

Skiing & Outlanding

In the winter of 1955-6, Elvie was learning to ski at Camp Fortune, north of Ottawa. And being an engineer at the National Research Council, Elvie applied a text book method to his learning...that is read your "how to ski" book riding the lift up and apply the new insight while skiing down. The result was a spiral fracture of the Tibia.

Despite the doctor's warning to stay off his leg, Elvie decided to actively glide throughout the summer of 1956. Elvie was doggedly trying to achieve his Gold 'C' distance. So he fabricated a pair of folding crutches that he could carry in the glider whenever cross-country flying.

Sometime that summer, Elvie landed out. The field was too muddy for Elvie to use his crutches so a young farmhand had had to carry him to the farm house. There he asked if he could use their telephone to coordinate with his retrieve crew. When Elvie realized that the farm family were looking quizzically at him standing on one leg, he explained that he had a broken leg.

Elvie was invited into the farm house to await his retrieve crew. As Elvie made polite conversation with the family over tea, it became increasingly apparent to him that they were distressed. Eventually, the family inquired if it would not be wise to have a doctor look at Elvie's leg.

The family had assumed that Elvie had crashed into their field, broken his leg in the process and was now calmly sitting in their living room stoically enduring the pain...after all, "c't un anglais" ! Elvie lifted his pant leg to reveal the cast and all was made clear including that he had landed, not crashed.

Elvie did spend the rest of his life with right leg being about ¼ inch shorter than his left, the spiral fracture having slipped while healing due to Elvie's extensive use of his leg!