>

The designers referred to this new vernacular style as "Cascadian", named after the nearby Cascade Mountains. In addition to the above influences, the Cascadian style also relied heavily on a unified design reflecting the environment, specifically in materials, and the use of the "Timberline" arch. Turner and Forest used earlier forms of this flat arch consisting of a lintel supported by curved posts on other Forest Service projects in the Pacific Northwest.<sup>49</sup> At Timberline, the arch was integrated into the design at every turn. The "Timberline" arch is the

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, *Timberline Lodge, Timberline Trail, Government Camp vici, Clackamas County, OR*, 2,10.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 11-12. G. S. Underwood (see footnote 34 on page 27) was working for the Treasury Department and was brought in by the U.S. Forest Service to consult on the plans for Timberline Lodge. He produced the original concept of a rustic building with a central core and two wings. W. I. "Tim" Turner produced contemporaneous similar designs that became the basis for the final designs produced by Forrest, Griffith, and Wright. Linn Forrest, a native Alaskan, is most famous for designing the Mendenhall Glacier Visitors Center near Juneau, AK and a reconstructed native village at Totem Bight State Historic Park, AK.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 12.

central architectural element in the main entrance and reappears throughout the interior in window openings, fireplaces, entrances and furniture.



Figure 5.2- The Timberline Arch, copyright Kevin Matthews, courtesy of Great Buildings



Figure 5.3- Head House interior, courtesy of Timberline Lodge

Another area in which the regional emphasis appears is in the interior decorations. Works Progress Administration projects often collaborated with other Depression-era organizations on projects. At Timberline, the inclusion of the Federal Art Project (FAP) resulted in the regional artwork, murals, furniture, metalwork and fabrics that decorate the interior. Burt Brown Barker, a noted scholar, advocate for the arts and historic preservation<sup>50</sup>, and former vice

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<sup>50</sup> Barker later served as the president of the Oregon Historical Society, and was instrumental in the designation of the Fort Clatsop and Fort Vancouver National Memorial Sites in the 1940s and 1950s, both associated with the Lewis and Clark expedition.

president of the University of Oregon, was appointed director of the Regional Federal Art Project in December 1935 and facilitated FAP's inclusion on the project. FAP artwork illustrated regional cultural themes including pioneer, Native American and timber industry influenced art. Collaboration between the designers and the supervising interior designer appointed by Barker, Margery Hoffman Smith, carried the "Cascadian" influence and the "Timberline" arch into the interior design.<sup>51</sup>



Figure 5.4- Newell post detail,  
courtesy of HABS



Figure 5.5- Head House Interior,  
courtesy of HABS

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 12-13.



Figure 5.6- South entrance, courtesy of HABS

Timberline Lodge is constructed of uncoursed boulders set in mortar, and heavy timbers with a poured concrete foundation on an irregular plan. A two-story, hexagonal central lobby core has two asymmetrical wings radiating at obtuse angles. The plan was chosen to minimize snow accumulation at the junctions between the central lobby core and wings.<sup>52</sup> The original lodge is approximately 54,000 square feet and later additions have been added. The first floor exteriors are faced with igneous rock gathered from along the access road to the site and quarried locally. The central core lobby, called the Head House, is faced entirely with this native stone. The upper stories of the radiating wings are sided with a mixture of hand-hewn timbers, shingles,

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 29.

board and batten, bevel siding, rough-sawn clapboard, vertical plank, and diagonal plank. The variety of materials used reflects the asymmetrical nature of the picturesque influences.<sup>53</sup> The west wing is sided with board and batten, shingles and diagonal plank, the east with clapboard, bevel siding and shingles, and the 1973 addition with board and batten. Exterior wood materials were stained or sealed upon completion in 1937, but today are painted gray-blue because of the site's extreme climatic conditions.



Figure 5.7- South façade, east wing, courtesy of HABS

The structural framing is wooden platform frame construction. The Head House has a false roof supported by oversized massive timber columns, trusses and beams. The false roof

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 30.

adds to the European chateaux and alpine style, suggesting castle-like proportions.<sup>54</sup> Rectangular six-over-six double-hung sash windows are the most common. Above the main entrance, a large 7' x 11' plate glass window was used in the observatory, a mark of technological sophistication from the era. This large plate glass has springs in the frame to allow the pane to give under high winds.



Figure 5.8- False roof detail,  
courtesy of HABS



Figure 5.9- Head House entrance and observatory window, courtesy of HABS

The 1972 addition, named the “C. S. Price Wing” and completed during Kohnstamm’s operation, actually reflected designs from the 1930s. The wing addition added 19,500 square feet and added space for large groups and conventions. Interior changes occurred after the Landmark designation as the lodge acquired a new role as a historic site. The ski lounge was

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 31.

converted into a historic exhibition center and the “Ski Grille” into an auditorium, both for interpretive programs and services.



Figure 5.10- East façade addition, courtesy of HABS

### Preservation Efforts and Issues

The history of efforts to preserve and restore Timberline Lodge provides an interesting look into the management of resources through a cooperation of government, private enterprise and non-profit organizations. Although Kohnstamm took over operations at Timberline in 1955,

the process and cost of restoring what was lost and caring for that remaining fell entirely to him. He recalls “In the beginning, the Forest Service didn’t assume *any* landlord responsibility.”<sup>55</sup> He immediately set out to expand the ski facilities in an effort to draw more visitors. New lifts were installed in 1956, 1962 and 1966 and lights for night skiing were added in 1972. However, as Timberline began to turn around the Forest Service took a greater interest. In 1969, the Forest Service asked Congress for three million dollars to further upgrade Timberline Lodge. Congress appropriated \$101,000 for a garage in 1970 and \$961,000 in 1971 for a proposed convention wing, later built as the C. S. Price Wing.<sup>56</sup>

In 1973, the Timberline Lodge was listed in the National Register of Historic Places, which marked a shift in the perception and use of the lodge from a ski lodge to a historic hotel. As a result of the new acquired interest in Timberline as a historic resource, the Friends of Timberline organization was founded in 1975. Composed of concerned community members, the Friends began by creating inventories and restoring and replicating handcrafted fabrics and furniture. The efforts of the Friends also received a boost from the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). Women who received job training under CETA were hired to hook rugs and weave fabrics for Timberline, an interesting circuit returning to the initial impetus for constructing the lodge during the Depression. On December 22, 1977 Timberline lodge was designated as a National Historic Landmark, further cementing the conversion of its emphasis from a ski lodge to a historic property. A full-time curator was hired in 1979 and, in 1981, the Wy’East Day Lodge was constructed in order to divert the majority of skier traffic from Timberline Lodge.

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<sup>55</sup> Stanley, 69.

<sup>56</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, *Timberline Lodge, Timberline Trail, Government Camp vici, Clackamas County, OR*, 23.



