

Edward G Mercier, age 98 of Stowe, died Monday Jan 2, 2006. Born July 27 1907 in Kensington, England to Bernard and Anita Mercier. The family immigrated to New York in 1910, via Ellis Island. Ed grew up in the Bronx and graduated from Stuyvesant High School in 1926.

During the depression years, which he cherished as among the best times of his life, Ed lived on Long Island.

His career in Industrial Design and Engineering led him through a number of jobs – early Bell labs, when they were still in Manhattan, CineSimplex, the company that made Simplex Film Projectors, and General Precision Labs. After retiring from General Precision, he started his own precision gear manufacturing company.

Ed was a consummate inventor. On the serious side, he had several patents including a precision gear tester and rear-entry ski binding. On a lighter note, he invented a tennis racket with an extending handle, to improve the reach for those not endowed with a natural one.

Working in his garage-shop in Stowe, Ed continued as an inventor and tinkerer. He always had a project or two or three underway. In the early days of video he learned how to convert film projectors running at 30 frames a second to sync with the 24 frame rate of video. As late as 1987 he would still get the odd order from Hollywood to convert projectors as he was one of the few who still knew how to do it.

Ed married Catherine (Kay) Davis 1951 and settled in Redding CT. Their daughter Julie was born in 1952.

Both were tennis enthusiasts and enjoyed the Stowe Tennis club immensely. The Tennis Club was the setting for Ed's 80th, an event of great hilarity and camaraderie. The infamous statue of Ed's tennis pose was presented at the ceremony.

His association with Stowe began in the mid-1940's with weekend ski trips, when Mt. Mansfield was in its infancy. Ed bought a fixer-upper in the 50's to accommodate his family and many friends. They all shared many decades of comradery and fun and skiing. In the summer, there was the annual Polish Luau, where all would gather to party and pass the time of the "off season". In 1978, Ed and Kay moved permanently to Stowe. He loved the mountain and the sport of skiing, which he kept up as long as he could – the age of 94. The name Ed Mercier was an entrant in many a MMSC race and the occasional Wintermeister. He was spotted by Ski Magazine in 1991 and noted for his inspiring effort at the age of 84.

As an all round athlete, in his youth he became passionate about speed skating and tried out for the 1932 Olympics. In his retirement he rekindled his interest and at 72 began skating again at the Jackson Rink, where he was founder of the Green Mountain Speed Skating Club (is this a fact?) During the summer, Ed had marked out a course in the Spruce parking lot and it was not unusual to see Ed practicing his moves there.

Ed long felt that speed skaters were not adequately recognized and spearheaded the effort to create The Jack Shea national award for speed skating. Eric Oberg's granite sculpture, which Ed saw exhibited at the Helen Day Art Center, inspired the trophy.

In addition to skiing, tennis and speed skating, Ed was also an avid cyclist.

A man of extraordinary character and humor.

Preceded in death by his beloved daughter Julie, stepson Allan, wife Kay, and sisters Lillian and Julliette.

Survived by nephew Robert Piper, step daughter Kay Loysen, seven grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren, and many, many friends.

Ed will be dearly remembered and sorely missed by all that knew him. His family owes an extreme debt of gratitude to all the gracious people who befriended and assisted him over many wonderful years.

A springtime celebration service to be held in Stowe is being planned.

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made in Ed's name to the Lamoille Home Health and Hospice.....

At 87, Stowe skater 'as good as I ever was'

By John Acunto
Free Press Staff Writer

One winter day 15 years ago at an ice rink in Stowe, Ed Mercier became re-acquainted with something that had been missing from his life for almost half a century.

Standing inside the cold rink watching a skater's long blades dig into the ice, Mercier got that magical feeling in his gut again. It was all coming back to him.

"I see the long blades and racing tights and just like that my stomach did a flip-flop; I mean right away," Mercier said. "I said to myself, 'boy, I used to do that, why did I ever stop?'"

At that moment, Mercier knew it was time to give speedskating another try.

Today, at 87, with a short frame that stands about 5½, and a slight hobble in his walk, the founding member of the Green Mountain Speedskating Club still laces up his skates to do what he loves most.

And each time Mercier hits the ice, for a brief period he can really get those long blades moving.

"I can take one very fast lap around the rink as fast as I can go," Mercier said. "And I can go out there and I can be leaning on the turns and I can get that feeling for one lap."

In 1926, at age 19, Mercier was introduced to the sport in New York City. A friend had asked him to go to the rink to see a race.

Mercier liked what he saw.

Soon, Mercier was speedskating whenever he could.

"I liked short-track very much," Mercier said. "There would be a whole mess of you skating, trying to get position. It was very exciting."

