

# MCPA Newsletter April 2010

## Board Members

President..... Kal Klass [klasstwin@gmail.com](mailto:klasstwin@gmail.com)  
Vice Pres..... David Cameron  
Treas./Webmaster..... Chuck Miller  
Secretary ..... Ruth Danielson  
Advisor..... Doug Hammond  
Advisor..... Bill Rawlins  
Advisor..... Dean Nelson



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## Message From The Board

Greetings everyone! The MCPA board had their first meeting of the year on April 12. It has been an uneventful year for Monte Cristo due to an extremely mild winter. The clayslide has moved very little and most of the winter provided almost no snow to speak of until the middle of this month. We had a wonderful social on March 6 with a great presentation by Jon Reidel. Jon works for North Cascades National Park and gave a nice talk with a power point program about the glaciology of the Cascades and the origin of some of our rivers.

We will begin our work parties early this year. The first work party is Saturday, May 15. meet at the upper parking lot at Barlow Pass. This project is accessible to EVERYONE and we need as many helpers as we can get. Plans include brushing the the old E & MC railway grade trail parallel to the highway just before Barlow Pass (It forks off to the left from the Barlow Point trail, which takes off from the upper parking lot at the pass). This is flat and only a few feet above the highway so anyone (young, small, big, or tall) can help. Rakes and pruning tools will come in handy, as well as loppers and power saws/brush cutters. We will also be working inside the gate to replace our reader board roof and signage near the clayslide.

Subsequent work parties will meet at our usual location by the clayslide and lunches will be provided by the MCPA as usual. Other work party agendas will include placing a new plank bridge over Sunday Ck, improving directions for tourists to the crossing log at Twin Bridges, and improving the trail through the clayslide.

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**Our annual meeting will be Saturday, June 5, at noon, behind the Verlot Service Station.** Please bring a side dish for our usual potluck lunch. The MCPA will provide hot dogs and drinks.

Membership dues now include: \$24.00 for membership and \$18.00 for a key for a total of \$42.00. We encourage members to include a key because your vehicle is much safer inside the gate. All work parties will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month through October.

**Our annual meeting will be Saturday, June 5, at noon, behind the Verlot Service Station.** Please bring a side dish for our usual potluck lunch. The MCPA will provide hot dogs and drinks. The main service station has recently completed a remodel and is now handicap accessible.

We hope to see everyone at the upcoming work party and the Annual Meeting. Cheers everyone!

Sincerely, Kal Klass, MCPA President

## Historical Note

This note concludes the February 1953 correspondence between Monte Cristo Resort owner Del Wilkie and Mt. Baker National Forest Supervisor H. Phil Brandner. Wilkie had made a ski trip in to the lodge building at Monte after spending the night at the Barlow Pass Guard Station, where he broke the lock to get in. Brandner's tone was folksy and conciliatory, almost as an elementary teacher to a schoolboy or a grandfather to a frequently wayward lad who needed special guidance. He continues with the need for back country travelers to check in at ranger stations.

"Not that it makes any difference to us. Just mentioning a safety practice recommended by mountaineers. Our fellows do get in on rescue calls once in a while in National Forest back country. I believe [Monte Cristo District Ranger] Ed Anderson told me he last saw you, or heard from you, when you went out before Christmas. At that time I think you mentioned to him that you would keep in touch, etc. I am sending him a copy of your formal history-making report so he will know what made the tracks.

"Glad to hear that your improvements at Monte were in excellent condition. That undoubtedly tides them over for this winter.

"Surprised and sorry to hear that you did not have beautiful weather. It was wonderfully clear here [Bellingham] and also at Mt. Baker Lodge.

"Late last fall I noticed a new painted sign at the Barlow Pass junction. I thought it was not the best choice of colors and not the best location either but I assumed you had arranged for its placement with Ed Anderson. When I asked him how he figured that was a good signing arrangement he said he had not been contacted about it. Now, it is clear that there is occasion for an INFORMATIONAL sign along the Mountain Loop Highway informing the traveling public of the cabin and meal services at Monte Cristo. But don't you think that a much more attractive sign could be made of cedar, letters routed, stained weathered gray, and placed in a more advantageous location. (Ed will lend you a router and even give you a slab of cedar). It could be put in place of the extra white board road signs we put at Barlow just to make sure folks know where Monte is.

Thanks again for your interesting report. I hope you thoroughly enjoyed the trip.

Very truly yours,  
H. Phil Brandner  
Forest Supervisor"

Not everyone agreed with the tenor of this letter. The copy which I am using was in a file of papers belonging to Happy Annen, who had been a key figure in early 1950s Monte affairs, notably obtaining and creating the Monte Cristo Campground and turning it over to the Forest Service to maintain. Annen (I assume) had written under Brandner's statement of wanting to cooperate with Wilkie, "He *takes* cooperation as a one-way street!" A year earlier the three of them, along with Ed Nordlund, had skied in to Barlow on a previous visit. Now it appears that Annen had joined the Nordlunds in their disillusionment with the Wilkies.

David A. Cameron, Ph.D.