Although this cooperative effort has been critical to preserving Timberline Lodge, it has had its share of conflict. As with any cooperation between groups with diverse aims sharing one common goal, frictions arise from time to time. When Kohnstamm's special use permit came up for review in 1974, he desired a thirty-year contract and proposed plans for three new chairlifts, additional parking, a day lodge and a new sixty-room hotel. The Forest Service held public meetings and performed impact assessments and published them. The document emphasized a status quo management plan eschewing future development relating to the ski area. The Portland Chamber of Commerce backed Kohnstamm's plans, as did Oregon's two senators, and the permit was finally signed.<sup>57</sup> Kohnstamm's business venture, RLK and Company, currently holds a special use permit for ski operations at Timberline through 2022. Although the relationships between the different cooperative efforts to preserve Timberline have ebbed and flowed, many view it as a "successful test of the feasibility of a privately operated, government-owned lodge in the middle of a national forest."<sup>58</sup>

The preservation of Timberline Lodge's historic exterior and interiors is an enormous undertaking and a continuous process. Although the Wy'East Day Lodge bears the brunt of the daily wear and tear inflicted on Timberline's lodges, the Timberline Lodge still serves numerous visitors, skiers included. This continuous restoration effort has also employed several preservation firms in the northwest. Pilgrim's Progress, a Boring, Oregon based firm, has performed many of the restorations at Timberline in recent years. As a facility that has a dual duty of providing hospitality services and the interpretive services assumed as a National Landmark, the work at Timberline is exacting. Materials used at Timberline that were common

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<sup>57</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, *Timberline Lodge, Timberline Trail, Government Camp vici, Clackamas County, OR*, 27 and Stanley, 69.

<sup>58</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, *Timberline Lodge, Timberline Trail, Government Camp vici, Clackamas County, OR*, 27.

in the 1930s are becoming scarcer. Oregon White Oak, used for Head House's floorboards because it could easily be replaced, was thought of as "junk wood" in 1936. However, John Platz, co-owner of Pilgrim's Progress, had difficulty finding sufficient quantities until he found a coastal mill using it for forklift pallets.<sup>59</sup> To insure compatibility with the original material, floorboards are shaped with old tools and stained with hand-mixed stains. Likewise, much of the furniture and fabrics are reproduced items.

Clearly Timberline Lodge represents an extraordinary historic resource with broader significance than its contribution to the development and evolution of ski lodges. It is distinguished from other ski lodges through its ownership by the federal government and its historic connotations with the Works Progress Administration efforts in the Pacific Northwest during the Depression. However, it does provide a useful model for preserving historic ski lodges through a cooperative effort between the federal property owner, a property operator/manager, and non-profit preservation organizations. Although many other ski lodges and resorts are on property owned by the U.S. Forest Service, the ownership of improvements on the site usually rests with the special use permit holder. The cooperative agreement at Timberline Lodge could prove useful in managing other properties, provided the federal agency would assume ownership and then allow the permit holder and non-profit preservation organizations to maintain it.

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<sup>59</sup> Doug Irving, "Restoring Timberline history at floor level," *The Oregonian*, 6 March 2001, sec. East Zoner; Mid County, p. B02.

## CHAPTER 6

### Mont Tremblant, Québec

#### History

In 1938, the area around Tremblant, Québec had fallen on hard times. The surrounding forests had been timbered to the point that sawmills had begun to lay off workers and a local alcohol factory had recently closed. Then Joseph Ryan, gold prospector and son of a Philadelphia railroad baron, came to visit. After climbing to the summit of Mont Tremblant with CBS news anchor Lowell Thomas, Ryan decided to open a world-class alpine village and ski resort.<sup>60</sup> While still an untested idea, with Sun Valley barely out of its first year of operation, Tremblant became Canada's first destination ski resort and the first on the eastern half of the continent.

Joseph Ryan used his personal wealth to build a ski resort here, but also received ample local support. The parish priest, Father Deslauriers, saw the development as a means to reverse the economic downturn in his parish and labor streamed in from struggling farms, sawmills and lumber camps. In February 1939, Mont Tremblant ski area opened, the second resort in North America after Sun Valley. Although often termed an "eccentric owner", Tremblant flourished under Ryan's direction.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Richard Starnes, "Tremblant's history a tangled one: An American gold prospector, the parish priest and unemployed loggers carved a thriving ski centre out of the Quebec wilderness," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 11 August 2004, sec. Business, p. D3.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

In 1965, the Ryan family sold Tremblant to a group headed by two Canadians, Andre Charron and Marcel Desjardins. Although the level of management remained consistent, the Charron-Desjardins group was unable to raise money needed for modernization and expansion.<sup>62</sup> In 1979, the group sold the resort to the credit union, Federation des Caisses d'Entriade Economique. During this period, the forty year old main lodge and cabins needed repairs and the ski trails needed upgrading.<sup>63</sup> However, after only two years of ownership, the Federation was forced to put Tremblant back on the market. After two years of being on the market, a Montreal developer, Louis-Pierre Lapointe bought the resort for \$5 million. During this period of ownership, visitation continued to decline as skiers sought out other, newer resorts. Finally, in 1991, Intrawest, a Canadian company that owns several North American ski resorts, purchased Tremblant.

Intrawest had recently finished a successful redevelopment of a prior purchase, Blackcomb in Whistler, British Columbia. At the time of sale, Intrawest announced its plans to spend \$413 million to revive Tremblant.<sup>64</sup> Plans included building an alpine village with "New Urbanism" directives.<sup>65</sup> California urban planner Eldon Beck, who also designed the village at Vail, Colorado, was brought on to create the master plan at Tremblant. By 1995, Intrawest had already spent \$320 million dollars and had projections for another \$147 million in improvements over the next two years.<sup>66</sup> In September 2004, SKI magazine ranked Mont Tremblant as the number one ski resort in North America, number one in North America for accommodations, and

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<sup>62</sup> Matthew Elder, 1991. "Turnaround at Tremblant, Intrawest lifts Laurentian spirits," *The Gazette* (Montreal), 9 December 1991, sec. Business, p. TWIB8.

<sup>63</sup> Starnes.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Mark London, "Kitschy, but great place to hang out: Mont Tremblant is laboratory for neo-traditional design," *The Gazette* (Montreal), 25 November, sec. Art, p. H5.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

number one in eastern North America for restaurants and services-- all for the eighth year in a row. Clearly, Intrawest's efforts to revive a flagging ski resorts have proven successful.

### Chalet des Voyageurs



Figure 6.1- Chalet des Voyageurs, courtesy of Mont Tremblant

The Chalet des Voyageurs was constructed in 1939 as the base lodge for Joseph Ryan's Mont Tremblant Ski Area. Ryan thought that in order to draw American skiers from across the border, his new ski area needed to reflect its Canadian place. He chose to design the area's buildings as a reflection of the French Canadian vernacular architecture. Most of this inspiration

came from the architectural heritage of the Laurentian Mountains, but also drew on influences from the historic center of Quebec City. This “Neo-*Canadien*” or “*Canadien Revival*”<sup>67</sup> style was used to provide a consistent style on the Chalet des Voyageurs, the Tremblant Inn, and ninety-five guest cabins. Ryan even reconstructed an eighteenth century chapel from the Ile d’Orleans, an island near Quebec City.

The Chalet has an irregular plan with a rectangular center and two octagonal wings, one significantly larger than the other. The original structure was two stories. The slopeside octagonal end was also two stories and the opposite octagon only one story. Two pyramidal cupolas are centered along the rectangular center, with a third octagonal peaked cupola atop the two-story octagonal end. Five small shed dormer windows pierce the roofline along the long rectangular facades and eight are found on the two-story octagon, one on each roof slope. Standing seam metal roofing covers the entire structure. The structure was moved in 1994 to sit in the center of the new village planned by Intrawest. It sits in the *Vieux Tremblant* or Old Tremblant section of the village along with the Tremblant Inn and twelve of the surviving cabins.

