

# MCPA Newsletter October 2010

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## Board Members

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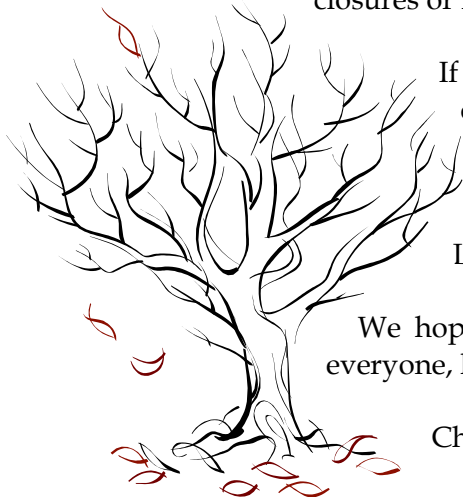
↳ **WEB ADDRESS:** <http://www.mcpa.us>

## Message From The Board

Fall greetings everyone! We hope the summer has been productive for everyone as it was for the MCPA. We got more accomplished this year at the Town site while we had river crossing permits to drive all the way in. We finished installing a 25 foot long bridge over Sunday Creek in September in addition to more brushing around the townsite site. The townsite looks better than ever. At our September work party, we created an alternate trail up to the Gothic Basin trail head since high water had already taken out part of the existing trail. The new "cut" is higher off the river and hopefully, will be allow tourists to access the log crossing without getting their feet wet.

Although we are finished with work parties for the year, remember our annual winter social in February. We will mail out cards with the date and directions before the end of this year so you can mark your calendars. If any of you are townsite site hosts, the Forest Service is having their end of the year meeting and potluck at the station house in Darrington on October 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10 am to 1 pm.

We anticipate the new road going in next year for the Hazmat cleanup and we will try to keep our membership advised of everything as development occurs with that. We are trying to keep in good contact with the contractor to let everyone know well ahead of time about any road closures or restricted access to hiking trails or the townsite site.



If you haven't already checked out our website, you should. It has developed into a very nice detailed reference site for all kinds of interests. For example, see our recent link on the website to the "Mt Loop Highway Cyber Tour". All the information and pictures were collected and organized by David Cameron and Louise Lindgren.

We hope to see everyone at our winter social in February. Until then everyone, have a wonderful Fall and Winter!

Cheers Everyone, Kal Klass, MCPA President

## Historical Essay

In the late 1970s there was little interest and action around the marginal and 76 Basin mines. In our case Ed Nordlund had built a small, almost outhouse sized shed for the Tyee, the only new structure in the area. Its visibility made it a target for occasional vandals, and nothing was kept inside save an old sack of damp cement which we couldn't convince anyone to steal. However, it did provide evidence that he was keeping up the annual \$100 assessment work requirement to keep legal ownership of an unpatented claim. He also listed their cabin outhouse as a tool shed for part of that work, which was a bit more dubious. Most owners just lied, filing their paperwork with the county and paying the small yearly fee by the September 1 due date. Over on the Sidney those fellows posted notices on a portal timber that they were doing their non-existent work two years at a time, which violated the law but let them skip hiking up there more often. Generally the Forest Service didn't care, unless someone tried to build a cabin or cut trees, which drew attention and could cause revocation of their rights. That happened down at Silverton when a fellow started to build a summer place next to scenic Deer Creek falls on the old St. Louis claim and lost it as a result. On unpatented claims the government retains all surface rights, including the timber, with only the subsurface ones under control of the miner.

After Enid and Ed Nordlund sold their cabin to me, Ed saw a useful strong back available to him. Thus he asked me to become his partner: I'd do all the physical work of clearing trail, marking boundaries, and developing their three claims, and he'd take care of filing the paper work down at the courthouse. That involved buying a blank form from a stationery store, filling it out, then sweet talking a female county employee at the counter into notarizing it for nothing. Ed was smooth at that. Thus I came to explore the area above the townsite and do the only maintenance on what is now the Glacier Basin trail from Dumas Street to its junction with the old Mine to Market Road. I also kept open the one up Glacier Basin to the Sidney and Wedge (along with picking blue huckleberries in season), and flagged the boundaries, which ran up to 600' x 1500' for a lode claim.

This changed when the Hunt brothers tried to corner the world silver market in 1980 and caused a massive spike in the prices of precious metals. Quickly the woods were filled with people nailing up location notices to mine gold. A new rush was on!

At Big Four the swamp was posted. At Boardman Lake an armed would-be miner drove off hikers and fishermen, shooting in the vicinity of one "trespasser" as a warning. A garbage bear chomped him, attracted by his messy camp, and that problem was solved saved for our having to go in and pack out the debris. At Monte the sight of a man packing a .44 Magnum revolver was not uncommon, while a retired mining engineer relocated all the old claims he could find from reading the history books. That included the Tyee, so I had to remind him chapter and verse about claim jumping rules. He agreed and later became a guest speaker for a class I taught on Monte history.

The Hunts failed after silver went over \$50 and gold \$800/oz. (equivalent to \$2,200 today). Location notices rotted away in the winter rains, and our mining ventures were sold to a fellow from Lake Stevens who let them lapse. It probably was just as well.

David A. Cameron, Ph.D.