

# THE INSIDE TRAIL



Voice of the Glacier Park Foundation ☐ Summer 2009 ☐ Volume XXIV, No. 2

## TALES OF THE LODGES, BOATS AND TRAILS



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*The Many Glacier Hotel boat dock on a still quiet summer evening during the 1970s. (Paul Meierding photo.)*

# Centennial Generates Projects, Reunions

Glacier National Park's centennial observance in 2010 is fast approaching. Numerous ceremonies, activities, reunions and events are in preparation. The Park's Centennial Committee and coordinator Kass Hardy have invested countless hours in these various projects. Some will be underway this summer (including displays of the Official Centennial Art Exhibit). For details, see the Centennial web page at [www.glaciercentennial.org](http://www.glaciercentennial.org).

Of special interest to *Inside Trail* readers are a couple of publishing projects. The Centennial Committee is publishing a volume entitled *100 Years, 100 Stories*. The Glacier Park Foundation (independently of the Committee) will publish a commemorative edition of *Inside Trail* stories, poems and artwork. This volume (edited by Ray Djuff and Chris Morrison), will be a great treasury of

the lore of Glacier Park.

A number of reunions are being planned by former Glacier employees. The first of these is scheduled for July 2009, for former employees of Lake McDonald Lodge. (See the notice on page 13.) Swiftcurrent employees are planning a reunion for Aug. 12-19, 2010. (Interested people should contact Dan Maturen at [dmaturen@gmail.com](mailto:dmaturen@gmail.com).)

2010. (See the back cover of this issue.)

The Many Glacier reunion will feature a Centennial Hootenanny. That event (and the Serenade two nights later) will celebrate the musical traditions of the hotel, the long-time leadership of Ian Tippet, and the ongoing programs there. (See "The New Hoots" on page 3.) Additional performances are planned for Glacier

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*We look forward to covering these and other events of the Centennial for our readers. Thanks to all those who are generously contributing to the planning of these events!*

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Gearjammers will hold a reunion at Glacier Park Lodge from Sept. 8-10, 2010. (For details, see the website at [www.glacierjammers.com](http://www.glacierjammers.com).) Many Glacier Hotel employees will hold a reunion from July 29 to Aug. 1,

Park Lodge and Lake McDonald Lodge.

We look forward to covering these and other events of the Centennial for our readers. Thanks to all those who are generously contributing to the planning of these events!

## Glacier Park Foundation

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*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.*

# THE NEW HOOTS

## AT MANY GLACIER HOTEL

*2008 Hootenanny musicians performing "House of the Rising Sun". (Emily Trapp photo.)*



*2008 Hootenanny musicians performing "House of the Rising Sun": John Zimmers, Julia Taylor, James Hackethorn, Emily Trapp, Nick Paliewicz, David Wilson (Emily Trapp photo) (Emily Trapp photo.)*

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*We had a dynamic, fun staff of employees who played guitar and sang, a flutist, an actress, and several pianists besides me.*

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*By Emily Trapp (Many Glacier 2005-09)*

Several Montana Springs ago, a beautiful picture of the mountains of Many Glacier caught my eye. It read something like, "Want to play music in the mountains this summer?" Although a lifetime Montana resident, I had only visited Glacier Park as a baby in a backpack. I had to seize this opportunity! Amidst wrapping up my first-year college studies, I holed up in a practice room for a couple of days to pull together a demo CD. Five years later I can

happily say that Many Glacier Hotel is still my summer home.

In my initial summer, I came up to the park early to spend two weeks playing piano at Glacier Park Lodge before Many Glacier Hotel opened. Even during my time at East Glacier, I visited the Swiftcurrent Valley a few times. My first trip to Many Glacier was on my 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. We went fly-fishing at Redrock Lake, where I caught a big birthday fish! I was stimulated by all of the colors around me, and when we drove by

the hotel and I gasped for this truly magical wonderland.

My first summer in Glacier brought significant musical growth. On my first night entertaining, I realized very quickly that four hours of playing the piano was a lot more than I thought! My sight-reading abilities quickly advanced and I started to understand what sort of music tourists actually want to hear. I have expanded to playing a variety of styles from Ragtime to Jazz to Folk, and still enjoy performing classical repertoire. I've acquired quite a fetish for sheet music, and have quite the expansive collection!