### Tremblant Inn

The Tremblant Inn is the only original structure that has not been moved as a result of the Intrawest development. It became the anchor of the section of the village called *Vieux Tremblant*, a collection of the surviving original buildings. The Inn has a three-story, rectangular plan with later additions from the 1960s and 1970s.

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<sup>67</sup> The use of ‘Canadien’ as opposed to ‘Canadian’ in these style descriptions emphasizes the French Canadian influences, rather than Anglo Canadian.



Figure 6.2- Tremblant Inn, courtesy of Mont Tremblant

The Inn has a large two-story projecting front gable entrance. The eaves of the projecting gable end and on the main roof have a pronounced kick at the end, a common feature in Laurentian vernacular architecture. Hipped roof dormers pierce the roof from the second and third floors. The second floor dormers have four sets of two-over-two double hung sash windows and are centered above the first floor windows. The third floor dormers are centered between the second floor dormers and each has a single two-over-two double hung sash window.



Figure 6.3- Demolition of later additions, Tremblant Inn, courtesy of Mont Tremblant

Intrawest has recently demolished the later additions to the Inn and plans to construct more appropriate additions on the same footprint. The roof of the Inn was replaced recently and comprised twenty percent of the overall budget for the Inn's restoration. The new roof retains the aesthetic of the original roof with modern materials. The original roof was covered in square sheets laid at diagonals, creating a unique diagonal pattern, in a roofing method common to the Laurentian area.





Figure 6.4- Installation of new roof, Tremblant Inn, courtesy of Mont Tremblant

The twenty-four surviving cabins of the original ninety-five perhaps best reflect the French Canadian vernacular architecture of the Laurentians. The forms were replicated from existing Laurentian farmhouses in the area. The forms vary from front gabled, normal pitch to two-pitched gambrel roofs with gabled dormers. Siding varies from clapboard to vertical board and batten. Twelve of these structures were also moved to the *Vieux Tremblant* section of the new village.



Figures 6.5 and 6.6- Original cabins relocated to *Vieux Tremblant*, courtesy of Mont Tremblant

### Preservation Efforts and Issues

Joe Houssian, the president of Intrawest views the preservation of Tremblant’s original structures as “the single most important element for long term success of the resort.”<sup>68</sup> Rather than demolishing the existing structures and moving ahead with plans for a completely new “village” at the base, Intrawest chose to retain most of the existing structures and build the new village in a style similar of Joseph Ryan’s original “Neo-*Canadien*” style. However, the new village replicates the styles and forms of the historic center of Quebec City rather than the Laurentian architectural heritage Ryan drew from. While this design decision has drawn criticism for being too kitschy and Disneyland-esque, it has ensured the survival of some of Tremblant’s resources, albeit in moved and altered forms.

The preservation issue most pertinent to the situation at Tremblant is the issue of integrity. How much integrity remains after these structures are corralled into one location and altered, disrupting the historic site relationships between these structures? The Chalet des Voyageurs was moved to a new location, disrupting its former relationship on the site to the ski

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<sup>68</sup> Guy Thibaudeau, “Restoration of Greatness.” *Ski Area Management* vol. 33, no. 1, January 1994, 55.

slopes. Additionally, a new ground floor was constructed and the original building was set upon it. The new ground floor appears compatible in terms of materials and workmanship, however it obviously altered the original design of the structure. Moved closer to the Tremblant Inn, surrounded by several of the surviving cabins and with an entire “village” constructed around it, the Chalet des Voyageurs certainly has a different feeling relative to the site. Conversely, the Chalet is currently used as it has always been, as an après-ski<sup>69</sup> facility.



Figure 6.7- Original siting of Chalet des Voyageurs and cabins, Mont Tremblant, photo by T.H. Richards, copyright Manhattan Views

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<sup>69</sup> Literally, “after ski” and widely used to refer to the dining, drinking, and social interactions after a day of skiing.

Tremblant has evolved since the day it was constructed with the latest iteration of its current ownership by a multi-resort corporation. As with Sun Valley, any proposed designation perceived by the resort ownership as impinging on the future development of the ski area would be contested vigorously.

## CHAPTER 7

### **Berthoud Pass, Colorado**

#### History

Berthoud Pass Ski Area lies in north central Colorado, sixty miles west of Denver and twenty-five miles south of Granby. Though others also compete for the claim, Berthoud Pass was one of, if not the, first ski areas in Colorado. Berthoud Pass does hold two undisputed distinctions in ski history-- the first tow rope in Colorado and the first double chairlift in North America (1947).

The Berthoud Pass Ski Area first opened in February 1937. Before 1937, the area was managed and operated by the Winter Sports Council, associated with the city of Denver. A 1920s inn at the pass burned down in 1939 and was replaced by several smaller buildings. In 1945, Sam Huntington and three families, the Grants, Shaforths, and Tolls, purchased the ski area. Under their management, the first double chairlift in North America was installed in 1947 and a new base lodge constructed in 1949. This base lodge is the current one standing at Berthoud Pass. In 1973, the area was sold to Irma Hill, who subsequently sold it four years later to Clarence Garst. Peter Crowley purchased the area from Garst in 1987, renamed it Timberline Ski Area, and undertook major renovations to the base lodge. An accident on the double chairlift in 1988 led to bankruptcy the same year.

In 1988, Gary Schulz, the maker of Borvig ski lifts, purchased the resort for \$350,000. The area again filed for bankruptcy and closed in 1991. Jim Pearsall and Paul Weibal purchased

the area from bankruptcy court, but the area remained closed between 1992 and 1997. The area reopened in January 1998 and then immediately sold to the owners of Silver Creek Ski Resort. This company, later renamed SolVista, held a special use permit from the Forest Service to operate through 2003. However, SolVista requested non-use for the 2001 season and the area remained closed for 2001 and 2002. SolVista removed the lift towers in April and May 2003 and the special use permit expired on October 22, 2003. A stipulation in the last special use permit committed SolVista to removing all improvements on the site if the permit was not renewed.

The U.S. Forest Service's draft of *Berthoud Pass Ski Area Needs Assessment* recommended a change in the management direction away from a ski area. Local citizens and interested parties attended public meetings held by the Forest Service regarding the future of the area. A non-profit organization, Friends of Berthoud Pass, was created to provide a common voice to these proceedings. Although the lodge and other ski related facilities were scheduled for removal by 2004, the majority of the area remains as SolVista left it in the spring of 2003. In May 2004, the Forest Service published its assessment of the area. The fate of the base lodge and facilities remains uncertain, as no future management direction has yet been determined.

## Berthoud Pass Lodge



Figure 7.1- Berthoud Pass Lodge, 2004, courtesy of USFS

The Berthoud Pass Lodge, constructed in 1949, represents the first commercial operation of a ski area at Berthoud Pass. With the purchase of the area in 1945 by several families, Berthoud Pass became an operating ski area with an emphasis on business. The construction of the first double chairlift at Berthoud Pass in 1947 also reflects the historic significance of this transition to a profit-generating ski area.

