



MEDIA CONTACTS

Mark Fischer
mfischer@pgri.us
410.336.9981

Sheila Rivers
srivers@mountwashington.ca
250.218.9701

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mt. Washington Icon Announces His Swan Song

General Manager to retire next spring after 41 years on the slopes

COMOX VALLEY, VANCOUVER ISLAND – Mount Washington Alpine Resort announced today that this ski season will be the last one at the helm for ski resort icon Peter Gibson. Gibson, the resort’s General Manager, will retire next spring after 41 years as a fixture of the ski area. “I’ve had one of the greatest runs in the ski industry,” noted Gibson. “To be able to be at one area for four decades, and to help it develop from scratch into a one of the top resorts in Canada has been a privilege and a lot of fun.” Gibson summed up his career succinctly saying, “To have a job in your home town and to be able to do something that has been a passion all my life is a dream come true.”

Gibson started at Mountain Washington in May of 1977, two years before the resort opened in 1979. His primary duty those first two summers was operating a chain saw and running the trail crew as they created the ski runs for the mountain. “I was helping the founders figure out how to build the trails and infrastructure for ski hill, but there was lots more that needed to be done, so while we cut trees we also planned the overall resort and figured out how ski school, rentals and resort operations were going to work once the place opened,” Gibson recalled.

All the brainstorming and planning paid off when Gibson learned he would be the Director of Skiing when the resort opened. Over time he assumed greater responsibilities including Guest Services Manager and Director of Marketing. In 1999, Gibson was appointed General Manager, and in 2001 he became the President of Mount Washington Ski Resort, Ltd.

Gibson started skiing at Comox Valley’s Forbidden Plateau when he was 10 years of age, and he fell in love with the sport. By the time he was 16, he had become a ski instructor. After graduating from Courtenay High School in 1967, he completed a Bachelor of Arts degree and Professional Teaching degree at University of British Columbia that he put to good use doing what came naturally – teaching skiing. In addition to teaching at Mt. Washington, Gibson also taught at Grouse Mountain and Whistler. In search of an endless winter, while still working for Mount Washington, Gibson was able to take an extended holiday and teach skiing at Ben Lomond, a ski area in Tasmania, Australia, during the Canadian summers from 1989 to 1992.

“I’ve been fortunate to work with three very committed ownership groups at Mount Washington over the last forty years,” commented Gibson. “When we started, one of our big features was flush toilets, which was quite innovative for a mountain resort at that time. Lots of hard work and millions of dollars later, we have a top Alpine and Nordic ski area with over 700

units of housing at the resort. Now we are focused on adding snowmaking, summer activities, new restaurants, and further development to make Mount Washington a great year round destination. I'm quite proud of the team here and what we have accomplished, and I'm very pleased to pass along a solid foundation for the next generation to build upon."

Vern Greco, CEO of Pacific Group Resorts, Inc. reflected on Gibson's role during the transition to the current ownership two years ago, "Mt. Washington had experienced a couple very difficult low snow seasons just before our acquisition. It was a hard experience for a staff accustomed to some of the best snowfall in Canada, and the team could have been quite discouraged. Instead, Peter kept everyone focused and positive during the sale process in what was naturally a very uncertain and trying time. He led the team through the transition with aplomb. His steady hand was extremely important, and we are grateful he was in that role."

George Trousdell, the Director of Mountain Operations at Mt. Washington expressed his appreciation for Gibson, "I've been here for 37 years, so not quite as long as long as Peter, but long enough to know him very well. His exit strategy is vintage Peter. He's leaving in good health, he's in a good place, and he has given us enough time to allow for careful selection of a new general manager and the time for a thorough knowledge transfer between Peter and the new GM. Everything he does, he does thoughtfully and with appreciation for those around him. I hope he enjoys his retirement because we're going to miss him."

ABOUT MOUNT WASHINGTON

Mount Washington Alpine Resort is located just 30 minutes from the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island, British Columbia and hosts over 300,000 visits per year. In the winter guests, enjoy five chairlifts and five carpet lifts accessing over 1,700 acres and 1,657 vertical feet of alpine terrain. The resort also has 55 kilometers of designated cross-country skiing and 25km of snowshoeing trails along with a dedicated Nordic lodge.

Summer activities at Mount Washington include lift-accessed mountain biking, a new quad bungee trampoline, scenic chairlift rides, disc golf, miniature golf, boardwalk chess and checkers, shopping and dining. The resort also plays host to over 40 weddings per year plus numerous group and corporate events.

Off-island visitors can use WestJet, Air Canada, Central Mountain Air, and Pacific Coastal Airlines which provide air service to the Comox Valley Airport (YQQ) or they can fly right into Comox Marina via Harbour Air. Additional carriers serving the Victoria Airport (YYJ) include Delta Airlines and Alaska Airlines out of Seattle.

###