

Vail Mountain – A Historical Look At the Progression of Trails and Ropeways

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Robert W. (Bob) Parker was born Evanston, IL on July 9, 1922. Divorced, two adult children, two grandchildren. Educated in eastern U.S. Attended college at St. Lawrence Univ. (Freshman - '40-'41), U. of Washington (BA-'49), Univ. of Grenoble, France (Language Cert.-'50), Ecole d'Alpinisme, Chamonix (Diplome-'51). Univ. of New Mexico (Archaeology - '87 - '90). Worked as farmer, tree surgeon, ski patrolman, mountain guide, education advisor, editor (SKIING Magazine '55 -'62), ski area executive (Vail, '62 - '87)), writer (various publications, poetry book, World War II stories), field archaeologist (currently).
At Vail, Marketing Director, VP Marketing, VP Corporate Relations, Sr. VP Operations. Retired 1987.

Abstract:

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Vail, as we know it today, started in the 1940s after a group of buddies from the famous 10th Mountain Division ski troop returned from World War II to their training grounds in Gore Valley. The brave veterans were Pete Seibert, Bill "Sarge" Brown and Bob Parker. They fulfilled their dreams, and in 1962 Vail Mountain opens for skiing with two chairlifts, one 4-passenger Bell bicable gondola and a \$5 lift ticket. During the inaugural 1962-63 season, the mountain recorded 55,000 skiers.

Bob will recount the pioneer (1960's) days of ski lift and tramway building in Vail, Colorado. Early surveys, construction methods and accidents. Transport of tramway elements from Europe to the U.S. and on to Lions Head. The accident in "76" and its impact on. Tramway safety measures. Safety devices following the accident. Tramway safety, practical and theoretical. Proposed tramway and funicular at Beaver Creek. Tramway personalities.