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John J. Claire, Jr.

Born: 1907 Died: 1971

John Clair, as a youngster, began skiing on the gentle slopes of a golf course in Jamaica, New York, whenever snow was present. As his own proficiency increased, and skiing grew in popularity, he helped form the Long Island Ski Club in 1938. Clair also served the Metropolitan New York Ski Council for thirty years.

John J. Clair was born in Jamaica, New York in 1907. He is a perfect example of what an individual can do for ski sport through its governing bodies when genuine desire and dedication are combined and acted upon.

Becoming a member of the United States Eastern Amateur Ski Association in 1950-51, Clair served as its treasurer and was its first vice-president from 1952 to 1954. In 1956, he chaired its International Competitions Committee.

On the national level, Clair was a director of the National Ski Association of America from 1952 to 1954 and during 1953-54 also served as chairman of the International Competitions Committee. He was a member of the United States delegation to the F.I.S. Congress held at Igls, Austria, in 1953, and again represented this country during the F.I.S. meeting in Palun, Sweden, in 1954. Clair chaired the U.S. Olympic Games Committee for the 1956 Winter Games in Italy, and was a member of the finance committee in 1960 and 1964. Wearing still another hat, he served as a member of the Olympic Transportation Committee in 1964. Clair also attended quadrennial meetings of the U.S. Olympic Association in 1953 and 1957, representing the USEASA.

Interspersed with all this, Clair also found time to be a founding member of the Long Island Ski Patrol and become National Ski Patrolman No. 1158. He has been a member of the Board of Trustees of the NSPS since 1952, putting his well-known fundraising abilities to the chairmanship of the finance committee of the NSPS, in 1968.



John Clair far right with a friend and veteran newscaster Lowell Thomas.

Liberally sprinkled through these activities, Clair also found time to be a director of the New York State Winter Sports Council since 1952, its secretary in 1966-67 and its president in 1967-68. Such proven ability and drive placed Clair on the executive committee of the newly-formed New York Committee for the U.S. Ski Team Fund, where his knowledge of fund raising proved itself once again. His long contacts with members of the U.S. Ski Team and those of foreign teams have given Clair still another chore of love; his close proximity to the international airports has made him "unofficial greeter" of nearly every ski team that leaves or enters the United States through these metropolitan airports.

Through all this John Clair, Jr., has seen two fine sons and a daughter through to responsible adulthood, served as the president of the Jamaica Estate Civic Association for eight years and lend his talents to Archbishop Molloy's committee for Catholic Scouting another five years. ***It is men such as John Clair who held organized skiing's government together. He represented Swix Wax and became known universally as "Mister Swix."

John Clair was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1970.