



“Cass’s Corner”: Where Did I Go...?

How often, I wonder, to myself, do I start my writings off wondering, reminiscing? Pondering, perhaps, 'what I could have been, had my accident not taken place, as it did. An accident that robbed me, my parents may argue, of a future that sparkled, with possibilities?



Living in southwestern Colorado, as I did from Grade Five through high school, it was natural, I suppose, that I did as much (snow) skiing as I did.

Dad was the mountain physician at Purgatory Ski Area, and, by virtue of that, we had our family pass, each winter. Regularly, I would ski two, three times, weekly.

Geez, what memories I have, of the mountain, and of skiing it!

I must have been, I don't know, probably in Grades Seven and Eight. Bob and I cut through the trees off to the right and we found ourselves atop a relatively small cliff. It has been a lot of years now, but I'd estimate it to have been a four to six-foot cliff, the first one we did.

Later, we would regularly cut through the trees, in search of more such 'plummetts.' Don't think I'll ever forget the instance, likely in Grade 8 or 9, year before my accident, when we actually dropped off the chairlift, landing at the top of a cliff, at the bottom of Purg's Lift 3, the Grizzly Peak chair! You know what, though? I believe I ended up being the only one of our pair to submit to that plunge, before skiing off the top!

This was a significantly grander cliff. . . probably nearer 18-20 feet. At least the landing was 'powdery.' I only wish, now, in hindsight, that there had been a steeper descent, BETWEEN the bottom of my cliff and the lift line, at the base of Lift 3!

Just the same, though. . .

As the theme song from the old television show, "All in the Family" iterates, "Those. . . were the days. . ."

I 'returned to life,' following my three months in hospital, immediately getting back into high school. Within a few weeks, winter and the ski season were again, inevitably, upon us.

How things had changed now, though; before, I would be jumping cliffs and skiing the trees with Bob, with Cory, any of a number of junior high and high school chums. Heck, I even remember racing down the intermediate-level run, 'What,' with Mom. She was later a long-time ski instructor, but she, too, joined me in the trees, a few times.

Earlier, I feel I noted 'how things had changed,' pre- and post-accident. My circle of friends and skiing companions, too, had changed.

I remember skiing 'Boogie' with Matt, the elder of my earlier friend Nathan's younger brothers. Footloose and fancy free. . . everything, whether I fully acknowledged it or now, 'may have just been a wee bit slower'. . .

Chipper and I would ski 'Dead Spike,' I remember, partially an intermediate run, then further down, an 'expert' run. He and I had not been huge friends, prior to the accident, but isn't it interesting now, that he and I are skiing, together. An accident like the one I had elicited a fair bit of sympathy and concern, it seems. We enjoyed ourselves, as we made multiple descents of the mountain.

We 'reminisce, about the things we miss,' don't we. . .

- Cass