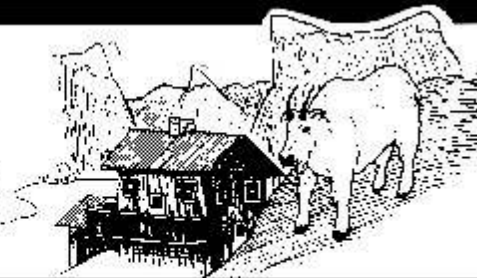


# THE INSIDE TRAIL



Voice of the Glacier Park Foundation ■ Winter 2005 ■ Volume XIX, No. 1

## *Remembering* J. Gordon Edwards

*Gordon is standing on Thunderbird Peak looking toward Kintla Perak after a storm on August 31, 1956. (Bob Megard Photo)*

### *Also in this issue:*

- *Finding Old No. 98*
- *Running the PBX in the 1950s*



# Farewell to Gordon Edwards

Dr. J. Gordon Edwards, author of *A Climber's Guide to Glacier National Park*, died on the trail on August 19, 2004. Dr. Edwards was 84 years old.

He was a legendary mountaineer and one of the most distinguished and famous figures in Glacier's history.

Dr. Edwards was setting out on a climb of Divide Mountain when he collapsed and died. He was with his wife Alice, his inseparable companion on Glacier's trails and peaks for more than 55 years. Their daughter Jane was leading a climb of Mt. Cannon at the time of her father's death.

Dr. Edwards leaves behind many hundreds of Glacier friends. Despite his fame, he was unassuming and wonderfully personable, always willing to discuss mountaineering with the greenest novice.

Dr. Edwards was a Glacier Park Foundation member from its beginning in 1980. He frequently wrote for *The Inside Trail*. This issue features a special memorial section dedicated to him.

*Gordon Edwards leading a group on the Ptarmigan Wall, as always the consummate host, freely sharing magical places with those of us who had the incredible good fortune to share time with this gracious host.*  
**(Dave Shoup) photo**

Glacier Park Foundation  
P.O. Box 15641  
Minneapolis, MN 55415  
[www.glacierparkfoundation.org](http://www.glacierparkfoundation.org)

#### Board of Directors:

Tessie Bundick  
Laura Chihara  
Janet Eisner Cornish  
Carol Repulski Dahle  
Joyce Daugaard  
Glen Elvig  
Lee Flath  
David Gilbertson  
John Hagen  
Einar Hanson  
Paul Hoff  
Mark Hufstetler  
Jeff Kuhn  
Linda Young Kuhn  
Rolf Larson  
Leroy Lott  
Greg Notess  
Mac Willemssen

#### Officers:

John Hagen, President  
Einar Hanson, First Vice President  
Carol Dahle, Vice President - Membership  
Mac Willemssen, Secretary  
Tessie Bundick, Historian  
Jim Lees, Treasurer  
Rolf Larson, Inside Trail Editor

The Glacier Park Foundation was formed by Glacier Park employees and visitors who have a deep love for this special place. The Foundation is committed both to the importance of wilderness preservation and to the importance of places like Glacier as classrooms where people can experience wilderness in intense meaningful ways, learning not only a love for the land, but also a respect that nurtures the skills necessary to preserve that land. The Foundation has a special interest in Glacier Park's history, traditions and visitor facilities.

The Inside Trail takes its name from the famous old trail which connected Glacier Park Lodge with the vanished chalets at Two Medicine, Cut Bank, and St. Mary. The name thus emphasizes the publication's focus on the lore and history of Glacier National Park. We invite submission of historical, scientific, or anecdotal articles, commentary, poetry, or artwork for publication in future issues.

# GLACIER BULLETIN BOARD

The Inside Trail *welcomes not only articles, but also brief letters and anecdotes. Here are a few which were sent to us recently.*

## Farewell to Mark Tyers

Mark Tyers' many friends and fans from Hootenanny days of 1973-75 will be saddened to know that this world lost a great musician last June, when he stepped out onto Heaven's Peaks, followin' the Drinkin' Gourd, after a long illness.

*Kathy Tyers (MGH 1973-75)*

## A Wedding Invitation

Fellow gearjammer Emily Slagle (#87) and I (#101) will be getting married on June 25. My thanks to Leroy Lott for recruiting me to be a jammer! Anyone that shows up at the wedding in an old red is welcome.

*Brad Dieringer (Gearjammer 2000)*

## Reunion with Red Bus #105

I spent two years of time-consuming labor acquiring gearjammer lists and organizing the first-ever decades-wide reunion of drivers of the red busses in June 2002. I was sitting in the lobby of Glacier Park Lodge listening to the dedication speeches when my wife, Billie, sent a messenger to get me to join her outside at the front driveway. To my great surprise, there sat my bus from 1950 (number 105), surrounded by a beautiful, large blue ribbon covered by a layer of thick white snow. With no coat, wearing my Ford-issued long sleeve "Once a Gearjammer, Always a Gearjammer" shirt, I commenced the photo celebration. What a wonderful Christmas in June!

*Leroy Lott (Gearjammer 1949-50)*

## The Ubiquitous "Reds"

My wife and I recently toured New England and stayed a couple of days at the Trapp Family Lodge near Stowe, Vermont. They have a gift shop (of course), and among other things we bought a CD of the Von Trapp children – who are carrying on the family musical tradition – singing Christmas songs. When we got home and were sorting through our purchases, I noticed something very familiar on the back of the Von Trapp CD. Sure enough, two pictures of the kids sitting and standing in front of – a Glacier Park red bus! We're everywhere!

*Paul Reinhard (Gearjammer 1959-61)*

## Generations in Glacier

Our granddaughter, Lindsey Fifield, worked the front desk at Many Glacier in 2003-04. Her mother Martha was at St. Mary in 1974. Betty (her grandmother) worked the dining room at Many in 1946-47. Betty's uncle, Olie Landkamer, drove one of the first buses to the Logan Pass Dedication in July 1933. That is *almost* four generations in Glacier!

*Leo and Betty Schneider.*

## Reunion Plans

Many Glacier employees of 1967-68-69 are planning a big reunion at Many in 2007. Plan to attend – let's bring back an alumni Hootenanny!