For six years, speedskating was Mercier's life. When tryouts for the 1932 Olympic speedskating team were held, Mercier decided to give it a shot.

Mercier didn't fare too well at the tryouts, losing in his first qualifying race. What little hope there was at making the Olympics was gone.

Shortly after, the Great Depression caught up with Mercier and he lost his job as a civil engineer and was forced to hang up the long blades.

Although Mercier got another job designing projection for theater and studio work, he never had the time to get back into speedskating.

"I got very much involved with my job, working overtime, and taking care of my family," Mercier said. "The job got the better of me."

As the years went by, the skates remained in the closet. Mercier began to cycle, play tennis and ski.

He enjoyed skiing so much, he eventually bought a winter home in Stowe. In 1978, he moved to Stowe.

Then, after all those years, after the failed Olympic tryouts, getting caught up in his work, and skiing on that one winter day when he stopped at the ice rink, that magical feeling was still there, even at 72.

For Mercier it was a new beginning.

Since then, he has plunged back into speedskating, making the most of his fast lap.

"And that's enough to bring me back 50 years," Mercier said. "I say I'm as good as I ever was."

technique, too. Masters from injury.

got involved in Masters Swim-

icing on the cake. Training

"We love it," adds Connie.

Ed Mercier

Speedskater, Age 87



"I don't believe in sitting back and waiting for the end. I believe in pushing myself, always."—Ed Mercier, 87.

Ed Mercier's affair with speedskating began in the 1920's. The subway cost a nickel. The best bootleg hootch was called Golden Wedding. Ed skated night

after night in the men's speed trials at Manhattan's Iceland rink.

When the stock market crashed, everyone was out of work. The rinks closed.

Ed packed his skates away and got busy about earning a living. In 1937, he got a good engineering job with General Precision Equipment.

"I got involved in underwater sound work for the Navy," Ed explains. For 35 years he worked hard for General Precision Equipment where he helped develop sound-on-film technology and aerospace communications.

It was in 1941 that he met and married Kay, a fine athlete in her own right. "She played exceptionally good tennis," Ed says. "If you hit the ball anywhere near her, you'd swallow it!"

In the late 60's Ed planned a skating vacation at Lake Placid. While there he tried Alpine skiing and after a few runs down Whiteface Mountain's Alpine trails he switched sports. He became an avid Alpine skier and moved to Stowe in 1970. It wasn't until 10 years later that he finally returned to the ice.

Ed remembers watching a man in racing suit and long blades practicing for the Wintermeister, a race that included a Giant Slalom run, a 7.5 kilometer cross-country ski, and a speedskating event. "My stomach just did a flip-flop and I wondered why I ever stopped skating," he says.

Ed returned to his old love, but not without preparation. He bought a pair of in-line skates to help him ease back into the form he

would need for the rink. "I promptly landed right on my fat fanny," he recalls. Ed practiced, and when he felt ready, stepped onto the ice.

"It felt absolutely wonderful to skate again," he says. He is a regular at the Jackson arena in Stowe where he jokes with other skaters. Little kids watch him in awe. His body easily assumes the racing position: left hand behind his back, right arm rhythmically swinging, legs still powering him around the ice on his tailor-made racing blades. He is smooth, even predatory. "Hey Mister, that's some pair of skates!" calls a 5-year-old fan.

These days, Ed doesn't leave home for more than a few hours at a time. Kay suffered a stroke following surgery and needs his care. But those few hours are all it takes for him to practice the sport he loves.

"I'm not capable of good competition anymore. I don't have the stamina. I do quick, short crossovers and I practice the basic position and my so-called extension," he notes. Ed doesn't particularly care for deeply cold days, but he skates anyway.

"I don't believe in sitting back and waiting for the end," Ed says about the years left for him. "I believe in pushing myself, always."

VERMONT SPORTS TODAY 10/95

The title tells it all and it could strike a chord

A Man, An Idea, A Statue

By Bob Vehe

Ed Mercier of Stowe, Vermont, a founding member of the Green Mountain Speedskating Club, is a man with a long memory, a knack for long range planning and boundless enthusiasm.

Speedskating impressed him from the first time he saw it as a 19 year old in 1926 in New York City. Concentrating on it for the next six years got him ready to enter the tryouts for the 1932 Olympic team. He missed his goal, but it didn't diminish his interest in the sport. The Great Depression of the 1930s created a detour, when keeping employed and carving out a career to support his family had to take priority. After 52 years had passed and Ed was living in Stowe, he stopped at the local rink one day and that wonderful feeling swept over him again.

