

New Mexico Ski Hall of Fame

2009



George Hatch



George Hatch was born in New York in 1936. His father died when he was five and his mother and three brothers moved frequently after that eventually living in Vermont. His stepfather skied at Hogback Mountain Ski Area and George learned to ski there at a young age.

George moved to New Mexico and came to work at La Madera Ski Area in 1960. Shortly thereafter, La Madera changed its name to Sandia Peak and installed its first chairlift in 1964 and built the Summit House on top of the mountain. George became manager in 1963 and oversaw new trails and lifts being built on the growing area.

In 1969 he accepted a job as general manager at Red River Ski Area in northern New Mexico at a time that the area was expanding.

He moved over the mountain to Taos Ski Valley in 1973 and became mountain manager. He used his expertise to help

Taos grow until 1984 when he was hired to help start a new area called Ski Rio an hour north of Taos. He worked there as mountain manager for several years until Ski Rio

went into bankruptcy. George then retired to the town of Questa north of Taos.

George was a big bear of a man, but skied with grace. He was quiet until you got to know him. He liked practical jokes, art, hunting and fishing.

George could drive anything from a snowcat to bulldozer and had the mechanical skill to keep any vehicle running. He helped introduce snow-making at several of the ski areas and was known to experiment with cloud seeding by firing rockets into clouds. George was good with a chain saw, but on several occasions was tagged by a tree when he ran the wrong way after cutting through the tree.

Four New Mexico ski areas have benefitted directly from George Hatch and his vision of the mountains.

George died in 2005, but left his imprint on the ski mountains of New Mexico.