The Berthoud Pass Lodge represents an architectural sub-type of ski lodges common to the 1940s and 1950s, the “rustic-modern” aesthetic. This “rustic-modern” aesthetic traces its

genesis to a transitional period of architecture in the National Park System.<sup>70</sup> Key features of the “rustic-modern” aesthetic include elements of the International Style constructed with rustic details and materials, particularly wood.



Figure 7.2- 1960s postcard, Berthoud Pass Lodge, courtesy of Colorado Ski History

Berthoud Pass Lodge is a three-story, seven-bay structure constructed of wood on a concrete foundation. The ground floor extends out from the front and side façades creating an enclosed porch fronted with large plate glass windows. The second and third floors each have six double-hung sash windows recessed in a vertical panel spanning the two floors with a stairwell on one end. The stairwell reads from the outside by the three single pane windows stacked upon one another. The siding of the structure is vertical plank board and batten. A slightly sloped flat roof covers the structure with three simple brackets along each end. An

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<sup>70</sup> See footnote 80 on page 72.



observation deck covers an extended wing from the main structure. An outdoor deck was added from the base of this wing in 1987.

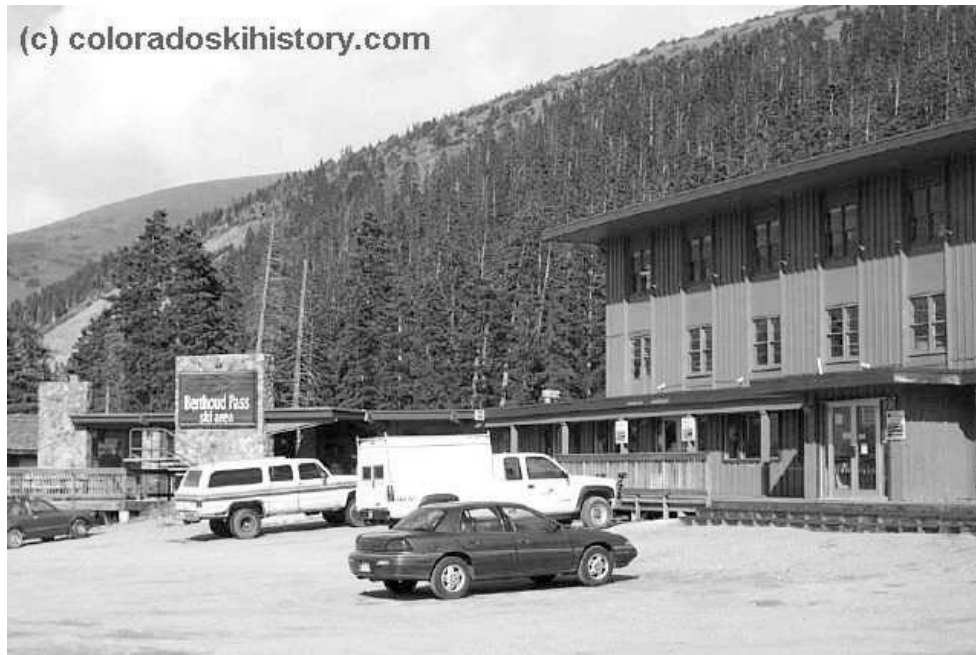


Figure 7.3- Berthoud Pass Lodge, 2003, courtesy of Colorado Ski History

### Preservation Efforts and Issues

The history of preservation efforts at Berthoud Pass stretches back less than a decade, but it has been a tempestuous period. In 1996, Berthoud Pass Lodge was recorded as a historic site by the Colorado Department of Transportation. Later that year the Colorado Historical Society determined that the lodge was not eligible for listing in the National Register. After SolVista ceased operations at Berthoud Pass in the spring of 2003, the U.S. Forest Service began the process of compiling an assessment of the Berthoud Pass area and its future management direction. Berthoud skiers and concerned citizens formed Friends of Berthoud Pass, a non-profit

organization to voice their concerns over the future of the ski area. Part of the process entailed public meetings where interested entrepreneurs, citizens and representatives from nearby local governments voiced opinions on Berthoud's future. In a December 2003 public meeting, the historic value of the lodge weighed heavily in the discussion.<sup>71</sup> The Forest Service mailed a draft assessment to interested parties in March 2004 and another public meeting was held to discuss the findings. Again the issue of the historic nature of the lodge and area's place in Colorado state history was a prime topic of discussion. The Forest Service published the final Berthoud Pass Assessment in May 2004. The assessment concluded that future ski operations at Berthoud Pass were not feasible based on the recent failures of the last several operations. Part of the recommendations for the future was the demolition of the lodge with maintenance and operation costs given as the primary factor.<sup>72</sup> Under the Forest Service's rationale, if the future plan for Berthoud Pass did not include skiing, then the existing ski lodge was unnecessary. Under the permit obligations of SolVista's permit, all improvements needed to be removed upon the permit's expiration. The public comments included as an appendix to the final assessment demonstrate the publicly perceived historic importance of the lodge. Out of thirty-two letters and public comments, fourteen specifically address the historic value of the lodge and its significance to the area and the state of Colorado. A sampling of these comments suggests that a public perception exists on the historic significance of the lodge.

"I feel that the legacy of recreation on Berthoud Pass needs to be preserved."

"Colorado has a heritage and it should be preserved."

"Berthoud Pass is a historical asset, ripe for developing again."

"It cannot be said enough: to demolish Berthoud Pass is a terrible waste of opportunity, a destruction of Colorado's roots and a terribly sad event."

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<sup>71</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture. Forest Service, Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests. *Berthoud Pass Assessment*. Fort Collins, 2004, 4.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

“I’m surprised that the Lodge was not deemed eligible for Historic Register listing.”

“...an example of early ski facility vernacular which is a rarity... Most ski areas have removed their base lodges only to replace them with faux Swiss or imaginary alpine or western barn architecture.”

“[the current plan] does insure that Berthoud Pass will not inspire or pass along its rich cultural history.”<sup>73</sup>

The demolition of Berthoud Pass Lodge has been postponed at least twice. Originally set for demolition by September 2004 after the release of the final assessment in May, the deadline was first pushed back to the end of 2004. Presently, the lodge is slated for demolition by July 2005. No direction for future management has been decided for Berthoud Pass. One proposal includes an emphasis on the Continental Divide Trail, since Berthoud Pass is the most accessible point along the trail. Colorado State Parks had plans for a 3,000 square foot day lodge on the site, but retracted the plan in October 2004. The Forest Service is currently entertaining other proposals, but the demolition of the existing lodge remains fixed and the responsibility of building a new structure would be the responsibility of the new tenant. Ike Garst, who owned and operated Berthoud Pass from 1977 to 1987, said, “Tearing down the lodge that’s up there makes no sense at all. I think something could work up there but not without the existing lodge.”<sup>74</sup> Forest Service estimates for renovating the existing lodge come in at \$200,000 to 300,000 while estimates for any new construction begin at \$2 million.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., E1-E12.