*Keith Bearden (Many Glacier '67-'68)*

## Challenging my Bus Number

I'm still around – now 84 years old! I hope to match my bus number (97) before I leave. I'm from the Glacier Park class of 1942 – how many are left?

*Joe Funk*

## A Fateful Coin Flip

I met my husband when he came hitchhiking through Glacier in 1952. He had flipped a coin to determine which route to take back to Vancouver, Canada. We married a year later.

*Harriet Stapleton (Glacier Park Lodge 1952)*

## Kudos to the Inside Trail

I've lived all over the U.S., relocating with my husband's job, and you have always been able to find me with *The Inside Trail*. For this I am eternally grateful. My one summer at Glacier was terrific and I would have come back but had already graduated from college and my parents thought it would be good to take me off the dole so I would be motivated to find a real job. Being the parent of a college freshman, I now see the wisdom of their ways.

I'm pitching long and hard for my kids to work at the park by telling stories of friends, hikes and fresh mountain air. This would also give me an excuse to come back and visit. Keep up the good work, keep sending info, and I'll keep reading it while dreaming of the day I retire and can take one of the red buses into the park and bore the pants off the new drivers with my tales of yesteryear. All my best from Missouri (formerly Texas (4 cities), Ohio, Louisiana and Alabama).

*Trisha (Wiggins) Lee (Many Glacier 1973)*

# Remembering Gordon Edwards

## *. . . An Anthology*

*Dick Schwab*

*Robert Megard*

*John Hagen*

*Edward Sanman III*

*Dave Shoup*

*Jana Hjelmseth Baker and  
Jacquie Hjelmseth Fennel*

*Rolf Larson*

*(Photo by Larry Burton. 1939-2004. Overlay route map is a drawing by Gordon Edwards from "A Climber's Guide to Glacier National Park," reprinted with permission of the Glacier Natural History Association)*

# Adventures with Gordon Edwards

By Dick Schwab (MGH 1947-52)

I think the best eulogy my family could make for our great friend, Gordon, is already in my Glacier diary, which records the happy and exciting days of grand adventure we enjoyed with him, Alice, and

Jane over the past thirty years. The following selection of diary entries give an immediate sense of Gordon as someone who had adventure built into him and who generated unforgettable memories for all who knew him. Spread over a generation of good times, these notes bear witness to the kindness, generosity, and humor of Gordon's lively spirit, which made all our hours with him so pleasurable and memorable. Whenever I read them over I smile and think how lucky we were to have known this great man.

*These notes bear witness to the kindness, generosity, and humor of Gordon's lively spirit, which made all our hours with him so pleasurable and memorable.*

## Red Grasshoppers and Red Argillite

Wed. 25 July 1973: Mark [our son, 12 years old], Gordon Edwards, John Mauff, some others, and I went up Gordon's route to Schwab Falls [on the stream flowing out of Snow Moon Lake]. From Snow Moon we climbed up a shoulder of Mt. Allen that looks over Cracker Lake. Gordon put Mark to work catching the red grasshoppers that matched the red Grinnell argillite on the slope. It was a wonderful scene: Mark and Gordon catching the

*The following selection of diary entries give an immediate sense of Gordon as someone who had adventure built into him and who generated unforgettable memories for all who knew him.*

grasshoppers and Gordon with his net and kill jar. We peered over the cliff to see the milky color of Cracker Lake straight down below.

## John Mauff's Fall

Wed. 9 July 1978: This was one of our more memorable expeditions in Glacier. Gordon, Jane, John Mauff, Joe Steffen, Randy Kay (the Many Glacier dance band leader) and I started out on a beautiful day, climbing to Snow moon first and then up the ridge to the east overlooking Cracker Lake. From there we ascended a cliffy pitch and got onto

the long, long upper ridge. I think this is what Gordon, Alice, and Jane have called strolling along the great "Tightrope in the Sky" which is a much higher ridge than any other on either side, offering magnificent views all over the Park.

As we were going up a fairly gentle slope with cliffy outcroppings, John, who was walking and talking with Joe Steffen, lost his footing, toppled over backward, and sustained a very nasty cut on his forehead. We all rushed down to administer first aid.

Perhaps it was Jane, in conjunction with someone else, who knew how to pull the skin on the skull together so the two sides of the gash matched well, and then secured the cut with a "butterfly" dressing that kept the wound tightly closed. John, with his amazing tolerance for pain and almost casual attitude toward accidents of this kind, sat quietly talking with us for awhile, taking some nourishment in the form of a candy bar or so, and then insisted we plod forward to the summit.

Gordon, worrying about going back down the cliffy side of Allen to Snow Moon, etc., decided we should cut across the great western scree slope of Allen on the Josephine side and make our way through that terrible but safe jungle of alders along a steep stream that eventually intersects the upper trail on the eastern side of

Lake Josephine. John, always game and amazingly stoical, although perhaps not quite with his usual sure-footedness, weathered the descent remarkably well. I went ahead crashing through the alders, finding routes around little cliffs along the waterfalls of the creek. It was a hot and sweaty operation. The alders served as cushions and obstacles to be pushed through, and so although it was quite safe it was also quite a travail to get down this way. To make things a bit worse, there was a

## Remembering Gordon Edwards *continued*

rumbling of thunder as a big storm seemed to be approaching us from the west, and occasionally we felt a heavy drop of rain. A real downpour would have made for bad footing, but with good luck we finally broke through to the trail before the storm hit. John casually suggested as we got to the trail that we all make for the grill to have a beer!

### The “High Rollers Club”

*Tues. 31 July 1979:* This was one of the all-time great adventures during our time in Glacier – and nearly a major misadventure. Gordon, Joe Steffen, Worth and Carolyn Moffat, and I set off with several others on a beautiful day on Gordon’s Helen Lake Overlook Goat Trail. This spectacular trip starts above and to the right of the Ptarmigan Tunnel, weaves around behind the Ptarmigan Wall, up and down, and along ledges through splendid country with the grandest views.

