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Clarita Heath Bright

Born: 1916 Died: 2003

Skiing quite well in a number of elimination trials, Clarita Heath made the United States Women's Olympic Team in 1936 and competed in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany. While skiing the European circuit in 1938, Clarita fell and injured her knee, putting her out of the competitive aspect of skiing, but she became a certified ski instructor. A talented musician and photographer, Clarita was the Olympic Photographer for the Helms Athletic Foundation in 1952.



Clarita Heath, a member of the first women's United States Olympic ski team in 1936 was born August 27, 1916, in Pasadena, California. While traveling in Europe she went to Kitzbuhel and started to ski in 1935. She soon was winning races and was recommended to National Ski Association officials as a qualified competitor. Running well in numerous elimination trails, she represented the United States in the 1936 Olympics and the 1937 F.I.S. World Championships, placing fourth in the latter's downhill to become the first American woman to place in the top bracket of an international race. She continued to do well, earning such titles as Slalom Champion and the first Far West Kandahar in 1939, the 1941 Silver Belt, and the Harriman Cup in 1942 as winner of slalom and combined. She was one of several women who won the Diamond Sun at Sun Valley. In addition, she won the Silver Dollar Derby at Reno in 1948.

Clarita Heath Bright also contributed to skiing through her efforts in instruction. She became a certified Austrian instructor in 1937 and a charter member of the California Ski Instructors in 1939. These endeavors were climaxed by earning professional certification with the Far West Ski Instructors Association in 1956. From the days when she joined the Arrowhead Ski Club, so she could race in Europe, to racing and teaching at California's Conway Summit and Idaho's Sun Valley, she demonstrated her ability and the quality of a champion. Married to Honored National Ski Hall of Famer Alex Bright, this outstanding woman skier is a member of Southern Skis (California), Alteburger (Boston), Sun Valley Ski Club and a Daist Member of the Hochebirgers of the United States Eastern Amateur Ski Association.

Clarita Heath Bright was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1968.



The 1936 Women's U.S. Olympic Team

From left: Lillian Swann, Mary Bird, Ethlynn Smith, Grace Carter, Helen Boughton-Leigh, Clarita Heath, Elizabeth Woolsey, Marian McKean