<sup>74</sup> Jason Blevins, “State Parks says no to lodge on Berthoud Pass,” *The Denver Post*, 15 October, sec. Business, p. C-02.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 8

### **Mount Ashland, Oregon**

#### History

Local skiing enthusiasts were responsible for establishing a ski area at Mount Ashland near Ashland, Oregon in the early 1960s. Headed by Glen Jackson, then the head of the California-Oregon Power Company (later known as Pacific Power and Light), this grassroots effort constructed a lodge, Ariel chairlift, a T-bar and rope tow in 1963. The Southern Oregon State College Foundation took over management of the area in the mid-1970s. In 1977, a local businessman named Dan Hicks bought the area and installed a new Windsor chair lift in 1978. In 1983, Hicks sold the area to Harbor Properties of Seattle. Night lighting and two more chair lifts were installed during the Harbor Properties ownership period. In 1991 after a poor snow season, the area was purchased by the City of Ashland through donor-restricted contributions and a grant from the Oregon Economic Development Fund. The City of Ashland owns the area's facilities and holds the special use permit for skiing, issued by the U.S. Forest Service. The Mount Ashland Association leases the use of facilities from the city for one dollar per year and currently operates the area. The Mount Ashland Association is a non-profit organization whose aim is "to provide educational and recreational opportunities to the members of the general public in Jackson County."

## Mount Ashland Lodge

Mount Ashland Lodge, constructed in 1964, was designed by Bob Bosworth, a professor of architecture at the University of Oregon at the time. Bosworth had also designed the Oregon Pavilion for the Seattle World's Fair in 1962. After designing the lodge and before construction was to begin, Bosworth went to the lodge site to stake out the foundations, only to find they were already poured. The construction manager, Jack Batzer, had gone up to the site several weeks before to get an early start on the construction and had poured the foundations for the lodge since they were staked out upon his arrival. To this day the details behind the 'mystery' staking of the foundation remains uncertain. However, as a result of the 'early' staking, the siting of the lodge did not meet with Bosworth's original plans. Instead of facing the primary ski slope, the lodge points thirty degrees more downhill than originally planned.



Figure 8.1- Mount Ashland Lodge,  
courtesy of Mount Ashland Association

Construction of the Mount Ashland Lodge proved to be a difficult task given the location and tumultuous climatic conditions. The twenty roof hips were assembled on the ground, later to be hoisted into position by crane. As the roof was hoisted into place, several bolts securing the assembly cracked in the sub-freezing temperatures causing the roof to crash to the ground. The initial access to the lodge site along a steep road meant that concrete trucks had to negotiate the last quarter-mile to the site in reverse to prevent the concrete from spilling out the back.



Figure 8.2- Mount Ashland Lodge shortly after completion, courtesy of *Ashland Daily Tidings*

The Mount Ashland Lodge reflects the “rustic-modern” aesthetic found at Berthoud Pass Lodge, but also relies heavily on the Picturesque and European “chateaux” styles, which also influenced the design of Timberline Lodge. It is a two-story structure built on a complex plan with stacked blocks surrounding a central node. The staggered roof eaves of the stacked blocks translate the dramatic slope of the site and reflect the irregularity and asymmetry common in the Picturesque and “chateaux” styles. The steeply pitched roofs and the roof finials perched atop each stacked block also demonstrate a Picturesque influence. A chimney tower rises from the peak of the center section, capped by a pyramidal roof. The siding and openings reflect the

“modern-rustic” aesthetic with vertical board and batten and simple one-over-one windows throughout. On the slope side, windows are stacked vertically along the entire.

While Mount Ashland Lodge is less than fifty years old, several alterations, particularly in the interiors, have been made over the years to adapt the structure to changes in ski technology and management. The majority of alterations are applied surfaces, largely reversible, and do not seriously compromise the historic integrity of the structure. The exposed wood framing and large central fireplace remain intact and according to George Kramer, a local preservation professional, Bob Bosworth would certainly recognize his design today.<sup>76</sup>

### Preservation Efforts and Issues

The Mount Ashland Lodge has served the Mount Ashland Ski Area for nearly fifty years and will continue to do so, but not as the sole lodge. The Mount Ashland Association (MAA) recently announced plans for an area expansion including new lifts, runs, and a new lodge. According to Rick Saul of the MAA, during the planning process there were discussions to remove the existing lodge in favor of a new structure. In the end, it was determined that the lodge played a significant role in representing the heritage of the area and should be retained. While the old lodge will retain vital functions, such as lockers and rental services, all food service will be relocated to the new lodge.<sup>77</sup> Rick Saul pointed to lessons learned in traffic

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<sup>76</sup> George Kramer, interviewed by author, electronic mail correspondence, Athens, GA, 21 January 2005-27 February 2005.

<sup>77</sup> Rick Saul, interviewed by author, phone conversation, Athens, GA, 23 February 2005.

control and service design since Ashland has been operational as the prime reason for shuffling services between the new and old lodges.

While the Mount Ashland Lodge has not reached the fifty-year mark required for National Register eligibility, it will within the next decade. At that time, it could be considered under Criterion A for significance as a typical ski lodge precursor to the “megaresorts” that soon followed it. Many of these ski areas started in the 1960s to service local needs rather than broader regional or national skiers. It is also unique architecturally for the integration of the “rustic-modern” aesthetic with influences from the “European chateaux” style and even Timberline Lodge.

Several preservation issues illustrated at Mount Ashland are applicable to many other ski lodges across the country from the same period. These lodges are not yet ‘historic’ as defined by the National Register, yet they represent an important transitional period in the evolution of ski lodge design. The Beech Mountain Lodge in Banner Elk, North Carolina is a similar lodge that reflects a mixing of the “rustic-modern” aesthetic with a Swiss alpine lodge style. As the needs of these areas change, whether through expansion or changes in ski technology or area management, the integrity of these lodges can be weakened through alterations. In the case of Mount Ashland, the owner/operator has recognized the significance of the lodge without prompting from outside sources.



## CHAPTER 9

### **Cultural Resource Analysis**

Men worshipped perfection in tempo, vorlage; were consecrated to mastery of controls and schusses, corridors and flushes; talked of waxes and edges, ski-meets and records. Men now ski superbly. But what have they lost?

-Sierra Club Bulletin (1938)

The case studies discussed in this work display the range of unique situations and preservation issues found among ski lodges. However, ski lodges also reflect commonalities that define them as a unique cultural resource. Despite drastic extremes in geography, scale and management, ski lodges share specific characteristics that comprise a unique cultural resource. Some of these characteristics are inherent in the nature of the ski resorts they are a component of, while others reflect their status as products of the twentieth century and the common heritage they share with other building types from that era. Taken collectively, ski lodges are a unique cultural resource defined by their location and use, both of which shape an identifiable design unique to ski lodges.

#### Built For A Specific Purpose

Three factors characterize ski lodges as a unique building type and as a distinctive cultural resource. From the nature of skiing as a winter sport requiring both the right climatic and terrain conditions, ski lodges are defined by a specific location. Ski lodges were built in

sometimes remote and often mountainous locations with some measure of a significant snow season. The remoteness of location and the amount of seasonal snowfall often directly influenced the design of a ski lodge. Timberline Lodge in Oregon was built with steeply sloped rooflines, even incorporating “cat slide” roofs on the east and west facades.<sup>78</sup> As Timberline has ten



Figure 9.1- “Cat slide” roof on east façade, Timberline Lodge, courtesy of HABS

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<sup>78</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, *Timberline Lodge, Timberline Trail, Government Camp vici, Clackamas County, OR*, 35



Figure 9.2- “Cat slide” roof on west façade, Timberline Lodge, courtesy of HABS

snowfall months, these steep pitches facilitate snow removal and reduce snow loads. The difficult approach to Mount Ashland also affected the design, siting and construction of the lodge. Like Timberline, the amount of snowfall dictated a steep roof pitch and wide overhanging eaves. The remote location and difficult access road created confusion regarding the lodge’s siting relative to the slopes. Although the original design called for the lodge to be sited traditionally facing the primary slope, the contractor began work before the architect could make a site visit and the lodge was sited facing thirty degrees more downhill than planned.<sup>79</sup> The severe weather and steep access road also affected construction of the lodge.