We were in sight of the amazing narrow goat trail high above Helen Lake on the way to Ahern Pass, when suddenly Carolyn tripped and started rolling down toward a cliff. Everyone was shouting at her to spread her arms. For a while, from the angle where I stood, I could see the top of her blond head as she sped along like a rolling pin toward a cliffy section. Joe was experimenting around like a human fly on a cliff above and was shouting at her to spread her arms, and Worth was rushing along after her. Suddenly she sort of flipped and ended up sitting dazed with her back against a rock outcropping. We were sure she must have broken some bones,

but she sustained only abrasions and tore a fingernail or so. Of course she was pretty much shocked. We fed her candies and checked her out. The problem was how to get her out of that very awkward place on the wrong side of the wall.

Gordon remembered that once he, Alice, and Jane had been over there, and the two ladies had some reason to get back early. They had climbed up through a cleft in the wall that did not look too hard to get to, and they made their way down the

other side to the Ptarmigan trail. We decided this is what we would have to do now, and after a bit of a rest we began the slow ascent toward the cleft. Everyone gathered close to Carolyn like worker bees around the queen, guiding her every step. But we did not know exactly what it would be like on the other side. Someone made the mistake of muttering, “I dread to think what we’ll see when we get to the top.” If Carolyn heard this she did not lose spirit, but seemed to pick up energy the more we climbed.

*Gordon leading a group along a Goat Trail on the Ptarmigan-Ahern route. The Edwards called this route the “Great Tightrope in the Sky”. Gordon, as always leading, is disappearing into the mist at the front, while Jane is at the rear wearing her trademark straw hat. This picture is from a different trip than the one mentioned in Dick’s story. However, Dick and his son Mark were also on this adventure. You can see their silhouettes in the middle of the group. (Rolf Larson photo)*

<p>When we got to the top it was clear that it would not be terribly difficult to descend if we engaged in careful route-finding. Gordon fashioned a sort of rope leash for Carolyn. He had her go ahead of him, while others stayed in front of her, and we began the adventure of getting down to the trail. My job was to be the route-finder, and it turned out that there were quite easy ways to get through the cliffy parts and then to traipse down the scree and steep grassy, bushy slope to the trail. It was amusing to look around and see Carolyn gamely making her way in front of Gordon who was holding onto the rope carefully so as not to jerk her off balance but to give her support if it were needed.</p> <p>We all were quite exuberant when we got back to the trail. And so it turned out to be an unforgettable and victorious day. We had a “Gator Ade Orgy” at Ptarmigan Falls, which was the first good water source on the way back. Worth broke out his endless supply of Gator Ade mix. We all congratulated Carolyn for her grit.</p> <p>In any case, Carolyn joined the ranks of the “High Rollers,” an informal club we established for those who had been involved in episodes such as this. There are many distinguished members among us. And most of us have qualified as well for the title of “Roloids,” who are those who help the High Rollers get down. One night Gordon, Alice, Jane, and I spent a good share of the evening over in the lounge of the hotel next to the dining room, looking out at</p>	<p>the sunset and the gathering night, dreaming up all sorts of details, officers, mottos, anthems, hymns, etc., for the High Rollers Club. The chaplain was to be called the Holy Roller, etc., etc. Alice took notes on it all, and we thought it was pretty amusing. Hymn: “When the Roll is Called Up Yonder.” Drinking song: “Roll Out the Barrel,” etc.</p> <p><b>Mass Climb of Mt. Clements</b>  <i>Wed. 18 July 1990:</i> Gordon led the Glacier Mountaineering Society on an amazing trip to the summit of Clements, along the new, longer, lower cliff-hanging goat trail on the north side that he found the previous year. There were forty-six people on this hike, and he and Jane managed to get them all through in good shape. I note on my calendar that it was a “perfect day.” Gordon is to be seventy-one years old this August, and he could still wear us all out!</p>	<p>to protect ourselves from the cold blasts. There are good views everywhere on this mountain, and we had a peek at Goat Lake down below, approaching the lip of the cliff above it carefully so as not to get blown over it.</p> <p>When we got down to the road at Sunrift Gorge, Gordon talked with a couple from Massachusetts who had taken the Siyeh Pass hike from Siyeh Bend, and he graciously offered the amazed husband a ride back to retrieve his car. I quietly let him know who Gordon was as we both got out of the car at Siyeh Bend, and he, having been a ranger elsewhere, was much impressed. A milkshake and charburgers revived us at St. Mary.</p> <p><b>Sparks on Mt. Siyeh</b>  <i>Fri. 24 July 1998:</i> A group from the Glacier Mountaineering Society made the huge expedition from</p>
<p><i>Whenever I read [my notes of these days],  I smile and think how lucky we were to have  known this great man.</i></p>		
	<p><b>A Gale on Goat Mountain</b>  <i>Tues. 26 July 1995:</i> I had a wonderful first climb of Goat Mountain with Gordon, Alice, and Jane in bright but exceptionally windy weather. We had a happy time talking and joking all day. The wind was so intense it nearly blew us flat at times. We had lunch behind a little fort of stones near the summit</p>	<p>Wynn to Siyeh – including Gordon and Alice. Gordon soon will be seventy-nine! They ran into a vary dicey electrical storm, with lots of sparks and crackling and buzzing on the summit of Siyeh, but no harm was done to them.</p>

# An Ascent of Thunderbird Mountain

*Suddenly, we were in bright sunlight. The wet rocks, crusted with colorful lichens, sparkled around us. (Bob Megard photo)*



*By Robert Megard (Many Glacier 1953-57)*

Thunderbird Mountain, an isolated rock spire in northwestern Glacier Park, attracted Gordon Edwards attention as a rare opportunity for a “first ascent” in Glacier. He thought it may have been overlooked, not climbed previously because it is located in such a remote part of the park and, at 8,800 ft, not especially high. From vantage points on neighboring peaks, he also saw that it might be a challenging climb, with no easy routes to the top; other climbers may have been repelled by steep cliffs that support the summit ridge on all sides and threaten severe exposure on potential climbing routes.

The weather was awful, but we were surprised to find that the ascent of Thunderbird was easy. The last part, through mist and fog, was along

a goat trail that followed a scree-covered ledge all the way across the mountain’s east face. We followed it until we found a wide, steep gully through the cliffs, and were surprised again when we scrambled to the top of the gully and found ourselves on the summit ridge. We had persisted during an exceedingly unpleasant day, enticed by the prospect of a first ascent. Our enthusiasm faded as we approached the summit, where we could see a cairn built by previous climbers.

