

The story of Alex Linton, a descendant of Alexander Linton who emigrated to Canada in 1888. His father would have been a brother to Oliver Linton (see the separate story of the Lintons).

In Memorium: Alex Linton, Resort Founder and Visionary

The man who first spied the pristine snow of Mount Washington and envisioned a family ski resort for the mile-high peak, has passed away.

The weather was perfect one Sunday in February, 1975 when Alex Linton, a Campbell River businessman, was driving home after a day of skiing the Kandahar at Forbidden Plateau. He looked out the window and spotted Mount Washington in the distance. His first thought was to marvel at the massive blanket of snow looming in the distance.



Wondering how deep the snow was on the backside of the mountain, which was hidden from sight, Linton finished his drive and called friend Henry Norie to see if his new helicopter might be available in the morning for a look around the mountain. The next morning, Linton spotted natural bowls, lots of vertical and tons of snow - and he began to dream.

Last year Linton celebrated the 25th anniversary of his dream - Mount Washington Alpine Resort - along with thousands of other visitors. However, in September the flags at the Resort were flying at half staff to honour Linton's memory. Linton died in September of kidney disease. He had suffered from back problems for a number of years and went to the hospital with a sore back.

"They treated the back and they didn't realize it was the kidneys," said Peter Gibson, a longtime friend of Linton's and president of Mount Washington Alpine Resort. "He was 83, and he had a full life." Linton was a downhiller all the way, says Gibson. He skied Forbidden Plateau in the early days of that Resort, and even drove bus tours up to Forbidden.

"When I was 14, 15, 16 years old I did a lot of skiing with his daughter Pat," Gibson related. "Pat went on to cross-country ski with the national cross-country ski team." Linton's dedication to Mount Washington was evident from the first time he spotted the mountain's blanket of snow. The day after his fateful drive home, he and Norie were in a helicopter a few hundred feet above the mile-high summit. Norie, who didn't ski, was infected by his colleague's enthusiasm - such was the charm of Alex Linton. Flying back to Campbell River, Linton and Norie formed a plan that would see them shaking the hand of the Chairman of the Board of land owners Crown Zellerbach a mere 16 months later. That sealed the land purchase and Mount Washington Ski Resort Ltd. was born.

In December 1979 the world began to flock to the snow-choked ski hill. Now, 25 years later, the Resort has far surpassed even Linton's dreams, Gibson said. "I think Alex saw a family ski hill that his family would assist him in running. He saw a small, little village (the Alpine Village) with twinkling lights. I don't think he foresaw a year-round resort at all," Gibson said. "It was his dream to get the thing started, and it wouldn't have started without him. But I think the current dream is far beyond what he envisioned."

Linton leaves behind his wife Alma, son John, daughters Pat, Jeannette and Leslie, numerous grandchildren - and legions of skiers who respected the man and his vision.