

MCPA Newsletter August 2010

Board Members

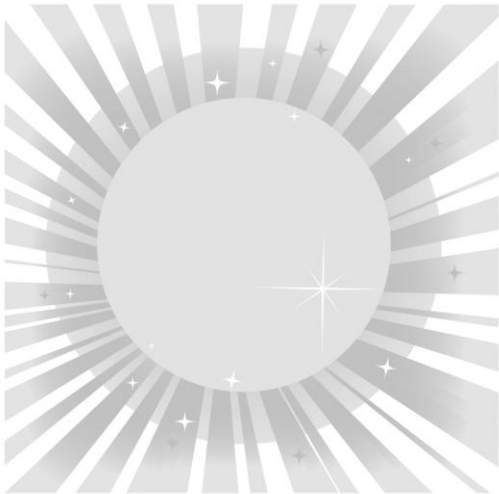
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Message From The Board

Summer greetings again everyone! At our next work **party on August 21**, we will once again try to have a 4 x 4 on the other side of the river at Twin Bridges for members to ride in to the Town site and work there. Bring rain gear and extra food. Again, please remember to use your new red decals this year when driving in past the gate. It helps us identify MCPA members.



We had an extra work party on July 31 as we have a permit from the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife for crossing the river three times only. We used the permit on this day to shuttle members into the Town site for an all day work party. A foot bridge was constructed to cross Sunday Creek by the pump house and a lot of brushing was completed around the Town site and across the Town site bridge. Brushing has also been accomplished by members all the way up Dumas Street. It all looks great. Thank you everyone who helped out with all of this!

New brochures have been completed by our webmaster and board member, Chuck Miller. This was an extremely involved project and it took a lot of time. Thank you Chuck! He is posting a laminated version with the map at Monte Cristo and on our MCPA bulletin board by the clay slide. These new brochures are more complete with accurate maps and better detail as the older brochures have been updated and edited.

Remember we welcome members to attend our board meetings. The next one will be Monday, September 13, in Mountlake Terrace. Please email me if you are interested in attending and I can give you directions. The meetings usually last 1½ hours.

The MCPA remains in contact with the Forest Service regarding any updated information on the planned Hazmat cleanup and we had a meeting with them August 6 in Darrington. They have finalized the location for the new road to roughly parallel the old wagon road to above Haps Hill. Then it will follow the County road, then the old Mine to Market road over Glacier Creek to the United Companies Concentrator. Road construction is planned for 2011 and the actual cleanup is planned for 2012. During the actual cleanup, no one will be allowed into the area. We have emphasized to them that they need to have guards posted at both the old gate and the new gate to prevent vandalism during the cleanup. As of yet, they have not finalized plans for posting signs or guarding the area. But that is 2 years into the future and we will keep everyone abreast of the situation regarding these plans as they develop.

Cheers Everyone, Kal Klass, MCPA President

Historical Essay

We are all familiar with the names of the major mining properties at Monte Cristo, notably the Mystery, Pride of the Mountains, Golden Cord/Justice, Comet, Rainy, and the O&B. These were located early on and with the exception of the Rainy, which is across Glacier Creek from the Pride/Mystery bunker, tapped into mineralized outcrops high on the mountains circling the town.

Less well known are a large number of claims which in turn surrounded them, from the rocky summits down to the town limits. Most of these were staked out to protect the main deposits or in hopes that those productive veins would extend onto someone else's property. Others just were located to fill the spaces in between, perhaps with the possibility of selling them at a profit rather than actually producing any ore.

With the passage of time these less important ones often changed hands, sometimes were relocated, and after the federal mining rules were changed to require their recording (for a fee) as well as annual assessment work, finally abandoned thirty years ago. Most were unpatented and kept alive only by those with high hopes or with the desire to play at being a miner. That meant varying amounts of work with essentially zero financial return.

One such group focused on the lower 76 Basin area and the ridge down to the top of the townsite. In July 1926 Frank W. Peabody returned to the scene of his 1889/90 success and relocated the Sheridan Quartz, Tyee Quartz, Lost Cord Quartz, and Kittie Mackay (for his wife) as part of the Peabody group, which also included his Sidney/Peabody. Frank Fitzpatrick witnessed the documentation. In September 1932 Eric G.S. Ward, witnessed by Susan A. Ward, located the Wedge Quartz, Contact Quartz, and Gene Elton. These pretty well filled up the space between the Rainy on the north and the Senator to the south in the middle of 76 Basin. All were unpatented, requiring annual assessment work of \$100 to keep ownership to the mineral wealth. Surface assets such as timber and title to the land remained with the United States government.

Eventually all these became part of Peabody's holdings, and when he and Kittie died, were passed on to his nurse Kate Knowlton, about whom I have written in the last three essays as well as earlier. Kate always knew that Monte Cristo and mining would rebound, the hills again would echo to the sounds of steam whistles and blasting, and all these properties in town and its surroundings would regain their value. Of course, a few others have dreamed the same. Upon Kate's passing away, these holdings were bequeathed to the Red Cross, with three awarded by the court to Ed and Enid Nordlund, who were Kate's executors and had requested no money or compensation for their efforts.

One item at least beyond her collapsing Dumas Street cabin has survived. It is a brittle, faded, and splitting blueprint, on the back of which Ed had written "Kate Knowlton: original map of 'Peabody' claims. C.E. Nordlund." Carefully unfolded, it is a treasure in itself of claim boundaries and names, trail and creek locations, and sites of a couple of cabins long gone. (To be continued.)

David A. Cameron, Ph.D.