



SPRING 2014

# ALF ENGEN SKI MUSEUM

### CHAIRLIFT RIDE, LIGETY GEAR 'REBOOT' MUSEUM EXHIBITS

By Mike Korologos

In what was touted as "the most significant day since its opening," the Alf Engen Ski Museum unveiled two major attractions Feb. 7 to the delight of a throng of visitors, supporters and donors.

One was the first-anywhere *Virtual Ski Experience* chairlift ride – complete with snowflakes and breezes.

The other was the *Ted Ligety Hometown Hero* exhibit that showcases racing gear and other items donated by legend-in-his-own-time, Ted Ligety, a Park City native and skiing's reigning World Cup champion.

Adding a heightened air of excitement to the festive "rebooting" of the museum was its timing. It came while Park City, its athletes, ski resorts and winter sports training sites were being showcased – and lauded – worldwide by extensive TV coverage of the Olympic Games taking place in Sochi, Russia.

Orchestrating the brief ceremony at the exhibits' opening reception were museum board of trustees president, David Vandehei, and museum executive director Connie Nelson. Vandehei recapped the founding of the museum and called the day's events a "museum reboot" that ranked in significance with the grand opening of the \$11 million venue at Utah's Olympic Park in 2002. He noted that now more than ever, the museum will be a major – and popular -- attraction for visitors to Park City and Utah.

The Virtual Ski Experience attraction has visitors sitting on a four-passenger (quad) chairlift. It bobs, sways, rises and dips in unison with winter sports scenes projected on a 16- by 19-foot screen a few feet away. Two two-and-one-half minute rides are offered.

Local ski enthusiast and photographer Marshall Miller videoed the Speed Flying Experience. His helmet-mounted camera shots are synchronized with the motions of the chair. One ride features scenes Miller photographed while paragliding off the steeps and crags of Mt. Superior near Alta Ski Area in Little Cottonwood Canyon. The other gives "riders" the sensation and visualization of sitting in a bobsled that is speeding down the nearby world-class luge/bobsled track at Utah Olympic Park.

Drawing special appreciation at the exhibits' grand opening was Jonathan Francom of Adobe Systems, which gave the lead gift that made the ride exhibit possible. In his remarks to the crowd, he noted that Adobe cofounder, John Warnock, is a Salt Lake City native and avid skier who graduated from the University of Utah before going on to create the world-renowned technology company.

Also heartily acknowledged were Bill Ligety and Cyndi Sharp, parents of Ted Ligety. The athlete was attending the 2014 Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia, where he won a gold medal in giant slalom a few days after his memorabilia were unveiled at the museum.

Continued on next page





Other exhibit donors acknowledged were the Alf and Evelyn Engen Endowment Fund, Rossignol, University of Utah Cauldron Park, Summit County Recreation/Arts/Parks (RAP) Tax Grant, Utah Division of Arts and

Museums, Skytrac, Inc., and the Park City Rotary Club.

Museum board of trustees members Jim Gaddis, Alan Engen and Mike Korologos greeted numerous special guests that included Summit County Assistant Manager, Anita Lewis; Colin Hilton, director of Utah Olympic Park; and Tom Pettigrew, Director of Skier Services at Park City Mountain Resort and his wife Dori Pratt.

The *Virtual Ski Experience* was designed and engineered by JDH Group of Ogden, Utah. It is the first such ride anywhere, according to the company. While the ride was free of charge during the grand opening, there is a fee of \$5 for a single ride and \$8 if the visitor wishes to enjoy both the virtual and paragliding and bobsled rides.





## ALF ENGEN SKI MUSEUM

### VIRTUAL SKI JUMP

### Interactive Ski Jump Exhibit coming to the Alf Engen Ski Museum this Summer

A new interactive ski jump experience is currently being designed and built for the Alf Engen Ski Museum by JDH Group, the same company that installed the virtual quad-chair exhibit in February, 2014. The primary supporters of this exhibit are museum founders Alan and Barbara Engen.

The Interactive Ski Jump exhibit will be modeled after the actual world-class K120 jumping hill here at Utah Olympic Park. By virtue of the scenes on the large video screen in front of them and by the feel, vibrations of the skis they're strapped into, participants will have the sensation of soaring off the K-120. The experience starts when the "jumper" steps onto the skis and starts down the in-run. When the jump is completed, the exhibit will display the "jumper's" high score. The screen will then fade out and start back up at the top of the ski jump ready for the next participant. The Interactive Ski Jump will track the all-time high score as well as the daily high score.

