

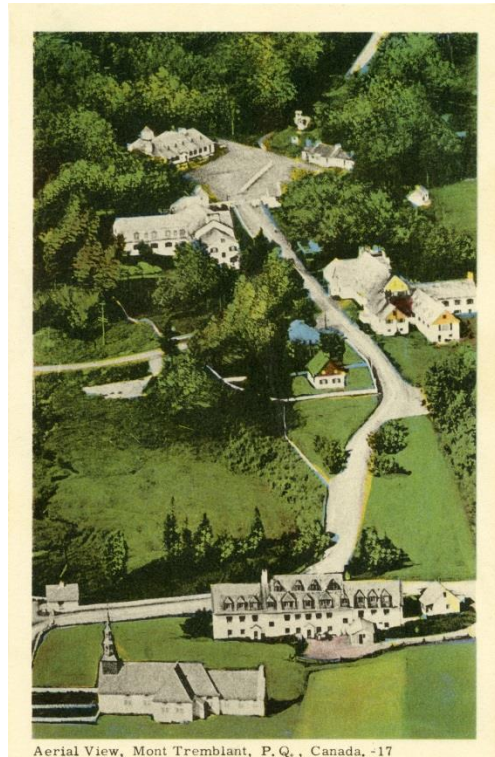
Mont Tremblant Lodge

On February 12, 1939, before a crowd of people alive with curiosity, entrepreneur Joseph Bondurant Ryan inaugurated, at the foot of Mont Tremblant, a wonderfully charming twenty-room inn. But all eyes turned immediately to the extraordinary invention that the American millionaire had installed, at great expense, on the first elevation of the mountain flank: chairs suspended from an endless cable that would carry skiers to the very top of the new Flying Mile trail. The following week, all the newspapers carried stories of the event. Mont Tremblant Lodge was born, and the whole region took its place in the history books.



From left to right, Joe Ryan, founder-owner of Mont Tremblant Lodge; his wife Mary, who succeeded him in 1950; Mildred O'Malley; Abbé (Rev.) Charles-Hector Deslauriers, parish priest of Mont-Tremblant.

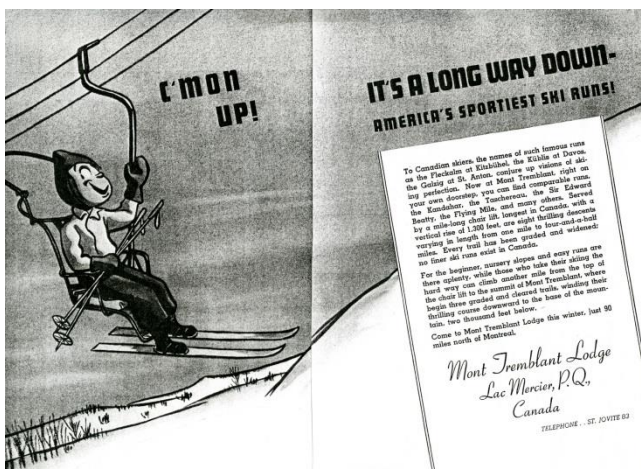
Source: *Société d'histoire Chute aux Iroquois*.



Aerial View, Mont Tremblant, P. Q., Canada, -17

(Above) Aerial view of Tremblant Lodge early in the 1940s. Source: postcard, photographer unknown.

Source: *Société d'histoire Chute aux Iroquois*.



(Left) Advertising for the brand new ski resort, as it appeared in the 1939-1940 issue of *Canadian Ski Year Book*.

Ten years later, the man nicknamed Emperor Joe was at the head of one of the classiest, trendiest ski resorts in North America and of a hotel complex that was the only one of its kind. At the foot of the mountain had arisen a little pastel-coloured operetta-style village with one hundred bedrooms, forty or so small houses, a huge cafeteria called the Chalet des Voyageurs and the Saint-Bernard chapel. Sparing no expense, Joe Ryan also built, along the banks of the Diable River, a road that went all the way to the foot of the “Versant nord”—the North Side—that he created in 1948 for less wealthy skiers. The mountain itself, which was part of the Parc du Mont-Tremblant, now had five mechanical lifts including two chairlifts, and about fifteen trails.

In 1965, Mary Ryan, who had taken over the reins of the company upon the death of her husband in 1950, sold Mont Tremblant Lodge to a group of Montreal financiers. The famous ski resort changed hands twice more until the firm Intrawest, whose headquarters was at the time in British Columbia, acquired it in 1991. A huge construction site sprang up two years later and a large number of buildings were torn down to make room for businesses, hotels and condominium apartments. New runs, a big lodge and a gondola lift took their places on the mountain. It was a new era for the resort.

The Saint-Bernard Chapel



Practised in numerous churches in the Laurentians, the blessing of the skis had a charm all its own at the Saint-Bernard Chapel.

Source: Société d'histoire Chute aux Iroquois.

The Saint-Bernard Chapel, dedicated to the patron saint of skiers, is one of the most remarkable buildings that remain of the hotel property founded by Joe Ryan. Built in 1942, this beautiful little church is an exact replica of the first church of the Saint-Laurent, on the Île d'Orléans, erected in 1695. Following the advice of Jean Palardy, painter and an expert in the furniture of old Québec, who had done the interior decoration of the resort's first hotel, Joe and Mary Ryan furnished the chapel with works of art, furniture and decorative objects from the old parishes of the Quebec City region. The founding parish priest of Sacré-Cœur de Jésus parish, in Mont-Tremblant, Abbé (Rev.) Charles-Hector Deslauriers, celebrated mass in the chapel for more than thirty years. Since April 2012, the Saint-Bernard Chapel has again served the parish faithful. Shortly before selling the company, in 1965, Mary Ryan asked that her remains be interred in the little cemetery adjacent to the chapel. She rests there, as does her husband Joe Ryan and their son Peter.

Research and writing: Danielle Soucy



The first director of the Mont Tremblant Lodge ski school, Austrian Hans Falkner, wearing his tie with great dignity at the top of the mountain.

Source: postcard, photographer unknown.