

#298

David Rowan

Born: 1927

Information submitted by Tom Corcoran, John Fry, and Charles Lewis in a nomination letter to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame

David Rowan's length of service as a ski publisher and editor is unsurpassed in the chronicles of American skiing. After graduating from Princeton and Cambridge Universities, he joined the fledgling SKI Magazine.

David Rowan was born in Great Britain on January 1, 1927. He was educated at Cambridge and Princeton Universities. After graduation, he joined the then fledgling *SKI Magazine* late in 1949 when Bill Eldred was in the process of assembling a first national ski magazine from several regional publications. Rowan became editor, interim publisher, and advertising salesman of the Hanover, New Hampshire, based publication.

Following a stint in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Korean War, Rowan returned to *SKI Magazine* in Hanover until it was sold to a New York Publisher in 1961 and merged with *Ski Life Magazine*.

In conjunction with the formation of the National Ski Areas Association, Rowan launched *Ski Area Management*, the first trade publication to seriously provide large and small ski area operators with information about lift operations, safety and the insurance they needed to operate. Under his leadership, SAM – as it has come to known – has served area owners as their major source of information on how to operate and market successfully. Since Rowan launched SAM, visits to U.S. ski areas have expanded to more than 50 million annually.

Over the years, Rowan's editorials have shaped the debate over every controversial subject in the sport, and his articles are read avidly by every ski resort decision-maker. He has never feared to champion unpopular causes if he thought they were right. His thoughtful eloquence, judgment and reasoning – expressed with British-trained understatement and humor – go to the core of every issue.

For years, suppliers of lifts, snowmaking and grooming machines, and the equipment used to enhance the skiing experience have had little direct voice or participation in the affairs of organized skiing – except for the efforts of one man, David Rowan. Sometimes openly, often confidentially, Rowan has communicated the suppliers' views on how to make ski area trade shows and meetings more meaningful and productive. His efforts have consistently enhanced the working relationship between ski area operators and suppliers, to the ultimate benefit of the skier. He has never abused the trust placed in him.

Thanks to Rowan's efforts, we have a continuing record, year-by-year, of every major ski lift installed in the United States. He has written and editorialized forcefully on the issues of environmental regulation of ski area expansions, national marketing of the sport, and legal obstacles to improved skier safety. He has advocated the need for better ski schools, uncovered false statistical reporting of the sport and brought valuable, previously unknown information about snowmaking and grooming to area operators as they set about introducing these new technologies.

Rejoining *SKI* in New York in 1964, Rowan served as publisher of the magazine and of his own *Ski Area Management*, helping to promote programs like NASTAR and the Graduated Length Method of Ski Instruction. In 1973, he returned to independent publishing, expanding *Ski Area Management's* influence and circulation. In 1991, he helped organize a national conference on Mountain Resort Design and the Environment at Vail, and he has made scores of public speaking appearances at ski seminars and conventions here and abroad.

Through his ownership and editorial direction of *Ski Area Management*, and as publisher of *SKI Magazine*, Rowan helped to create exceptional organs of news and opinion that shaped modern skiing in America. His editorials have always been provocative, and his ability to identify, research and articulate timely issues has brought about meaningful change in the sport. Through these efforts, David Rowan has truly been a skisport builder.

David Rowan was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1996.