The exhibit is scheduled to be completed this summer. The Alf Engen Ski Museum is so proud to be giving guests virtual experiences in a variety of winter sports. Thank you, Alan, Barbara and many other donors (i.e. Utah Division of Arts & Museums) for supporting the museum's efforts to give visitors the sensation of "flying" off the largest jumping hill used in the 2002 Olympic Winter Games.



Artist's rendering shows relationship of skis to large video screen in Interactive Ski Jump Exhibit.

Floorplan showing the position of Interactive Ski Jump Exhibit (shaded in yellow) - beside Virtual Ski Experience exhibit

## 2014 SOCHI OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES HOMETOWN HEROES EXHIBIT IS HERE

The museum is installing another new exhibit entitled *Hometown Heroes* featuring some of the many local athletes who excelled in the 2014 Sochi Olympic Winter Games. Athletes will include gold medalist Sage Kotsenberg (Snowboard Slopestyle); gold medalist Joss Christensen (Ski Slopestyle); bronze medalist Steven Holcomb (Two-man and Four-man Bobsled); gold medalist Ted Ligety (Men's Giant Slalom); and local Paralympic athlete bronze medalist Danielle Umstead and guide Rob Umstead (Alpine Skiing).





### FASHION THROUGH THE AGES

Over the past two years, Barbara Alley Simon has generously donated 55 men's and women's ski suits. The collection dates from 1968 through 1998 and gives a snapshot of three decades of ski fashion and ski apparel development. We featured the first donation of suits in the Summer 2012 Ski Meister. Since that time Barbara has donated more ski wear and accessories.

We had the privilege of showcasing these outfits during Skiing History Week at the Park City Mountain Resort on Friday, April 4th. Over 20 models strutted down the catwalk in front of hundreds of spectators with Barbara Alley as the commentator. The show also featured a band and trampoline show by Flying Ace Productions.

We are organizing an exhibit in the entrance to the museum that will showcase several of these vintage ski wear outfits and their corresponding accessories. Videos of Barbara's ski fashion shows from the 70s through the 80s will be featured on a flat screen TV. This will be a must see exhibit this summer and a fun walk down memory lane.



















The Alf Engen Ski Museum Foundation

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### CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

By David L. Vandehei

"SALT LAKE LEGACY STILL INSPIRING" was the headline in "USA TODAY" February 19th. The article says, "Twelve years after its conclusion the impact the Salt Lake City Games had on American athletes in Sochi is obvious."

We are proud of these Olympic athletes and the museum continues to preserve their legacy just as it has for those who began our history in the Intermountain West.

This has been an eventful year for the Alf Engen Ski Museum Foundation. Much has been accomplished and much more is in the planning stage. The person

who quides and shepherds the myriad aspects of the museum is its executive director, Connie L. Nelson. We are very fortunate to have Connie as museum director. Connie, who is a dual citizen of the United States and Australia has a Masters of Education degree from the University of West Australia, has been involved in sports and physical education her entire career.

Connie joined the Salt Lake Organizing Committee for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games Senior Manager in 2000, Business operations at Utah Olympic Park. After the 2002 games, she became the Executive Director of the Alf Engen Ski Museum Foundation. Her areas of responsibility and expertise at the museum are many and varied. Connie, working with the Board of Directors, is a dominant force in ensuring that the museum remains one of the finest ski museums in the world. Thank you, Connie Nelson!

### **CHAIRMAN'S GLIMPSE INTO THE PAST**

The International Olympic Committee convened in September 1946 to select a site for the first post-World War II Winter Olympics. They soon settled on St. Moritz, Switzerland for the 1948 Games and athletes around the world began vying for a coveted spot on their nation's Olympic team.

When the United States team was announced in the spring of 1947 in Sun Valley, two of the Engen brothers, Alf and Corey, had made the team. Soon thereafter, the United States Olympic Committee approached Alf, who was nearing his 40th birthday, and asked him if he would coach the team, along with Walter Prager, instead of competing. Alf, flattered that the USOC considered him worthy of passing his considerable skills on to younger athletes, readily agreed.