The original use of a ski lodge as a service facility for skiers dictates a narrowly defined use. As evidenced by the numerous abandoned ski areas across North America, when a ski resort

<sup>79</sup> Lance K. Pugh, “Ashland’s wrong-way lodge,” *Ashland Daily Tidings* (Ashland, OR), 8 March 2004.

ceases to be used for skiing, it rarely survives. Ski lodges were built to provide food and beverage, leisure, storage, and sometimes lodging facilities for the skiing customer. The importance of providing lodging facilities declined as ski areas in remote areas brought in related development. Only the older lodges reflect this service aspect, while later lodges moved lodging facilities to a separate building or to privately owned facilities.

Finally, these factors of location and use dictate a unique architectural form, plan, and design. Just as “a rose by any other name smells as sweet”-- placed in any other setting, a ski lodge would remain recognizable as a ski lodge through its form and design. Imagine Timberline Lodge placed in the urban setting of Portland or even any non-alpine location. Passers-by would likely wonder what a ski lodge was doing in such an unlikely location as the form and design of ski lodges is so unique and distinctive. This distinctiveness reflects a specific location and use and the resulting form and style unique to ski lodge architecture. Although particular ski lodge styles vary from European to regional to Modern influences, all reflect a typology and aesthetic representative of location and use.

The development of ski lodges as a specific building type began in 1937 at Sun Valley. Before 1937 structures built specifically for skiing were limited primarily to crude warming huts. Mountain hotels began winter operations to service skiers in the early decades of the twentieth century, but they were mountain hotels and not purpose-built lodges. After the completion of Sun Valley, ski lodges began the evolution into a unique building type addressing the specific needs of the destination ski resort. The evolution of the lodge plan and design were heavily influenced by Modern design philosophies dictating that form should follow function. Ski lodges also drew upon new construction methods and materials. The poured concrete

construction at Sun Valley Lodge reflects contemporary construction methods while retaining a rustic aesthetic created by the grain and planks of the wooden forms.

### Identification of Form and Typology

The design of ski lodges evolved in response to narrowly defined location and use. Typically ski lodges are located at the base of the primary slope of a ski area. Secondary ski trails on adjacent slopes also usually terminate at the base lodge. As a result, ski lodges have two primary facades, one facing the slope and one on the opposite side where skiers arrive at the lodge. The entrance façade welcomes visitors to a full day of skiing and the slope façade welcomes skiers in from the cold with the offering of a warm fire and refreshment.

Food service comprises a large part of the services provided on this side of the lodge. Through the evolution of lodge design, this service aspect grew in importance as time passed. This increase is reflected in later lodges, where more space is devoted to cafeteria and bar areas than lobby space. At Sun Valley Lodge and Timberline Lodge, this central space contains a lobby space reminiscent of a hotel. Comfortable chairs are positioned around a fireplace and offer a relaxing atmosphere after a day of skiing. At later lodges, skiers enter directly into a large cafeteria space. At Snow Valley, when a new lodge was constructed, the majority of food service moved from the old lodge to the new to accommodate greater numbers of diners. Likewise, the plans for a new lodge at Mount Ashland call for a transference of food service from the old to the new lodge.<sup>80</sup>

Overnight accommodations represent another aspect of the evolution in ski lodge design. In early examples, the lodge functioned as a hotel in addition to the daytime services provided to

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<sup>80</sup> Rick Saul, interview, 23 February 2005.

skiers. Sun Valley Lodge, Sun Valley Inn, and Timberline Lodge all reflect the importance of hotel services in their design.<sup>81</sup> Once ski areas became an established tourism destination and spurred nearby development, this function declined in importance. Later lodges, such as Snow Valley, Ashland Lodge, and Berthoud Lodge, have no overnight accommodations incorporated into the design. This change in design also precipitated a change in scale. Once overnight accommodations were removed from the equation, lodges could be built at a smaller scale to reduce construction costs. This change is evident even in the more recent lodges at mega-resorts. Although significantly larger than the lodges at Snow Valley, Ashland and Berthoud, the footprint of the lodge at Vail, Colorado is much smaller than those from the 1930s and 1940s since it does not have lodging facilities.

### Architectural Forms and Styles

Architecturally, ski lodge styles vary, including Alpine or Swiss Chalet, rustic aesthetic, Modern, and even regionally inspired styles as at Timberline and Tremblant. Yet all reflect an overall “mountain” or “rustic” aesthetic, either in materials or composition. Berthoud Lodge from the 1949 displays influences from a Modern aesthetic, with a slightly sloped roof, vertically paneled window openings, and an overall lack of ornamentation. However, the rough vertical board and batten siding and eave brackets reflect the rustic aesthetic also visible in many National Park structures constructed around the same period. This “modern-rustic” aesthetic was popularized by the National Park Service-- between its Rustic architectural phase ending around

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<sup>81</sup> An early exception is found at Mont Tremblant, where the Chalet des Voyageurs acted as a base lodge and a separate inn was constructed for overnight accommodations.

1942 and the ‘Mission 66’ Modern architectural phase beginning around 1956.<sup>82</sup> Another outstanding example of a lodge exhibiting this “modern-rustic” aesthetic is the base lodge at Mount Snow, Vermont, constructed in 1954.

The Alpine or Swiss Chalet style, first applied to the Challenger Inn at Sun Valley in 1937, has pervaded over time and geography even finding its way to such unlikely locales like the Southern Appalachians at the Beech Mountain base lodge constructed in the early 1970s. Although a Swiss Chalet style had existed in the United States since 1850, its adaptation to ski lodges appears to have evolved from contemporary European influences rather than from the nineteenth century.<sup>83</sup> Characteristically, the Swiss Chalet style used at Sun Valley and later emulated elsewhere consisted of irregular roofline, a low, horizontal emphasis, wide overhanging eaves, and a stucco and timber frame appearance.

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<sup>82</sup> The National Park Service’s Rustic architecture phase stretched from 1916 to 1942, with the most prolific years between 1927 and 1932. Works Progress Administration money and Civilian Conservation Corps labor provided the resources and an emphasis on regional and traditional craftwork the social and political will (see Tweed, William et. al. *Rustic Architecture 1916-1942*). A conscious decision to move to a Modern architecture aesthetic in National Parks did not occur until the Mission 66 program. Mission 66 was a federally-sponsored program to modernize National park facilities in response to massive visitor increases after World War II. Mission 66 projects began in 1956 and ended in 1966, with approximately 100 new visitor centers constructed. An unstated architecture evolved in the intervening period, bridging the gap from Rustic to Modern. During this period, Modern forms predominated and the Rustic aesthetic was reflected in materials and limited details.

<sup>83</sup> Jackson Downing introduced the Swiss Chalet style in his pattern book, *The Architecture of Country Houses* (1850). However, European ski areas visited by Averell Harriman and Count Felix Schaffgotsch primarily influenced the architectural style of the lodge and inn at Sun Valley.