Moving to Many Glacier is like moving home. I entertain for two hours in the Lobby as guests come

*(Continued from previous page)*

and stretch out from their hikes, and play later in the Dining Room and Interlaken Lounge. I enjoy playing requests, meeting traveling musicians, and playing with veteran employees. I am so thankful to have the opportunity to play for people from all over the world!

Everything changed in my second summer, during a reunion for past employees of MGH. I was deeply inspired by the legacy of Mr. Ian Tippet, and enjoyed meeting many individuals who have worked and played in the hotel over the years. The Hootenanny and Dining Room jam session were so fun! I thought, "We can do that!"

We had a dynamic, fun staff of employees who played guitar and sang, a flutist, an actress, and several pianists besides me. I knew that we could have a successful variety show. The next week, we pulled it off! The video from that first "New Hoot" will always be a treasure.

Entertaining one and all with his original tales about Huckleberries and Washing Machines, the great bellman Levi Webb continued the Hootenanny tradition the next summer, with the help of Mark Stokstad. I was in Missoula taking summer school to catch up for my recent transfer of schools. I missed Many Glacier horribly, and knew I had to return.

The summer of 2008 was by far the most exciting and expansive in our musical endeavors. My first night back was my first real jam session ever! It was sure to be an amazing summer, as I kept spotting more guitar cases and bright eyes. The beautiful violinist Julia Taylor was on

board, and her father, Rick Taylor, and Milton Crofts made a visit to help us get things together. Rick and Milt helped kick off the summer by leading some Hoot jams, teaching us songs, and sharing stories. They brought with them a sound system generously donated by the Glacier Park Foundation. Last summer brought a completely new meaning of playing music with others, and those times practicing in the Lucerne Room are truly priceless to me.

Our Hootenannies were eclectic, with large programs boasting Turkish soccer cheers, hypnotizing guitar solos by Onur Küçükahmetler, Russian gymnastic dance, the GP Boat Co. Band, the angelic voice of Noelle Wanchic, and poetry by a charming Jammer. We had many fun group numbers like "House of the Rising Sun," "This Land is Your Land," and Tex Dyer's "Comin' Back to the Rockies" (passed on to us by Rick Taylor), with naturalist and cel-

list Diane Steele Sine, an employee of MGH during the musical Tippet years. "Let it Be" from the Beatles became our sort of summer theme. It was the finale to most Hoots, with everyone singing and playing instruments. Throughout the summer, it was exciting as performers came out of the groundwork, shy in the beginning, but confident to perform by August. The amount of talent in the employees is truly incredible!

With Hootenannies every week, the sense of community is strong at Many Glacier, and we can be proud of the tag "Showcase of the Rockies." I am eager to meet the staff of 2009 and start making music together. We'd love to have you join us Sunday Evenings!

*Emily Trapp is the pianist at Many Glacier Hotel. She is a native of Helena, MT and a recent graduate of the University of Montana in Music Education, Piano Performance and Pedagogy.*



# Art Burch and the Boats of Glacier Park



Art Burch, 1929-2008.  
Photo courtesy of  
Billy Ann Burch).

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

I first met Art Burch on a stormy day in the spring of 1970. I was a new employee at Many Glacier Hotel. Art and his boat crew were preparing for the new season. An emergency arose when the *Morning Eagle*, the big motor launch on Lake Josephine, broke loose from its moorings and got broadside to the wind in shallow water.

Art hustled over to the hotel, rounded up about twenty off-duty employees, loaded us onto the *Chief Two Guns*, and sped across Swiftcurrent Lake with us. We raced over the path to Lake Josephine, waded into the lake, and lined up along the beam of the *Morning Eagle* in icy water up to our waists. We arduously pushed the boat back to the dock against the force of the wind and waves. Art expertly directed the

maneuvers amid driving rain, then took us back to the hotel and bought us all hot chocolate or coffee.

This episode captured Art's fine qualities of leadership and resourcefulness. He displayed these skills through decades of maintaining the balky boats and running them in Glacier's wild weather.

Art's father, Arthur J. Burch, bought the east-side boat concession in 1938 from the colorful "Captain Billy" Swanson. (Captain Billy built many of Glacier's launches -- the *DeSmet*,

*International*, *Little Chief*, and *Sinopah*). Art was ten years old when his father bought the concession, so he grew up learning to maintain and operate boats.