Back on the ice, Ed wondered why speedskating didn't have more recognition. His engineer's mind went to work and he analyzed why so many other sports have so much recognition. Tennis, hockey, golf, swimming and others all have national awards and one of the biggest is collegiate football with its Heisman Trophy donated by the Downtown Athletic Club of New York. The trophy is named after a famous college coach and is given to the year's outstanding college football player.

The publicity generated by sportswriters commenting on who should or would be given the award stirs up a frenzy of interest nationwide. Ed thought that this is what speedskating needs—an award to be given to the outstanding speed skater. The award must be a worthy piece of bronze art and not a plaque or a certificate.

In the winter of 1992, an art exhibit named "Sports in Art" opened at the Helen Day Art Center in Stowe and in it was the statue shown on the table at this past convention. The statue is titled "Jack Shea" after the double gold medal winner at the 1932 Games. It is a granite statue sculpted by Vermont artist Eric Oberg. I was pleased to obtain permission to use it



Ed Mercier—a man with an idea
Bill Houghton Photo

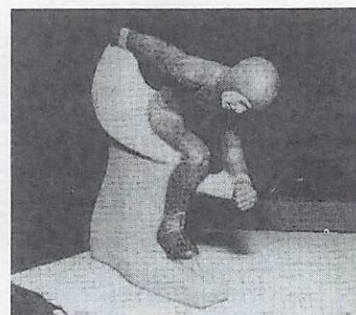
on the cover of the 1992 ASU Handbook. After seeing the statue, my goal was for a personal piece of art cast in bronze. Ed's goal was for a fitting trophy for the top speed skater. A bronze copy of the existing statue, however, would be too big for most homes or as an award.

Prior to the convention, Ed mentioned that the artist was sculpting a smaller version to be cast in bronze. Ed decided to bring the original piece to the convention to see if any interest could be developed. There still are two schools of thought. One is to have it exclusively for use as an award and the other is to have it available to all as a wonderful work of art that epitomizes a sport we all love. Why not both?

Ed's goal of a national award given by the ASU could be of great benefit to the sport. Do you know of some company, do you know of some group, do you know of some club, do you know of some city, do you know of anyone who thinks enough of the sport, the athletes and the organization to establish such a program?

Ed is 87 years old and has been hooked on speedskating for 68 years. His enthusiasm doesn't diminish by a few setbacks. Can you match this? Not in years, but in everlasting, upbeat fervor and confidence that rationality will always overcome negative thoughts. Let's be optimistic and dedicated to giving this the best try that can be made. Don't be retiring,

don't be negative. This can work. Let's make it work!



Granite statue titled Jack Shea
by Vermont artist Eric Oberg
John Needham Photo

Betsey & Tom Porter

From: "Karen Loysen" <karen@lk-architects.com>
To: <tporter1@nycap.rr.com>
Cc: "Christopher Loysen" <west7th@dodsonstexaco.com>; <eoberg@together.net>
Sent: Monday, April 03, 2006 12:34 PM
Subject: FW: Ed Mercier

Thanks for your note. If there is anything family and friends can do in support of this, please let me know.

Best regards,
 Karen

-----Original Message-----

From: Betsey & Tom Porter [mailto:tporter1@nycap.rr.com]
Sent: Saturday, April 01, 2006 4:00 AM
To: Karen Loysen
Cc: Katie Marquard
Subject: Re: Ed Mercier

Dear Karen,

I was very sorry to hear of Ed's death. I felt very lucky to have known him. I have sent your e-mail to Shirley Yates, long time Secretary of the ASU. She knew Ed as well. She and Bob visited your grandfather in Stowe. My wife and I did a couple times as well. I'll be going to the USSpeedskating meeting in Salt Lake City the end of April. Will discuss Ed's desire for the sculptor then and let you know if they'll be able to fulfill his wishes.

Tom

----- Original Message -----

From: [Karen Loysen](#)
To: tporter1@nycap.rr.com
Cc: [Christopher Loysen](#) ; jpwilliams@nycap.rr.com
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2006 1:34 PM
Subject: Ed Mercier

Hello Mr. Porter –

My name is Karen Loysen and I am Ed Mercier's grand-daughter. Ed died January 2, just past. I am trying to follow up on a trophy idea he'd been championing for many years. The trophy was based on a sculpture by Eric Oberg. There was an article written by Bob Vehe about the trophy in "The Racing Blade", June 1995, with a picture of both Ed and the Sculpture on the cover. Since Bob Vehe is also gone, I'm wondering where I might turn.

If you have any ideas as to how I might pursue this, I'd be greatly appreciative.

Thanks,
 Karen

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4/6/2006

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