Suddenly, we were in bright sunlight. The wet rocks, crusted with colorful lichens, sparkled around us. Below us, Thunderbird Glacier also was bathed in sunlight, but farther east, toward Mt. Cleveland, all peaks were still shrouded in black clouds. A lightning flash and an instantaneous thunderclap made us crouch low near the summit cairn. North of

us, beyond Boulder Pass, two of the highest mountains in Glacier Park, Kintla and Kinnerly peaks, were emerging from the mist. Snow fields on their southern flanks were sunlit, but their summits were still shrouded. Kinnerly resembled an erupting volcano as cloud appeared to be spewing from its conical summit. All was sunlit still farther north, as the waning storm moved eastward. We tried our best to capture the spectacle around us on film.

Gordon also thought our ascent of Thunderbird was especially memorable, but for different reasons, which he recounted in issue 21 of the Journal of the Glacier Mountaineering Society published in 1990, with words copied from his field notes for August 31 and September 1, 1956. He led the morning naturalist’s hike to Grinnell Glacier on August 31



and ran all the way from the glacier back to his cabin at the Swiftcurrent Ranger Station. He picked up Tom Landis (a fireguard) at Swiftcurrent and me (a bellhop) at Many Glacier Hotel and we headed north in his car, across the International Border to Waterton, for our assault on Thunderbird. The distributor failed and the car stalled, but we fixed it and arrived at Waterton too late for the afternoon boat we planned to take to Goat Haunt, at the far end of Waterton Lake. We planned to spend the night at the Goat Haunt Ranger Station and get an early start the next morning for the hike to Brown Pass and the climb up Thunderbird. Instead, we took in a movie and camped at Waterton. Then we took the morning launch, which battled fierce wind and whitecaps for 10 miles all the way to the head of the lake. We were now far behind schedule but determined to attempt the climb, so we “hiked eight miles to Brown Pass and climbed Thunderbird in snow squalls and tremendous winds”, as we reconnoitered the route he described later in his *Climber's Guide*.

We arrived back at Goat Haunt ranger station, soaking wet, about 8 pm, long after the last boat had left for the return trip across the lake back to Waterton. The ranger's wife gave us hot chocolate and crackers. We were told that there was a new telephone connection, so the ranger

***Kinnerly resembled an erupting volcano as cloud appeared to be spewing from its conical summit. (Bob Megard photo)***



called Waterton and located a man who had a boat. Slim was found in a bar, but agreed to retrieve us for a fee of \$5.00. After our return to Waterton, we drank coffee and milkshakes at the little café. About 11:00 pm, we left Waterton for the border crossing, which had closed for the night about two hours before we got there. Everything looked dark on both sides of the border, but we parked and went around to the American side, where we saw a light in a rear room. The boarder guard was in his pajamas, but he dressed, unlocked the gate, and let us across the border. We got home to Many Glacier Hotel and Swiftcurrent with more than enough time to get to work in the morning.

We probably didn't need to worry about losing our jobs if we had been late for work after our miserable

ascent of Thunderbird. It was too late in the season; few tourists were coming now, student employees were leaving, and the hotel was closing down for the season, although there was always the ominous possibility that we would not be invited back next year. Gordon and family probably left for California within a few days to begin another academic year at San Jose. I also left, to begin graduate school at the University of New Mexico, which I had decided on partly because Albuquerque was much closer to mountains than were Minneapolis, Madison or Ann Arbor.

Gordon's photographs of mountains really changed my life after I first saw them during one of his naturalist's lectures three years previously. I was a photographer for the college newspaper and news bureau. I had seen many landscape portraits of mountains on calendars and above sofas in mid-western living-rooms. Other naturalists in Glacier Park showed mostly pictures of pretty mountains viewed from valleys, but never had I seen such fantastic topography until Gordon's photography, in such vivid kodachrome colors, from vantage points so high above the rest of the world.

*[Gordon] led the morning naturalist's hike to Grinnell Glacier . . . ran all the way . . . back to his cabin at the Swiftcurrent Ranger Station. He picked up Tom Landis and me at Many Glacier Hotel and we headed north in his car . . . to Waterton, for our assault on Thunderbird.*

# Adventures Real and Vicarious with Gordon Edwards

*By John Hagen (Many Glacier 1970-80)*

I got to know Gordon Edwards during my first two summers working as a counter hand at Many Glacier Hotel. Gordon often stopped in the St. Moritz Room for an hour or two to write in the many notebooks that he kept on mountaineering and on alpine insects. He was a distinctive

out in Many Glacier's Lower Dorm. Employees in several rooms along the front of the building were being devoured at night by microscopic pests. Gordon identified them as bird lice which had crept in through the walls from swallows' nests up under the eaves. He dusted our beds with DDT, which promptly ended the attacks.

Like thousands of others, I've also had the pleasure of vicarious climbing with Gordon. The Climber's Guide has summoned up images of Glacier adventure for me in many places far from the Park. I especially remember days in law school, oppressed with long hours of studying cases, when I would refresh myself with five minutes of diversion in Gordon's book.

*I was struck from the outset by Gordon's generosity.*

I never lose my sense of awe at Gordon's section on Mt. St. Nicholas, Glacier Park's most dangerous peak. At one point he states: "A ledge

figure among the crowds of tourists, with his barrel chest, plain white T-shirt, and pleasant smile.

I was struck from the outset by Gordon's generosity. His famous Climber's Guide was out of print at the time, and it would be several years before a new edition appeared. Gordon took time out of his busy professorial schedule to xerox and mail me a copy during the off-season. I was impressed that he would take this trouble for an obscure young employee.

On one day off in June, a friend and I were drenched by hours of cold rain while taking a hike to Red Eagle Lake. Returning famished to St. Mary Lodge, we perversely ordered milk shakes. Gordon happened into the restaurant and noticed us there shivering and sipping on those shakes. He promptly packed us into his car and drove us back to Many Glacier, curtailing his other plans for the day.

