

New Mexico Ski Hall of Fame

2007



Allen Church



Allen Church was born in Los Alamos in the 1930s. His parents ran the Los Alamos Ranch School and his mother was the famous poet, Peggy Pond Church. Allen started skiing as a youngster at Sawyer's Hill nearby.

After the Manhattan Project took over the Los Alamos Ranch School, Allen and his parents moved to Taos. After graduating from high school in Taos, Allen attended Colorado State University and then Colorado A&M intending to study veterinary medicine. His interest switched to acting while in school and he moved to Hollywood to pursue a screen acting career. He got a part riding horses in a movie called "Six Flags West" (which came out in 1950 and starred Jeff Chandler, Linda Darnell, and Joseph Cotton). It was filmed near San Ildefonso and brought him back to New Mexico. His movie career ended abruptly when he was drafted to serve in the Korean War.

After the war, Allen enrolled at Stanford where he earned an engineering degree and got a job at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque. He got married and had two daughters who liked to ski. They got involved in ski racing and Allen and his wife ended up taking the two girls, Janet and Nancy, all over to attend races. To bide his time at the races he volunteered as a race official starting in the

late 1960s. Over time, the girls quit racing, but Allen got more involved in race timing.

He has served in the International Ski Federation's timing working group, a very small group of people who are mostly involved with timing equipment. He also has his own companion working group in timing in the United States Ski and Snowboarding Association.

He officiated at the 1988 Olympic Games at Calgary and the 1980 Games at Lake Placid. He was asked to run the timing operation at the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics. He was the Chief of Timing for the men's and women's Downhill, Super G, and Alpine Combined Ski events and was chosen to recite the officials' oath at the Olympic opening ceremonies.

Allen retired from Sandia Labs in the mid-1990s, and remained active in volunteering on several committees in the USSA and teaching new officials timing procedures and regulations. He received some of the U.S. Ski & Snowboard's highest honors including the highest honor, the Julius Blegen Award in 2015.

Allen passed away in August of 2019.