Figure 9.3- Beech Mountain Lodge, Banner Elk, NC,  
courtesy of Beech Mountain

Regionally influenced styles also make a significant contribution to an overarching ski lodge style. The Forest Service architects designed Timberline Lodge as an anachronistic vernacular adaptation with alpine and Pacific Northwest influences.<sup>84</sup> In the absence of a defined American Alpine architectural tradition, W. I. Turner, Linn Forrest and Howard Gifford chose to create a new style based on American influences rather than directly copy European Alpine architectural styles. They named the style used at Timberline “Cascadian” because it

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<sup>84</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, *Timberline Lodge, Timberline Trail, Government Camp vici, Clackamas County, OR*, 28



“reflected the monumental scale and beauty of the surrounding Cascade Mountains.”<sup>85</sup> This new style adapted forms from the European picturesque, chateaux and alpine traditions into an American, and more specifically Pacific Northwestern context. When Joseph Ryan began construction at Tremblant, Québec, he wanted to create a ski destination distinguished from those in the United States that would draw American visitors. To create a distinctive resort, he created a “Neo-*Canadien*” style emulating the French-influenced vernacular architecture of the Laurentian Mountains. Steeply pitched roofs, kicked eaves, hipped dormer windows and rooftop cupolas all reflect this *Canadien* and more specifically Laurentian influence.



Figure 9.4- Laurentian-inspired structure, Mont Tremblant, courtesy of Mont Tremblant

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<sup>85</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, *Timberline Lodge, Timberline Trail, Government Camp vici, Clackamas County, OR*, 28

### Airline Terminals: Ski Lodges of the Skies

As a product of the twentieth century that draws upon Modern design philosophies and contemporary construction methods and materials, a comparison to another unique resource from the same era draws some interesting parallels. Airport terminals as a building type are also products of the twentieth century and reflect a singular purpose. The National Register has recognized the unique nature of airport terminals and related aviation properties in the National Register Bulletin, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Historic Aviation Properties*. This bulletin addresses some of the challenges and unique situations faced when dealing with these resources. The evolution of airport terminals as a unique building type began in the mid-1930s<sup>86</sup> and the building typology and design of terminals adapted to technological innovations in air transportation over the course of the twentieth century. The three characteristics defining ski lodges as a unique building type also apply to airport terminals. The unique design of airline terminals directly reflects the specific place and use for which they were built.

The location of airport terminals at an airfield directly determines the placement and design of terminals. Situated adjacent to runways, most uses of airport terminals unrelated to air travel prove problematic. Adaptive use projects for airport terminals are not usually feasible without moving the structure. One notable example of a historic terminal being moved to another location and used for other purposes is the Newark Airport Administration Building. After being moved a quarter mile away from the runway in 2000 and renovated in 2002, the terminal called 'Building 51' now houses offices for the Port Authority of New York and New

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<sup>86</sup> The terminal at Newark Airport, dedicated by Amelia Earhart in 1934 is generally regarded as the first commercial airline terminal. Similar to ski lodges, other terminals existed before its construction, but were built to service an entire airport rather than a commercial carrier. Newark Airport's 'Building 51' was the first full-service terminal with a traffic control tower, ticket counters, waiting area, restaurants, airline offices, and overnight lodging for pilots.

Jersey. The structure, declared a National Historic Landmark in 1979 and listed on the National Register, has retained its listing despite being moved from its original location.

The original use of airport terminals was to provide a transportation hub for air travel. The efficient transition from transportation to the airport to the airplane was of prime importance. This emphasis is reflected in the plan of terminals and its continual evolution.

Like ski lodges, terminals also needed to address all of the needs of its customers. From ticket counters to waiting areas to restaurants, the design and plan of terminals reflect this multiplicity of uses.

These two factors combine to make airport terminals a unique cultural resource presenting problems for preservation. When airport terminals cease to adequately address the needs of the airline and its customers, demolition or abandonment prevail. A case in point is TWA Terminal 5 at JFK International Airport in New York. In 2001, American Airlines discontinued use of the terminal after its purchase of TransWorld Airlines. Currently an effort is underway to modernize the terminal to adapt it for continued use by Jet Blue Airlines. However, without these adaptations, it would remain unusable as a functioning terminal and demolition would likely follow.

The case of Newark's 'Building 51' terminal represents another case of the difficult nature of preserving these unique resources. Building 51 was retired from service in 1953 due to incompatibility with changes in aviation technology—a scant nineteen years after its opening. Forty-seven years later a new use was found for the terminal, but at the cost of moving the 7,000-ton structure 3,700 feet to a new location. New additions measuring 63,000 square feet were added to the 33,000 square foot building to accommodate its new use as offices. Although not

used specifically as a terminal, its new location is still at the airport and its new use is closely related to aviation.

This cursory glance at two historic airport terminals reveals a multitude of preservation issues common to any such distinctive cultural resource. Can airport terminals, or any such unique cultural resource, be adaptively used and at what cost? How does the prevailing measurement of integrity apply to these resources? Does their uniqueness preclude or mitigate the impact to integrity of significant alterations? These questions all have serious ramifications for the existing framework for preservation and designation of significant resources. Clearly these resources pose confounding, if not insurmountable, problems for preservation. As the prevailing preservation philosophy dictates in the United States, once a building is not or cannot be used for its historic purpose it is adapted to a new use. Regarding the integrity of these resources and designation, the National Register has attempted to address these questions as they pertain specifically to airport terminals. However, airport terminals are but one unique resource to emerge from the twentieth century.

#### Adaptive Use Versus Continued Use

As with airport terminals, the potential to adapt ski lodges to new uses is often limited. Some of the factors that limit the adaptive use of ski lodges are also the defining characteristics that make them unique. Location is often the primary limiting factor. Ski areas are most often removed geographically from developed areas. With few exceptions, ski areas in developed and populated locations created the development and settlements around them. Similarly, the terrain on which ski lodges are located also presents mammoth issues with movement to another site.

The unique design of the ski lodge also limits potential adaptive uses. The large lobby or cafeteria space, lockers and storage space, and entertainment spaces are an integral part of the design of ski lodges. Adapting these spaces to other uses may prove problematic and would certainly impact the historic integrity of the resource's interior.

The significance of ski lodges as a cultural resource lies in its representation of the history of recreation and more specifically of skiing and the evolution of a skiing recreational and tourism industry. As such, the highest and best use of a ski lodge from a cultural significance perspective is its continued use as a ski lodge servicing a ski area. Slight changes in use that retain an overall relation to skiing are the next best use. Mount Ashland, Oregon offers a creative solution for vacant or financially problematic ski areas. The ownership by a municipality and management by a non-profit organization can solve some of the issues surrounding financially unsuccessful areas. Similarly, the ownership of Sky Ranch Ski Area by the city of Reno and its use as a ski instructional facility for youth also represents the ability of vacant ski areas to be used for public recreation.

#### Federal Preservation Framework Considerations

The area of significance for ski lodges relating to National Register criteria lies in "Entertainment/Recreation". Most lodges would be eligible under Criterion A, structures associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The development of the ski resort as a response to the emergence of winter recreation and a winter tourism industry in the United States is an undeniable part of the history of recreation in this country. Some lodges may also be significant as examples of distinctive characteristics of type, period or method of construction as put forth in Criterion C. Outstanding

examples include Sun Valley and Timberline Lodges. However, many more are significant as typical examples of the unique architectural types and styles associated with ski lodges. These lodges may typify some of the broader areas of ski lodge design or type, but more likely are typical of a unique contribution to such areas.

