



In my good books "THE STORY OF MODERN SKIING"

JOHN FRY

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BY NEIL ELLIOT

So how did we do? Did we get to "Own the podium"? As I write this in early February, the hype for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics is in full gear, the torch relay has just passed through our area, and every other item on the TV and radio is concerned with the Olympics. How did we get to such an obsession with sliding on snow (and ice)? How did the winter Olympics turn into such a circus? We have a particular reason for needing to know. Our area is a Mecca for skiers. The story of skiing is our story, our past and our future.

In this well researched book, Fry tells us much about skiing's development from a sport for the few to a significant industry. If you don't know this history then maybe

you should, given the large contribution it makes to our economy, particularly that of the Kootenays. Fry's history is particularly a North American history of skiing, with little detail about, for example, the British development of "Downhill only" skiing. It does highlight the significance of the post World War II period, when the returning troops with alpine training opened the mountains. This is reflected in the history of my local resort, Red Mountain, which opened the first chair lift in Western Canada in December 1947. Fry also addresses the changing nature of the ski resort, from an activity-based income to real estate based income.

It is not just the changing economic nature of skiing

that Fry discusses. The changing techniques and disciplines of skiing are also highlighted. Anyone who has been on the ski slopes over the last few months will have noticed a new style of "rockered" skis making their way onto the feet of trendy skiers. It is just the latest innovation in a series of innovations as the ski industry attempts to both satisfy and stimulate demand. Think of short skis, long skis, fat skis, twin-tip skis, and a variety of specialist skis. As a snowboarder I feel distinctly disgruntled by Fry's attempt to classify snowboarding as a

discipline of skiing, but it is worth noting the connection between the two sports. It is also worth noting that innovations often come when skiing is hitting some kind of slump.

It is always worth learning something of the history of the events that are going on around us. As the poet Steve Turner wrote, "History repeats itself. Has to — No-one listens." Listening and learning from history gives us the jump on what may be coming. In a society that seems to live in the moment, it also helps us to avoid being

caught out by those who play on ignorance of the past.

But the best quality of the book is that Fry is clearly passionate about skiing. His aim in the book is to share both his knowledge and his passion for a range of types of skiing. This is a personal account of his experiences of skiing, but told in a way that gets the author out of focus. And ultimately Fry doesn't care whether we are in the latest gear or in gear from 50 years ago. He ends by saying, "The joy of sliding on snow is immune to progress." □



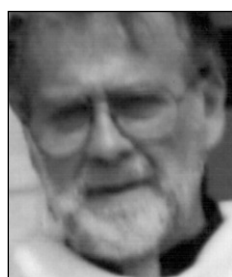
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The Vicar of Kokanee remembers clerics past

Kootenay Lake

BY JIM HEARNE

It was the tenth of May 1962. The five Hearnese had crossed the border and streamed down into Trail looking for St. Andrew's Church in their 1950 Chevy station wagon with a canoe on top. They stopped at two other churches before they reached their destination. These were St. Anthony's Church in "the Gulch" and Knox United just across the street from St. Andrews.

The staff of St. Andrew's were there to greet us. They were Elwood — "Father Pat" — Patterson, Peter O'Flynn, Betty Picton, the parish worker, Marg Armstrong, the secretary, and some members of the vestry.

Within ten days I was made a deacon in the Anglican Church of Canada. Soon after that, Father Pat left

to become Dean of Saskatoon, and a short time later Peter left to return to his native Guelph, Ontario. I was a new Anglican and a new Canadian in charge of a parish of several hundred families. As one of the Sunday school banners put it, "a raw deacon thrown in the deep end." I was not unfamiliar to parish work. St. Andrew's was actually the fourth church I had served. My pastoral experience dated back to June of 1953 while I was still in university.

During that first summer in Trail, J. Alan Jackson came to my aid. He was a tall, foli-cally challenged gentleman who bore a remarkable resemblance to "Mister Clean." For a time, when he became pastor of St. Saviour's Pro-Cathedral in Nelson, he suffered the epithet of "Dean



Clean." I shall never forget seeing him uncoil himself from his diminutive vehicle, the NSU Prinz. He was a great communicator. He brought with him a shaky legacy from the Oyama church for painting the pews blue.

In due time two other priests came to St. Andrew's. They were Bern Barrett and Don Anderson. Ralph Dean,

bishop of Cariboo, came for a most memorable mission. Later Sister Rosemary Anne, SSJD, came for a similar endeavour.

In the fifteen months we spent in Trail we had four residences. We lived in the rectory for a short time and were given strict orders not to pick the fruit tree clean in order to leave some for the Barretts,

who were soon to arrive. Renovations were taking place and it was one of the workmen who used my Eagle Scout shirt for a paint rag.

Ten months after our arrival I was priested on the Feast of the Annunciation in 1963. Shortly after that I was off to become the Vicar of Kokanee on Kootenay Lake. □