On another occasion, Gordon came to the rescue in his scientific role. An infestation of what the employees believed to be bedbugs had broken

I vividly recall the day of Gordon's famous grizzly bear encounter. He was charged by a sow in the Morning Eagle Valley, and managed to fend the first attack off with his ice axe. In the subsequent scramble, however, his forearm was clenched between the bear's teeth. Gordon patted the bear's face and spoke gently, and the animal let him go. I was on duty as a bellman that afternoon when he walked nonchalantly into the hotel and showed me his swollen and bleeding arm.

I had the privilege of several outings with Gordon, Alice, and Jane, including a hike along the spectacular goat trails above Helen Lake on the Ptarmigan Wall. We improvised

leads eastward ... and gives access to an easier cliff which is, however, above a sheer drop of possibly 2,000 feet and is composed of extremely rotten rock slabs in a vertical wall. The handholds here are thin slabs of quartzite and red argillite not more than a couple of inches thick. They will not stand the strain of a horizontal pull. Here is a place to hold the mountain together as you climb it! Keep your elbows against the cliff and make sure the pull exerted on the holds is straight downward."

Likewise arresting is Gordon's account of the routes up Mt. Wilbur, all of which involve hair-raising perils above yawning chasms. Gordon famously gave the name of "Thin

*We improvised ice axes out of sharp stones to cross a steep snowfield on Ahern Pass.*

ice axes out of sharp stones to cross a steep snowfield on Ahern Pass. On another occasion, I had the benefit of following orange ribbons that Gordon had tied on the flanks of Mt. Allen to mark a safe route to Snow Moon Lake.

Man's Pleasure" to one of these routes. As he describes it: "[Climb the small, open chimney just south of the prominent ridge... About 80 feet up, this chimney pinches together and ends in a peculiar cavity beneath an overhang. In the ceiling of

## Remembering Gordon Edwards *continued*

this cave is a hole about 2 feet square that gives access to a protected gully above it. The climbers who follow the leader here should be roped, and will certainly be exposed to a trickle of gravel during their ordeal in the cavity.”

The Climber’s Guide is full of colorful details: the lightning-mangled

can that held the summit register on Going-to-the-Sun Mountain; the whimpering porcupines that make it difficult to sleep at Gunsight Lake; the rocky blotch like a backwards E that marks the route over Iceberg Notch; the mysterious swarming of ladybird beetles on top of Mount Allen. Especially memorable is his account of “the Specter of the Brock-

en” in the section on Heaven’s Peak. This rare apparition (named after a mountain in Germany) occurs when the westering sun casts a climber’s shadow, with a surrounding rainbow halo, onto lowlying clouds.

Gordon’s departure is wrenching for family and friends, but his legacy certainly will continue to enrich the Glacier Park experience for countless people. And I hope to see him again. The prophet Isaiah describes the Kingdom of Heaven with images of a mountain. It’s pleasant to imagine climbing with Gordon once again on celestial peaks.

*The Climber’s Guide has summoned up images of Glacier adventure for me in many places far from the Park.*

*Gordon ascending a gully on Going-to-the Sun Mountain. He was always at home when on a mountain. (Rolf Larson photo)*



*Gordon and Jane traversing one of the many goat trails he ‘sniffed’ out over his half-century of exploration in Glacier Park. (Rolf Larson photo)*

# Childhood Memories of Gordon Edwards

*By Edward Sanman III (Many Glacier, Swiftcurrent, and GPI Auditor, 1964-72)*

I first met Gordon Edwards in June 1954 at the Many Glacier Ranger Station. He was a seasonal Ranger Naturalist and my father was a seasonal Ranger at the Many Glacier Entrance Station. I was 7 years old and this was our family's 3rd summer in Glacier and 1<sup>st</sup> summer at Many Glacier. The Edwards family were living in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cabin to the right of the Ranger Station, and we were living in the 1<sup>st</sup> cabin to the left. Their daughter Jane was only about 1 or 2 years old.

The cabin we lived in had 3 rooms (bedroom/living room, bathroom, and kitchen). The kitchen had a wood burning stove with oven and a small refrigerator. The stove provided heat for the cabin and had a special set of water pipes that connected the stove to a water tank to provide hot water.

When we arrived in Many Glacier and found out about this housing assignment, we thought we were in heaven. The previous two summers we had been in Apgar in the old Nyberg Cabin Camp. Those cabins only had one room, a tap with cold running water (no sink, throw the rinse water out the front door), wood stove, no refrigerator, and a communal outhouse (with separate men's and women's sides), 2 wash tubs (for bathing and washing clothes), and 2 electric lights on one switch. Our cabin at Many Glacier even had a telephone (hand crank) connected to the Many Glacier Hotel switchboard. The phone was

right over the head of my bed. Each of the 3 rooms had an electric light powered by the hotel generator below Swiftcurrent Falls.

Given the room layout of the cabins, entertaining had to be a family affair — there was no separate room that the children could be sent to. When the Edwards entertained, they found that the very small pantry (off of the kitchen and next to the back door) was big enough for a make shift cradle for their daughter.

I remember that Gordon was an avid hiker and mountain climber. Hiking was a family affair and the Edwards had an early version of a backpack for carrying an infant. I even remember a Postcard for sale in the Hotels showing the Edwards hiking in Glacier (I think it was along the Garden Wall) carrying their daughter in the backpack.

Gordon was best remembered for his mountain climbing in Glacier. Each

From 1955 to 1959, my father was stationed at other locations around Glacier and so I lost track of Gordon. I met him again in 1968 when I was working at Swiftcurrent Motor Inn as the Night Auditor. Gordon would visit Glacier for several weeks each summer, usually staying in the Many Glacier Campground. He would come over to the lobby of Swiftcurrent Motor Inn in the evenings and use one of the writing tables for several hours. I also saw Gordon occasionally in 1971 and 1972 at Swiftcurrent Motor Inn when I was working as the Roving (Raving) Auditor.

