

Snow Trains

Amidst much fanfare, Hannes Schneider arrived by train in North Conway with his wife and two children in February 1939. Crowds surrounded him the morning of his arrival, and children in town lined up in front of the train station, making an arch with their ski poles. Schneider had gained fame in Europe in the 1920s and 1930s for his ski school and his development of new skiing techniques. His is a dramatic story of Nazi persecution and internment, rescue, and starting over in a new country.



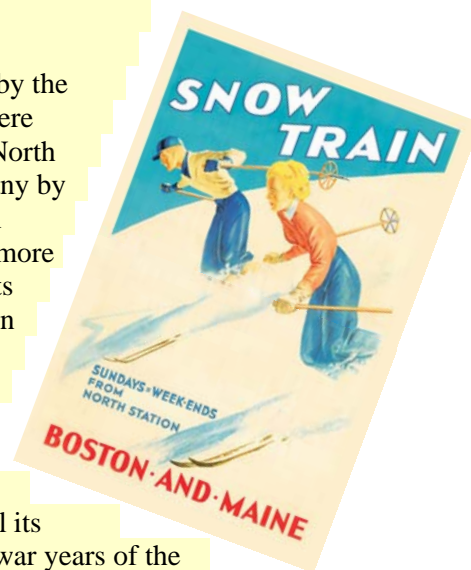
Photo courtesy of local historian and writer, Tom Eastman

Mt. Cranmore and Eastern Slope Inn in North Conway had been purchased in 1937 by Harvey Dow Gibson, a Conway native who went on to enjoy a successful career in New York's financial community and who was then the President of Manufacturers Trust Company. His vision was to develop his home town into a major ski resort, and with Schneider's arrival, everything came together. Schneider led the development of Cranmore while he continued to provide ski instruction. The mountain, with its modern facilities and Schneider's star power, became one of the most popular ski resorts in the Eastern United States.



North Conway, NH 1946

Soon skiers by the thousands were flocking to North Conway, many by trains. When Mount Cranmore opened for its first season in 1937-38, snow trains helped bring skiers from Boston to fill its slopes. The war years of the early 1940s found as many as five trains



coming into North Conway on a Sunday, carrying up to 4,000 skiers for a one-day trip. At their peak, the Snow Trains carried 24,000 passengers each season.

To view our slideshow of this fascinating era, please see our Snow Train album on our websites:
http://www.conwayscenic.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.photoalbums_snowtrain