The National Register standards for measuring integrity also present interesting problems when applied to ski lodges. As defined by the National Register, the seven aspects of integrity are location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling and association.<sup>87</sup> Most ski lodges are not likely to be moved given the terrain and siting relative to the ski slopes. One example of a base lodge moved from its original location is the Chalet des Voyageurs at Tremblant, Québec. In order to integrate the structure into the planned village at the base of Tremblant, Intrawest chose to move the Chalet closer to the Inn. Clearly this move impacted the location of the structure, but also the setting as it now sits with other structures clustered around it. Setting can also be impacted by the addition of an adjacent new lodge to relieve the strains placed upon the historic lodge. Lodges replacing many of the functions of the original lodge have been constructed at Timberline, Oregon and Snow Valley, California and one is planned at Mount Ashland, Oregon. Changes in materials likely need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis. However, some changes in materials that most ski lodges may see at some point in their lifespan are due to technological and material advances in weatherproofing and energy efficiency.

The integrity of design is perhaps the most important aspect relating to the significance of ski lodges as a unique building type. However, changes in design that reflect the evolutionary nature of ski lodge design to reflect changes in ski technology could be considered appropriate in that context. Most evolutionary changes relating to the management of services would likely be

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<sup>87</sup> Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (1997), sec. VIII.

reversible ones. For example, the Ashland Lodge has had considerable interior changes, particularly in the form of applied surfaces. However, the exposed timber framing, large fireplace and other design details remain intact. The architect, Bob Bosworth would likely recognize his design in the current status of the lodge.<sup>88</sup> The aspect of workmanship as it relates to the integrity of ski lodges applies primarily to alterations and additions. Significant additions or alterations obviously deviate from the original intent. However, the level of workmanship of additions and alterations can often reflect that of the original structure. Timberline Lodge presents an interesting case addressing the aspect of workmanship. The heavy use over the decades, short period of neglect and continued use have precipitated a system of replacement of worn or damaged artifacts, particularly with interior spaces. However, the level of workmanship has been retained in the replacement components. Following in the footsteps of the WPA, women who received job training through the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) were hired and trained by Friends of Timberline to hook rugs and weave replacements for Timberline's damaged interiors.<sup>89</sup> Marlene Gabel, an artist and designer who oversees the Friends of Timberline restoration work, tracked down the original patterns and designs and even enlisted one of the original WPA weavers to consult.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, the continual restoration and reproduction of Timberline's historic interiors retains the level of workmanship, as well as the social labor pattern established during Timberline's construction in the 1930s.

The final two aspects of integrity-- feeling and association-- are similar qualities applied to varying contexts. Feeling refers to a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period. Association refers to the property's reflection of an associated historic event

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<sup>88</sup> George Kramer, interview, 21 January 2005- 27 February 2005.

<sup>89</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, *Timberline Lodge, Timberline Trail, Government Camp vici, Clackamas County, OR*, 27.

<sup>90</sup> Stanley, p.70

or person. As the National Park Service recognizes the subjective nature of these two aspects, integrity in them alone does not qualify a property for listing. In application to ski lodges, feeling and association largely depend on the status of the other five aspects. Alterations and additions that further the continued use of the structure for ski service purposes and are appropriate extensions of the original aesthetic would certainly meet the feeling criteria. However, the same alterations and additions may have a negative impact on association if significant deviation from the original design exists.

One final area to address concerns Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its relevance toward ski lodges and the United States Forest Service (USFS). Twenty-five percent of the ski areas operating in the United States are on 185,000 acres of land managed by the United States Forest Service.<sup>91</sup> Although this acreage accounts for only .09 percent of the total acreage managed by the USFS, the number of skier and snowboarder visits represents sixteen percent of the total annual recreation visits to National Forests. Assuming the 1995 figure of 516 operational ski areas in the United States, 129 are within National Forests, not including the numerous abandoned areas throughout the country. The case study of Berthoud Pass deals directly with this issue. In the Forest Service Assessment of the area, the continued use as a ski area was deemed unfeasible based on the most recent failures of a commercial ski operation at Berthoud Pass. Recommendations from the assessment outline a future path for the area focused on a return to the natural state of the landscape. Hiking, backpacking, hunting and “snow play” recreation under a special use permit would be allowed in the area. Services provided to visitors would include interpretation, restrooms, refuse collection, and food

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<sup>91</sup> *Berthoud Pass Assessment*, A-2.



services.<sup>92</sup> The “Facilities Desired Conditions” portion of the recommendations do not include the preservation of the lodge. The rationale for demolition of the ski lodge and construction of new facilities rests in the initial design of the lodge for providing support service to a ski area.

The situation at Berthoud Pass highlights a broader issue in preservation in the United States, the disconnect between preservation and conservation. While other countries consider the conservation of architectural resources and natural resources as two parts of a whole, in the United States these are two separate movements. Certainly this raises issues over the preservation of architectural resources within the purview of federal agencies whose primary focus is on natural resources. Although Berthoud Pass Lodge was deemed ineligible for National Register listing, public sentiment seems to acknowledge its significance to both the community and state of Colorado. However, the Forest Service remains intent on demolishing the lodge even though it could be adaptively used for servicing visitors to the area.

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<sup>92</sup> *Berthoud Pass Assessment*, 23.

## CHAPTER 10

### **Conclusion**

The history of skiing in North America, particularly its emergence as a recreational activity and the evolution of a ski tourism industry, is best represented by the resources contained in the numerous historic ski areas in the United States and Canada. The ski lodge, with its prominence of place and status within any given ski area, represents one of the most significant resources of ski resorts. As the most visible and representational historic artifact of the history of the development of ski resorts, ski lodges are certainly worthy of preservation. However, the unique situation of ski lodges in terms of form, setting, and use raises problems when preserving these structures within the current preservation framework. Effort has been made to identify other unique resources that emerged in the twentieth century. The National Register Bulletin addressing the unique status of airport terminals is a prime example. The ski lodge as a unique building type from the twentieth century also requires a specific analysis and response to the current preservation methodology.

While this thesis isolated ski lodges (and specifically base lodges) as a representative resource for the history and evolution of skiing, it is but one part of a larger whole. Ideally, an entire ski area with all of its many resources best represents the history and evolution of skiing over the last century. Ski lifts and tow ropes have been acknowledged as a significant resource representing this history, as the National Register listing of the Dollar Mountain Ski Lift at Sun Valley testifies. Other component resources include mid-mountain and mountaintop lodges and warming huts and the ski slopes themselves, both contributing a unique testament to the history

of skiing. The evolution of slope design and technology would provide an interesting cultural landscape study in its own right.

Therefore, this study of ski lodges provides an initial glimpse into the variety of cultural and historic resources associated with the sport of skiing. Others may pick up where this study ends and take the observations and lessons from ski lodges and apply them to other resources associated with this cultural phenomenon. More generally, it is hoped this study may contribute to future considerations for the unique problems faced when addressing unique building types from the twentieth century with existing preservation philosophies and structures.

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