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William Eldred

Born: 1913 Died: 1965

William Eldred was always a no-nonsense type of person, and fully realized that skiers and ski manufacturers were all but ignoring ski safety. He asked that considerable research be done to study ski safety and the findings put into practice.

Born in Middlefield, New York, February 16, 1913, Bill Eldred attended high school in the Schenectady area and graduated from Union College. He was an editor and publisher, enriching the lives of many thousands of skiers as he projected his own love for the sport through the pages of his numerous publications.

In 1938, Bill started *Empire State Ski News* and following mergers with *Western Skiing*, *Ski Illustrated*, and *Ski Sheet*, emerged as the guiding genius of the national magazine named *Ski*. Under Bill Eldred's direction, the magazine consistently strove to encourage the wholesome and the best in skiing.

"Bill was always against humbug and nonsense." At a time when many skiers chose to close their minds to the number of ski accidents, Bill urged honest research and study to increase ski safety.

Bill Eldred wanted to introduce people of all ages to the sport he loved. His magazine urged more high-quality programs for juniors, and he himself was active locally in the Ford Sayre program in Hanover. Editorially, the magazine supported fundraising for Olympic and F.I.S. teams, rather than the crescendo of activity which occurred in F.I.S. and Olympic years. Bill Eldred was anxious to see the development and training of young skiers. He loved the glamour of the Winter Games, but he also thought a way should be found for the Olympics to benefit all skiers. On the eve of the 1960 Olympics in Squaw Valley, he wrote, "What the ski industry, organized skiing and individual skiers must do is to find ways to turn Olympic race fever into constructive channels, through formal promotion, informal club programs, and individual encouragement."

Perhaps Bill Eldred's greatest contribution to ski sport was to widen the horizons of skiers who read his magazines. As he editorialized in the first issue of his national magazine, "The editorial concept is based on one belief: that skiing is a national and international sport whose ken is limited only by the limits of snow itself. We refuse to recognize any territorial borders, whether state, sectional or continental."

The record shows Bill Eldred kept his promise, faithfully reporting skiing at areas throughout the America, maintaining at one time or another correspondents in Sweden, Austria, Switzerland, France, and also publishing stories written by reporters who resided in the many other snowfields of the world.

In November 1965, Bill Eldred died in Hanover. Arnold E. Abramson, in a tribute published in *Ski* in January 1966, stated, "Bill Eldred was a consummate gentleman: considerate, knowledgeable, kind and yet, from time to time, outspoken about the things in the sport which he knew were not in its best interest."

William T. Eldred was elected to the U.S. National Ski Hall of Fame in 1970.