The 1948 US Ski Team was filled with athletes from Utah and the greater Intermountain area. The most successful of these was Gretchen Fraser, a Washington native who lived and trained in Sun Valley. Fraser won a silver medal in the Alpine Combined, held on February 2nd and 4th. On Thursday, February 5, 1948, with Alf Engen beside her at the top of the run, Gretchen Fraser skied into the history books by taking gold in the women's slalom. It was the first-ever gold medal won by an American skier in the Winter Olympics. No other American skiers medaled in the 1948 Olympics, but they had a respectable showing and generated further interest in skiing among the American public.

Back ground information courtesy of First Tracks: A Century of Skiing in Utah by Alan K. Engen and Gregory C. Thompson, and For the Love of Skiing: A Visual History of Skiing by Alan K. Engen.



engenmuseum.org



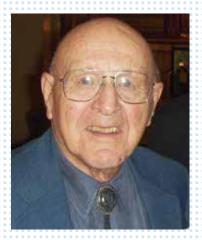
### DIRECTOR'S LETTER

By Connie Nelson

Ready, Set, jump – The museum's new *Virtual Ski Jump* exhibit is scheduled to be installed early this summer. This exhibit will complement the *Virtual Ski Experience* exhibit that was installed September 2013. Visitors are not only thrilled experiencing the virtual rides, they also gain an appreciation for the sports of bobsled, speed flying and powder skiing. This exhibit has the capacity to add new "rides" as they become available.

Some highlights made possible by grants, donors and members over the past six months include:

- Guests visiting We entertained and educated approximately 300,000 visitors in 2013. This is up 17% from 2012.
- Exhibits New exhibits coming this summer:
  - o Fashion Through the Ages Barbara Alley Simon collection of vintage ski wear from the 70s, 80s and 90s. These outfits will be featured in the museum entrance.
  - o *Hometown Heroes* Exhibit 2014 Sochi Olympic Winter Games The exhibit will feature Sage Kotsenburg, Joss Christensen, Steve Holcomb, Paralympian Danielle Umstead and Ted Ligety.
  - o Virtual Ski Jump Thank you to donors Alan and Barbara Engen, Alf and Evelyn Engen Endowment, Summit County and Division of Arts and Museums. And exhibit designer, JDH Group. This will be a "must see" exhibit!
- Education We have educated and enlightened over 2,500 students from 27 schools throughout Utah in the 2013-2014 school year. This program would not be possible without the continued support from Summit County Recreation, Arts and Parks (RAP) Tax Grant and the Marriner S. Eccles Foundation. A big 'THANK YOU' to the tireless docents who lead these field trips every week. Kudos to all of you. We do not advertise this program, yet schools are lining up to participate.
- Website engenmuseum.org Thank you Barbara Engen, CentralPoint Systems and Summit County 1% Restaurant Tax Grant for this fabulous new website remodel.
- Skiing History Week (International Ski History Association in conjunction with the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame) Held here in Park City, Utah from March 31 through April 6, 2014. The museum hosted the Opening Reception on March 31st and showcased the Barbara Alley Simon collection at a fashion show on April 4th at Park City Mountain Resort.
- Don Hague resigns from Board It is with great regret we will be saying goodbye to Don Hague as an Alf Engen Ski Museum Foundation Board member. Don has been a key leader in guiding our museum from the initial planning stages to a world-class museum. Don's expertise lead our Exhibit Committee and established artifact and archive room processes as well as exhibit design/build and renovation. Thank you for your volunteer expertise and efforts Don. We will really miss you.



### IN MEMORIAM

### Rush Spedden - 1916 - 2013

H. Rush Spedden, Engineer/Scientist, Teacher, Historian and a long-time Alta skier, has passed away at the age of 97. (He skied the Alta powder up until the age of 94...) Rush was one of the founders of Alta's Wild Old Bunch and gave the group its name in a home video. Rush was a World War II veteran, a respected mining engineer, and in later years an expert on pioneer trails in Utah and western Wyoming. His smile and graceful powder style will be missed, but his spirit carries on with all those who have been, or are now, part of the enduring powder culture of Alta.



## MUSEUM NEWS

### **NEW MUSEUM DOCENT**



### Janis Pierce

Janis Pierce fell in love with Utah, as well as another Alta skier, on a vacation from Chicago in 1976. It wasn't long until she moved here permanently and took a position promoting skiing and tourism at the Salt Lake Convention and Visitor Bureau. She also learned to ski at Alta and, many years later, achieved her personal best in 2014 of skiing 30 days in one season.