In talking to Gordon, I learned that there was an extensive network of animal trails at the higher elevations that could be used by people. Gordon offered to show me a path between Many Glacier Hotel and the cirque which held Snow Moon and Falling Leaf Lakes. I had studied the government topographical map and

---

*He would come over to the lobby of Swiftcurrent Motor Inn in the evenings and use one of the writing tables for several hours.*

---

summer he would climb various mountains and peaks in Glacier. He kept notes about various routes to the tops and which ones were preferable. His enthusiasm for climbing in Glacier got him into trouble when he painted a "THIS WAY UP" sign on the side of a mountain. The Park Service was not amused and made him remove the sign. A few years later, Gordon published his Glacier Park *Climber's Guide*.

looked at the terrain and could not see any easy way to get to these lakes. Gordon indicated that there was a mountain sheep trail along a ledge on the side of Mt Allen leading into the high cirque.

I regret that we never found the time to take that hike. I will always remember Gordon as a person who enjoyed talking with people, loved Glacier National Park and was always enthused about hiking in Glacier.

# A Thank You to Gordon Edwards

*By Jana Hjelmseth Baker (Many Glacier 1980-81) and Jacquie Hjelmseth Fennel (Many Glacier 1981)*

Dear Dr. Edwards,

You may not remember us, but we are two sisters from Missoula, Montana whom you graciously invited to climb Mt. Reynolds with you and your lovely daughter Jane in the summer of 1981. We know we've been remiss in thoroughly and properly thanking you for the honor of making our first Glacier mountain ascent so memorable. And yet, we're quite sure we really had no idea then how fortunate and blessed we were to accompany you that day.

Jacquie happened to wait on you and Jane in the Many G. dining room the night before the climb. She

recalls you both being so kind and interesting. Jane was especially encouraging of Jacquie and her music. Before you left, you invited her and the tag-along little sister to join you. What luck – we happened to be off the next day. We accepted without a thought that we had never really climbed a mountain that took more than just walking to the summit.

So many of the details are foggy for both of us now but the overall day is etched in our memories – glorious! We're sure there were moments of internal panic at various difficult spots we encountered – chimney chutes that we had to scramble up and down and extremely narrow goat trails, to name a few. But we primarily remember the day being dominated by great conversation,

laughter and an ease that we haven't experienced since. Dr. Edwards, you made our climb feel like a nice easy walk to Red Rock Falls. That was your gift to us and to so many you climbed with in your life. You loved your craft and did it so seemingly without much effort that you inspired generations to do the same.

We continue to have a passion for hiking and climbing with our families and friends. It is marvelous to make our way over the pass when we get to Glacier and feast our eyes on Mt. Reynolds. We delight in the rich experience you so generously gave to us. We didn't know how fortunate we were then, but we do now. Thank you for your extraordinary life and how it touched us all.

*Jana and Jacquie join  
Gordon and Jane  
on the traverse across the  
face of Mount Reynolds.  
(Photo courtesy of  
Jana Hjelmseth Baker  
and Jacquie Hjelmseth  
Fennel)*



# Gordon at Swiftcurrent

By Dave Shoup (*Swiftcurrent, Many Glacier 1973-76*)

As a waiter for two summers at Swiftcurrent Motor Inn in 1974 and 1975, I fondly remember Gordon drinking coffee most mornings with the local “mountaineering gang,” talking about the next climb or hike or past experience. Gordon always had time to give employees advice on our climbing expeditions. My most notable memory was hiking with Alice and Gordon on the Ptarmigan Wall goat trail from the Ptarmigan Tunnel to Ahern Pass. He took particular interest in a climb several

of us made up Mt. Merritt in 1974, giving us a new canister for climber registration to leave at the summit.

One evening, Gordon held a Glacier slide show in the Swiftcurrent Coffee Shop. I vividly recall him detailing his encounter with a bear near Morning Eagle Falls — talking gently to calm the bear as it bit deeply

into his hand. On his hike out, he took a picture of his enormously swollen hand, which he shared with the audience that evening.

He always had time to hear stories of our “adventures”. (I know mine certainly paled in comparison). We all owe many, many thanks to Gordon for his *Climber’s Guide*.

---

*I fondly remember Gordon drinking coffee most mornings with the local “mountaineering gang,” talking about the next climb or hike or past experience.*

---

# Paying Tribute to Gordon Edwards

By Rolf Larson (*MGH 1975, 1977-80, NPS 1981-1985*)

Gordon Edward was larger than life. Glacier National Park defined him for better than 50 years of his life, and in turn, he defined us who shared his passion for Glacier’s mountains. In all, he influenced three generations of climbers. A strong case can be made that he defined the sport of climbing in Glacier. He defined how we see mountains, how we relate to the landscape and how we relate to each other as people who use Glacier’s backcountry, especially climbers.

He exhibited extraordinary powers of observation, intense powers of understanding and a subtle ability to

understand and communicate with the creatures and natural elements that surrounded him in Glacier. “Look for goat trails,” he would tell us.

I met Gordon during my first summer working in Glacier. I was just another young person caught by the lure of Glacier’s magical peaks. Though surrounded by throngs of friends, when he sensed my passion for climbing, he welcomed me, as he did hundreds of others during his half century in Glacier.

I treasure the memories of times spent with him and his family. I will always remember the expanding meals at Swiftcurrent Motor Inn

when all were welcome to join the group and share in lively conversations. I will remember the thrill of watching him on the slopes. He had a tendency to always look up slope, savoring the adventure and assessing possibilities at each ledge or turn. I will always marvel at the way he knew what was going to happen next, be it a pending storm or a potential hazard. It was as if he knew something the rest of us could only guess at.

The overriding perception that Gordon brought to the sport of climbing in Glacier National Park was his love of Glacier and his passion for the sport of climbing. He enjoyed the entire mountain environment and attempted to share that broader enthusiasm with all of us who seek guidance from his climbing guide. He guided both our hearts as well as our hands and feet, sharing with us not only secrets of Glacier’s high

---

*A strong case can be made that he defined the sport of climbing in Glacier.*

---

places but a wealth of myth and history that have been attached to this special place by people whose lives were also touched by this passion to explore and exuberance to celebrate. No matter how significant or impressive our personal accomplishments, we as backcountry users in Glacier Park are only following in Gordon's

footsteps. Without his intuition, intelligence and gracious spirit, many, if not most of us would never have experienced the thrill and camaraderie of many great days spent in the mountains, and memories worthy of being passed on to anyone who will listen to our personal tales.

