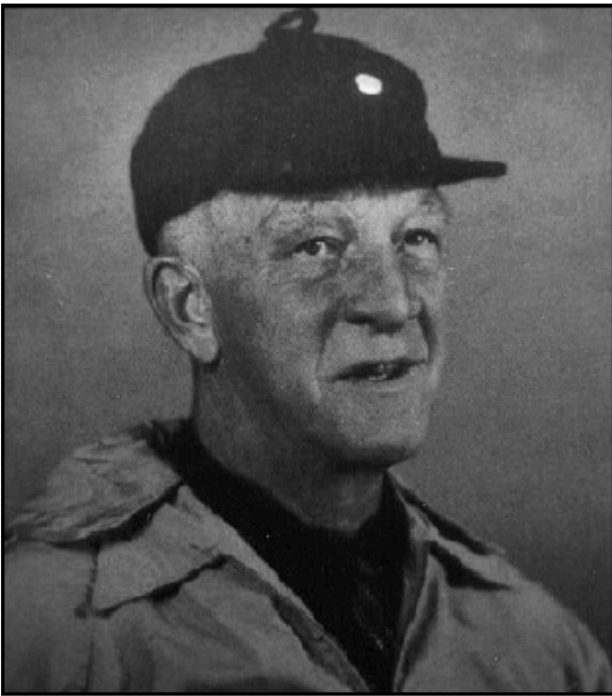


#5

Fred Henry Harris

Born: 1887 Died: 1961



Fred H. Harris, a lifelong devotee to the sport of skiing, is considered the "Father of Skiing" in the Brattleboro area.

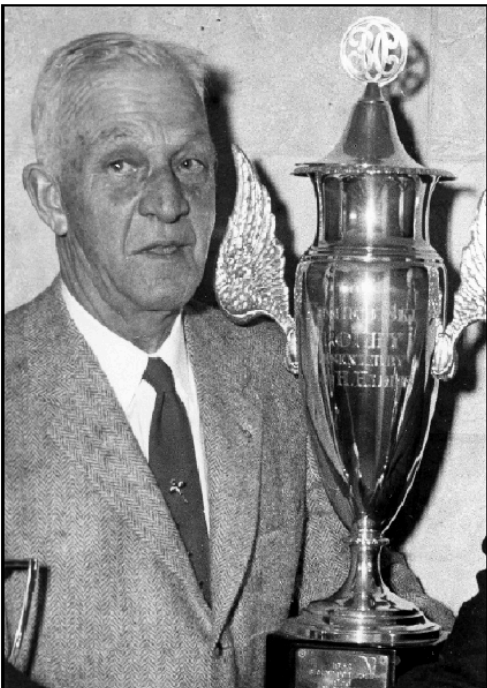
Fred Harris, born in Brattleboro, Vermont, on September 8, 1887, became interested in winter sports early on. While in high school, he was cutting figure eights on ice skates one day when he met an elderly gentleman by the name of Frank Lawton. Mr. Lawton told Harris that he knew of a better sport. The sport was skiing. They explored the local hills and soon Fred Harris was an enthusiast. Shortly thereafter, he heard of the Montreal Ski Club and was fascinated with their Hagen skis, Huitfeld bindings and high boots, a far cry from his own homemade equipment. In 1907, he built a small jump in Brattleboro for his own use.

When Harris entered Dartmouth College, he brought his skis with him but found little company out of doors in winter.

Students stayed inside, smoking pipes and playing cards. And so, on December 7, 1909, his junior year, he wrote a letter to the college paper, *The Dartmouth*, proposing that a ski and snowshoe club be formed, laying out its objectives and hoping that Dartmouth might become the originator of a branch of college organized sport hitherto undeveloped by American college. How fully that hope became reality Harris could not have imagined. On January 10, 1910, a few men met in Harris' room, #4 Fayerweather Hall and formed the Dartmouth Outing Club, Fred Harris, president.

The Dartmouth Outing Club and, particularly its ski teams, dominated collegiate winter sports for many years, many of its members later being elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame. Its winter carnivals were emulated far and wide.

Saranac Lake, in 1922, saw the founding of the U.S. Eastern Amateur Ski Association by six ski clubs, including the Dartmouth Outing Club and Harris' own Brattleboro, VT, Outdoor Club. He became USEASA's first president. Fred Harris was largely responsible for the construction of a 65 meter jump at Brattleboro, site of several national championships. In 1951, in recognition of his efforts, the Brattleboro club named its now-improved jump, the Harris Hill.



Grinden Papers

Fred became vice-president of the National Ski Association in 1928 and its treasurer from 1929 to 1931. He was an American representative to the F.I.S. Congress in 1930 and a jump measurer at the 1932 Winter Olympic Games in Lake Placid. A promoter of junior jumping, Harris developed a 40 meter hill in Brattleboro for beginners. As a tireless promoter of the outdoors on skis he exercised much influence in the early days of our sport.

Fred Henry Harris was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1957.



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Fred Harris and wife at dedication of Harris hill in Brattleboro, Vermont, 1951