During more than 15 years with Mountain Fuel/Questar, she was Director of Advertising/Consumer Information, speechwriter to the company president and – career highlight here! – dedicated seven of those years to designing Questar's significant role as supplier to the 2002 Olympic Winter Games. Following an early retirement, she took on marketing and management positions with The Living Planet Aquarium and The Open Book Store. She and her husband reside in the Heber area with two amazing terriers.

### **NEW BOARD MEMBER**

#### Ron Steele

Ron Steele, with a successful career as an athlete and industry leader for over 35 years, is well known in the winter sports business. Rising through the ranks of sales and marketing with Group Rossignol, Steele currently is the president of Group Rossignol North America, being promoted to this position in 2012. Group Rossignol sells and distributes the winter sports brands of Rossignol, Dynastar, Lange, Look and Kerma. Ron began his career as an Olympic athlete, jumping for the US team in the 1972 Olympics and as a member of the US Ski Team from 1972-1977. He went on to work in retail at a local specialty ski shop while attending the University of Utah. He was originally hired by Rossignol in 1978 as an Alpine Technical Representative. From those early days, Steele went on to become VP of Marketing and Sales for the Group, guiding Rossignol through its success in alpine skis, boots, bindings, nordic equipment, and snowboards.



Steele's ties to Utah began while attending the University of Utah (1974-1978) after being recruited to join the Ute Ski Team. He was named All American for 3 consecutive years and competed in the NCAA Championships all 4 years. Awards include a 2nd place finish in 1975, 3rd place in 1976, and then in 1977 he won the NCAA Individual Championship in Ski Jumping. Other notable achievements include receiving the Alf Engen Sportsmanship

Award in 1975 & 1976, the David Novelle Outstanding Skier Award in 1978, and the C. D. Reddish Memorial Award in 1978.

Prior to coming to the University of Utah, Steele resided in Leavenworth, Washington and had a successful competitive career with the US Ski Jumping Team from 1972-1977. Highlights include Junior National Ski Jumping Champion in 1971, the Senior National Champion in 1974, 1972 US Olympic Team member competing in Sapporo, Japan, and the 1974 World Championship Team in Falun, Sweden. Many other awards and top finishes were accomplished in national and international competitions.

Ron remains involved with local and national events within the skiing community, volunteers his time and resources to these many causes, and is currently serving as a Board Member for the University of Utah Ski Archives. Personal time is spent with Julie, his wife of 33 years, two adult daughters, skiing, fishing, and traveling.



### WHERE DID THE NAME "SNOW BASIN" COME FROM?

Information provided by Alan K. Engen

Over the years, this is a question occasionally raised by individuals interested in Utah ski history. Based on an article written by E.J. Fjeldsted, Secretary-Manager of the Ogden Chamber of Commerce, dated January 25, 1949 in The *Ogden Standard Examiner* newspaper, the following is part of his explanation:

"Those of us who see and enjoy the colorful Snow Basin of today and were not unfortunate enough to see this same area in 1936, will find it difficult to believe this short history of the area... In the spring of 1936, the Ogden Chamber of Commerce, through its recreation committee, requested the Forest Service to make a survey of the then Wheeler Basin, one of Ogden's major municipal water supply sources."

The Forest Service, as part of its review, requested that noted skier Alf Engen go into the basin area and make a recommendation as to the suitability of the location for accommodating future winter recreational activities. Based on Alf's recommendations and other studies dealing with water issues, "An organized plan was

adopted by the Chamber of Commerce, supported financially and physically by all the service clubs and civic clubs of Ogden, the city administration, the county administration, the State Department of Publicity and Industrial Development, and the Utah State Road Commission." Fjeldsted continued by writing, "...this master plan began to function and the lands in the basin were placed under the control of the Forest Service by lease... and the Forest Service went into full action by adopting plans for removal of grazing from the area, elimination of timber cutting, and development for public recreation use of the entire area."

A contest was subsequently conducted in the late 1930s by the Ogden Chamber of Commerce to secure a re-naming of the Wheeler Basin area. According to Fjeldsted, "Over a thousand names were submitted in the contest. Naturally one was selected – "Snow Basin" – submitted by Mrs. Geneve S. Woods. Today this name, and the area under this name, is favorably known throughout the winter sports world."



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The Alf Engen Ski Museum Foundation is able to perpetuate a showplace for Intermountain winter sports history through your contributions.

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