I would personally like to thank him. He made a better person of me. I think there are many of us who share this feeling. We were privileged to know this man.

We now experience the passing of the torch. The world of climbers in Glacier has moved from those of us who know this man to those who knew him. It is a tragedy that nobody else will have the privilege to experience this very special man as we did.

May we all have the strength and wisdom to pass on the lessons this man shared with us.

*He defined how we see mountains, how we relate to the landscape and how we relate to each other as people who use Glacier's backcountry, especially climbers.*



***Gordon Edwards describes the route up Iceberg Notch. He always found time to both share his knowledge and to listen to the experiences of others. (Rolf Larson photo)***

# Running the PBX in the 1950's



*Carolyn Anderson Woodbury, Kay Doherty Roam and Lisa Ambrose at Many Glacier front desk, 1959. (Kay Doherty Roam photo)*

*by Kay Doherty Roam (Glacier Park Lodge 1958, Many Glacier Hotel 1959)*

I did not want to work at Glacier National Park that summer of 1958, after

Western Star. The deal was that you had to work through the summer to be given the return half—if you left early you paid for it yourself. I recall that compensation for working six days per

On about the third morning, while doing my duty in the dorm bathroom, I overheard the hotel manager's secretary tell a friend that they were going to have to send back to St. Paul for a new PBX operator because one that they had hired was already homesick and headed for the barn—hang the cost of the ticket. I came boiling out of the stall and hollered, "No, no, I am a trained PBX operator and would love to have the job!" She looked me up and down and then instructed me to report for duty at 7:00 the next morning. It was absolutely the best job in the park. You were right in the middle of everything, seated next to the room clerk at the front desk. You were the first to know everybody's busi-

*I did not want to work at Glacier National Park that summer of 1958, after finishing my sophomore year at the University of Minnesota.*

finishing my sophomore year at the University of Minnesota. It would mean giving up my cushy room-and-board job working on the switchboard in the dorm, and that would mean moving back home—perish the thought. But stressed by two jobs and a seventeen credit hour load as a chemistry major, I twice that spring ended up in the University Hospital. That did it for Mom and Dad. One of Dad's good friends was a golf buddy of Don Knutson, whose company then managed the park hotels. Dad hauled me to Mr. Knutson's office for an interview—didn't trust me to go on my own—and I walked away with a signed contract to be a hall cleaner at Glacier Park Lodge and one-half of a round trip ticket to East Glacier on the Great Northern's

week was 85 cents an hour, plus room and board and the ticket.

Upon arrival I was told that I had been upgraded to room cleaner—no additional money, alas. My training took just long enough to clean one room,

*I walked away with a signed contract to be a hall cleaner at Glacier Park Lodge and one-half of a round trip ticket to East Glacier on the Great Northern's Western Star.*

with emphasis on hospital sheet corners on the beds. I still remember that the drinking glasses in the bathroom were encased in tidy little glassine bags—after having been rinsed out in the sink. So much for sanitation.

ness. The split shifts were 7-noon and 6-11 PM one day and noon-6 PM the next, which were ideal for studying on the job and exploring the area when off.



## Running the PBX *continued*

*“No, no, I am a trained PBX operator and would love to have the job!” She looked me up and down and then instructed me to report for duty at 7:00 the next morning.*

When she was busy I would assist the room clerk and the most famous person I checked in was Tennessee Ernie Ford, whom I recall as a lovely gentleman. When it wasn't busy I could watch what was going on in the lobby and was occasionally known to pick bark off the ponderosa log pillar located next to the PBX board.

Life in the park was a revelation. I discovered mountains, hiking, fresh air, hitchhiking, the ability to make friends. I gained so much weight on the good food that I had to send Mom an SOS for some larger clothes. I learned that the ultimate status symbol was to have a gearjammer boy friend and to prove it by ironing his red cowboy shirt in the dorm front room, preferably in the evening when there were the most to

notice. I knew I had arrived when I was handed a shirt that needed attention.

I loved being able to ride on the busses on days off when they weren't full, and in short order had visited all the other hotels in the park and Prince of Wales at Waterton. Two or three of us could ride the bus to Logan Pass, hike over Swift-current Pass to Many, and then safely hitch a ride back home. I never did get stranded or miss having my own wheels. I fell in love with the smell of the pines when they were damp and years later bought a house mostly because the pines in the yard had been rained on the night before. I had never noticed wildflowers, and their color and variety and profusion were overwhelming.

That summer was over in flash, but before collecting my train ticket I signed a contract to work the board the next summer at Many Glacier. Oh, my—even better, deep in the heart of the park. One of my best Many memories was those talented folks who presented the musical shows in the evening. Who could ever forget DeAnna Dougherty belting out “I'm just a girl who can't say no” in “Oklahoma!” Or the three bellmen who, in their lederhosen, introduced us to the tunes of the Kingston Trio. Or my roommate, Margie Ladd, a bagpiper from the University of Iowa whose plaintive tones could make a magpie cry. Me, too, because it usually took the two of us the better part of an hour to get her into her regalia, with time out to crawl around on the floor for the missing contact lens or two.

Carolyn Anderson was the room clerk I worked with and I looked on with approval as Bill Woodbury, boatman for Mr. Burch, courted her. I still am in contact with them and, in fact, it was they that introduced me to the Glacier Park Foundation. Because the U of M began classes later in the year than most schools, I was able to stay on to help close down the hotels. One day I received a call that there was a fire somewhere near the hotel with heavy smoke. Doing some research I found that Mr. Burch had ordered a new boat for the next year and had decided that the best way to get rid of the old one was simply to burn it out on the lake. So subsequent callers could simply be told that the boat was being deliberately burned. I still think there are some who disbelieved me.

My red-cowboy-shirted jammer of the previous summer, Rhodes Perry (anyone have any idea what became of him?—he was a medical student at Baylor University in Texas while at Glacier) came back for a visit and gathered a group of friends for a more sober and sedate re-



*Red bus at Chief Mountain Customs; Jan Franke, Kay Doherty Roam, John Duchow, Jeanne Stokes. (Kay Doherty Roam photo)*

## Running the PBX *continued*

union at the Swiftcurrent campground. He and I were at one point leaning against his car while waiting for the coffee pot on the campfire to boil, when suddenly the car began to shake. Thinking maybe a bear was pushing on it, we pulled out our flashlights and explored the area to no avail. When we returned to the dorm, we learned of the Hebgen earthquake down in Yellowstone.

