



Lenord and his son George built the ski-center cabin and warming hut from white pine they harvested and milled on the property. Inside, you can rent skis or snowshoes and buy bottled water or Gatorade. Don't expect a gourmet deli or fancy snack bar; at Blueberry Lake, it's all about the skiing.

Without the responsibilities of a dairy farm, he could focus on the excavating business, with more flexible hours that left time for some fun.

Like tennis, for instance. He tried it, loved it, and proceeded to build his own clay court. And golf, which he still plays every day if possible. But the best sport of all, the one that really caught his fancy—perhaps because it tapped into some ancient dream of deep fjords and dark forests—was Nordic skiing.

“They used to hold a valley decathlon,” he says. “So I borrowed some skis and boots and I was hooked. Eventually, I started doing races all the time.”

Along the way, he made friends with another Viking—Ole Mosesson, who ran a cross-country center at the Sugarbush Resort in Waitsfield. Mosesson sold his business after suffering a stroke a few years ago and moved back to his

native Norway. The two men have been friends for 35 years and continue to stay in touch. Ole has recovered enough to bike and fish but can no longer ski. Robinson still mourns the departure of his skiing partner. “He is my best friend and the strongest man I ever met. He loved to race and we used to ride to different competitions together,” says Lenord. “We always ended up skiing against each other, even though he was a few years younger than me. I really miss him.”

It's not clear whether it was Ole's influence or their competitive spirit that inspired Lenord to open a touring center further down the road in Warren, but anyone who knows Robinson knows that he loves a challenge and never does anything halfway, so it makes perfect sense that he would create his own cross-country trails. If nothing else, it would be

a nice winter business that would allow him to perfect his new love—nordic skiing. But where to build it?

Son George, now 51, remembers the exact moment his father got the idea. “I was there the day he got the vision to build the lake and the dam,” he says. “There was a spot up near Prickly Mountain where he'd take us to fish. Even though I was six or seven years old, I still can picture how excited he was when we went up there one day and he started looking around. He jumped up and told us to keep fishing; he said he had to run home and get his surveying equipment.”

Shortly thereafter, around 1979, after acquiring a partner from out-of-state and buying up the land that would eventually become Blueberry Lake, Robinson used his excavating expertise and equipment to begin the project that would last five years until the dam