

SKIING HOLIDAYS

My first experience of skiing was in 1936 when the Hardy family flew from Croydon Airport to Switzerland and went to Lenzerheide

I was only seven at the time but I remember wearing black baggy trousers and anorak and falling quite a lot!

We also did some nice sledging including a trip through the trees being pulled by horses.

After the war in 1946, we went to Davos and stayed at the 5 star hotel Fluella, all on a £50 maximum allowance by the government! My father had got to know the manager during the war when he was working in London and was able to make suitable swap arrangements!

In 1949 a naval ski party with two girls, one of which was my sister Claire, went to Obergurgl in Austria.

This was a very energetic holiday as we had to climb for hours on skis, as there were no ski lifts; up to the top of the Rotmos Glacier and then ski down.

I managed to get my bronze badge during that holiday.

We stayed at a nice family run pension Jenewein and in the evening danced and drank beer. We were young and fit!

In 1953, having met Rebeka at a welcome home party I invited her to join my mother and father at a holiday in Davos again. This time we stayed at an inexpensive pension, still on restricted allowances and had to be careful as there was an income tax inspector also staying there.

The next occasion began a series of skiing holidays with Geoffrey and David Dove and other friends including the Costains, and the Burrows.

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1961 VERBIER
1962 LECH
1964 AROSA
1966 ZERMATT

The first one was to Verbier in 1961. Rebeka did not come on this one. I had not been well and a holiday in the Alps did me a power of good. There was lot of snow and we were sometimes restricted in where we could go. One day when the upper slopes were closed, Peter Costain and I decided to ski the Ruinettes as many times as we could! We worked out that at the end of the day we had skied the equivalent of Mount Everest!

I think the second occasion was in 1962 when we drove to Lech in two cars doing the 700 miles in 21 hours. I have a cine film of this trip somewhere.

1964 Arosa

1966 Zermatt

We had a wonderful fancy dress party at one of the venues, a picture follows:-

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There was then a 20 year gap until in 1987 we went to Kitzbuhl with Michael and Elizabeth Robinson and their son Simon and his wife Caroline and their very young daughter Abigail.

The lower slopes were very icy and Rebeka and Elizabeth did not find it easy. Michael and I joined a ski class and had to follow a very speedy Australian guide on two occasions. Once we were skiing alone and were caught in a snow storm and had difficulty in finding our way down, negotiating a difficult black run without realising where we were!

When, prior to the holiday, I showed Diana my ski clothes she said 'Dad, I think we need to go shopping, you are very out of date!'

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Chatham Ski Slopes. FLB and the Doves formed a company to build and run a 200 metre ski slope near Chatham. We had a grand opening ceremony performed by the two Bell brothers, Martin and Graham, who skied in the main alpine championships. (A cine film somewhere) Eventually we had such a good offer from Granada that we sold for a 100% profit.

SKI AND WINE

In 1990 started a series of fantastic holidays with Remington and Geraldine Norman as the organisers and guides. We were usually a party of about 20 staying in hotels or chalets.

The first one was:

1990 Val Thorens in the Trois Vallees

1991 Val Thorens again.

1992 Tignes

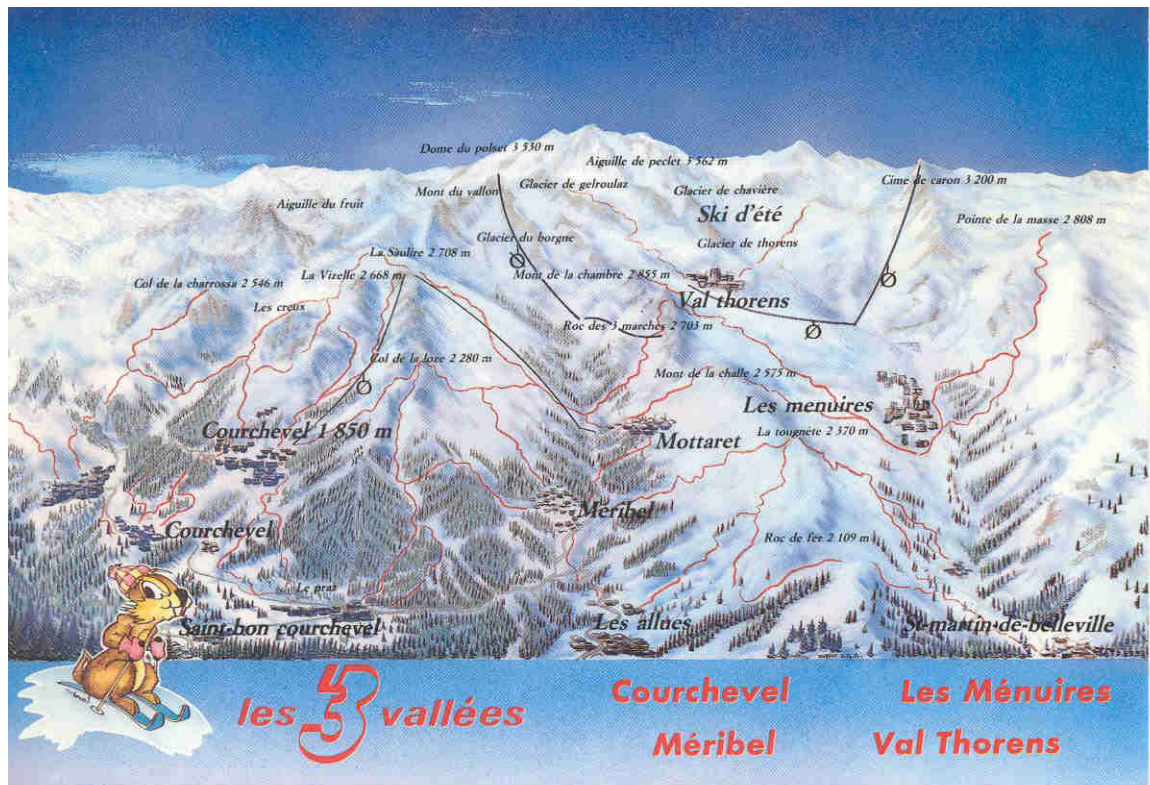
1993 Meribel

1994 Meribel

1995 ? Feb 5-17

1997? Mar 5-12. The last one. I arrived back to be met by Valerie to say that Alan had had a very bad motor cycle accident.

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These were really enjoyable. Remington and Geraldine were excellent guides and taught me a lot. We used to

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cover a lot of ground in a day and it was really exhilarating to be schussing down a red run at speed, then 'killing moguls' down a black run and trying not to fall and slide for what seemed miles. The views from the top and the happy pit stops for lunch at excellent restaurants, with the not-so-occasional gluhwein gave a boost to one's courage to face more black runs. In the evening Remington would give us a wine-tasting or serve excellent wines with the meal, or both! He was a Master of Wine and later wrote a definitive book on Burgundy which won an award. Somewhere I have some good cine films of these holidays.



Geraldine and Remington Norman

I have lots of lovely pictures of us all, and in particular of Michael with a wonderful big smile of pure enjoyment on his face!

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Michael Robinson



A good glass of wine and its effect!

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Laurence struts his stuff!