I had a funny experience during the late 1960's. I ended up marrying my high school boyfriend and one summer while we were living in Oregon we headed to Minneapolis to visit the folks. We decided to really splurge with a night at Many, rather than staying in the campground. After dinner we got the three little boys to sleep and then decided to



**Margie Ladd in 1959. (Kay Doherty Roam photo)**



**The chorus of "Oklahoma!" in 1959, Dee Daugherty in stripes. (Kay Doherty Roam photo)**

slip down to the bar just off the lobby for a nightcap. It was dark and crowded and as I plowed my way through the throng looking for a couple of empty chairs a hand reached out and grabbed my slacks. Ready to swat whomever was being so fresh I looked down and to my utter amazement saw my old bagpiper roommate Margie sitting there grinning. Of course we joined her and her dentist husband and then exchanged Christmas cards for years.

In the summer of 2003, I signed up for a ten-day tour of Lewis and Clark sites

trip mates were well aware that this was a much-anticipated homecoming for me. When the bus turned west at Babb and the beloved mountains began to come into view, I breathed "Oh, they're even bigger than I remembered." What a wonderful moment! Compounded by the fact that the tour director had asked the hotel to give me the best room in the place rather than the old coal bin usually assigned to single travelers. A big corner room with wonderful views over Swiftcurrent Lake. I had died and gone to heaven. But I managed to wake

*"Oh, they're even bigger than I remembered."*

in Montana. The deciding factor was the ride over Logan Pass in one of the new jammer busses and a night at Many Glacier. By the time we got there my

up early enough the next morning to head out with the trusty camera in hand and take a couple of rolls of the sunrise.

After 67 years. . .

# Finding Old No. 99

(Photo courtesy of  
John B. Turner)



might be at East Glacier, so down the road we all eagerly went.

Arriving at East Glacier, we soon discovered the 75th anniversary display in the lobby, and were thrilled to find Dad in the group photo of the original 1937 Gearjammers! All of the

By John B. Turner

I would like to share with your readers my family's memorable experiences at Glacier, which span more than 60 years.

My parents, John F. Turner, of Texas, and Mary T. Turner of Minnesota, met at Glacier while working summer jobs in the park. Dad was a Gearjammer from 1936 to 1939, and he was the first driver of bus #99 when the new fleet was first introduced in the summer of 1937. He later became the Dispatch Agent at East Glacier, during the summers of 1940 and 1941. As Dad fondly remembers, he noticed the name "Mary Treacy" of Minnesota on the incoming train manifest, and became determined to meet her. As fate would have it, Mom got a job across the lobby as a cashier, and so their friendship began. He eventually proposed to her at the East Glacier train station, and they were married in 1942. They moved to California, where they raised five children: Byron, Ann, Judy, Sara and David. They have returned to the Park a few times over the years, including the memorable summer of 1989 when our family held a reunion at Waterton. During the '89 reunion, we looked everywhere for Dad's beloved bus #99, but alas with no luck, and we finally settled on taking our family photo in front of a different red bus.

For many months, all five siblings and the grand kids had been planning another reunion at our brother David's house in nearby Whitefish, MT. Mom's health had been failing for several years, and Dad had been house bound for much of that time caring for her, so it was not an option for them to attend

the 2004 gathering. As the reunion approached, Mom's health deteriorated, and sadly, she passed away in June, bringing us all together a month early for a more somber reunion. After the funeral, we all decided to follow through with the planned July reunion and tried to encourage Dad to join us, since his burden of care giving had come to an end. But due to his 89 years and a few nagging ailments, he told us he did not think it was wise to make the trip.

In July, we all congregated in Whitefish as planned, only to unexpectedly discover that on his own initiative, Dad had gone on-line, booked his own ticket and flown to the reunion, much to the surprise and delight of us all. To accommodate this happy development, we decided to change the whole focus of the sibling reunion: we started to plan a trip to Glacier in hopes of finding Dad's old bus #99. We wanted to recreate our family photo from 15 years ago, only this time in front of the right red bus.

We left Whitefish and began our search for #99 at the West Glacier Lodge, where we encountered several of the old buses. Dad reminisced with some of the current "Jammers" while our cameras clicked. We then set out over Logan Pass as Dad told tales along the way, stopping for lunch and more stories at St. Mary's Junction, but no sighting of #99. After lunch, we went to Many Glacier and met "Jammer" David Eglsaer (also from Texas) and Joe and Geri Kendall, who have worked at the park since 1949. We were all spellbound as the four of them exchanged stories of their years working at Glacier. During the conversation they suggested that old #99

other pictures and memorabilia on display brought out many more stories and memories from Dad. By then, we were all stunned at the sequence of events that was making this such a magical day for the family. But there was still no sign of old #99.

As we were about to wrap up the day, one final surprise found us in front of the Lodge: one of Dad's granddaughters met another driver named Brock Haley (from Atlanta). As it turns out, Brock is the current driver of bus #99, and so our magical day improbably continued as Dad and Brock exchanged more wonderful stories. Brock graciously listened to Dad, and his love and pride for the Park, and his willingness to share it with his passengers, were evident in all his words. Brock told us he could arrange for a shuttle bus to take us all down to the lot where #99 was parked for the rest of the day. Brock opened it up and let Dad sit in the drivers seat as we all posed for photos...Brock took turns shooting with about a dozen different cameras so that we could all go home with our own memories.

It was a truly memorable day, and we cannot thank the Park and its employees enough for going out of their way to make it so special for Dad and his family. He has raved about his days at Glacier for so many years, and it was so heartwarming to encounter your present day employees who still take such pride in their work and in sharing the Park with its many visitors. We look forward to visiting the Park again in years to come. Please pass our sincere thanks along to everyone who made our 2004 reunion so memorable.



*Gordon Edwards was by profession a scientist. By style he was a naturalist and teacher. In this picture, he takes a moment to rest and enjoy a hard-earned perch atop the Ptarmigan Wall. (Rolf Larson photo)*