In 1953, Art married Billy Ann, his wife for 55 years. Soon afterward, Art bought the west-side boat concession (the *DeSmet* on Lake McDonald). In 1967, he acquired the east-side concession (on Two Medicine, St. Mary, Swiftcurrent and Josephine Lakes) from his father. Art and Billy Ann raised four children (Art Jr., Scott, Kathy, and

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Susan), spending winters in Kalispell and summers in the boat crew quarters at Lake McDonald and then at Swiftcurrent Lake.

In the winters, Art built boats at his shop in Evergreen. He built the *Chief Two Guns* for Swiftcurrent Lake, several versions of the *Curly Bear* for St. Mary Lake, the *Wanda Mae*, *Roddy Paul*, and *Connie Marlene* for Waterton Lake, large boats for Yellowstone Park and Jackson Hole, and rowboats for Glacier's rental fleet. He also trucked the Glacier Park motor launches down to the shop for periodic maintenance.

side, with its superstructure torn off and with chunks of the boathouse driven through its hull. The Burches salvaged life preservers and other items, then roped the hull to trees on the distant shore and waited for the ice to melt.

Spring left the shallow water at the site "an undulating mass of debris" (trees, chunks of the building, and other flotsam) as remembered by Scott Burch. The leaking *Two Guns* floated amid the mess, with about two feet of freeboard. The hull was black with spilled engine oil.

Lake had to be used.)

The Burches brought the *Little Chief* from Two Medicine to Swiftcurrent Lake to fill the *Two Guns*' place there. The *Two Guns* itself went to Rising Sun, where for the rest of the summer it ran (on sunny days) with no superstructure and tourists riding on open benches. Eventually it was refitted and returned to its former place on Swiftcurrent Lake.

### **An International Adventure**

Scott Burch recalls another colorful tale of his father. The launch *International*, on Waterton Lake, was sold by Glacier Park, Inc. (GPI) to the Burches in 1977. That fall, Cy Stevenson, GPI's legendary chief engineer, showed the Burches the antiquated arrangements in the boathouse at the south end of the lake. He helped them to raise the 50-ton boat up rails into the shed with a cable attached to a Model T engine (which had to be started with a hand crank, and which powered a leather drive belt)

The following spring, the Burches returned to the boathouse, cranked the engine, and started to lower the boat down the rails. The cable paid out very slowly, and the *International* inched toward the water at a snail's pace. Scott recalls, "Art wasn't real patient. He took the motor out of gear and let the boat slide by its own weight. It took off like a freight train! There were crowns in the rails, and the hull flexed when it hit them. Seams split apart and windows shattered. Art's eyes got big as the boat splashed into the lake -- we were lucky that it didn't derail. He said, "I guess we won't do *that* again!"

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*[A] huge cornice of snow collapsed on Grinnell Point. [It] obliterated the boathouse. The Two Guns was carried some 80 yards out across the ice that covered Lake Josephine.*

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### **The Wreck of the *Two Guns***

The biggest challenge of Art's career was the wreck of the *Chief Two Guns* in 1975. At that time, the *Two Guns* had been transferred to Lake Josephine and shut up in the boat house for the winter. (The *Morning Eagle* had been floated to Swiftcurrent Lake and transported back to Evergreen for refitting.)

Late in the winter of 1975, a huge cornice of snow collapsed on Grinnell Point. An avalanche swept down on a curving path and obliterated the boathouse. The *Two Guns* was carried some 80 yards out across the ice that covered Lake Josephine.

The Park Service gave the Burches permission to take snowmobiles to Lake Josephine to inspect the damage there. The *Two Guns* was on its

Art and his sons towed the *Two Guns* to the outlet of Lake Josephine with a motorboat. In Stump Lake (between Lake Josephine and Swiftcurrent Lake), the hull repeatedly was grounded, and had to be raised with jacks and winched with "come-alongs." Finally, the *Two Guns* reached Swiftcurrent Lake, where the Burches beached it near the boathouse, cleaned off the oil, and patched the hull.

The next challenge they faced was to move the *Morning Eagle* upstream to its customary place on Lake Josephine. The passage took five days of jacking and winching. (Ordinarily, the boats could have been hauled overland from lake to lake on an old logging road. But a flood in the spring of 1975 left the road impassible, so the water route across Stump

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Art sold the boat concession a few years later to his sons and his nephew Mark Van Artsdale. He promptly started another business, building docks, and ran it well into his 70s. Hard work and energy were his trademarks.

In 1996, the Park Service released initial proposals for a new General Management Plan for Glacier Park. Some of these proposals were very

ill-considered -- e.g., razing Swiftcurrent Motor Inn and shutting down numerous auto campgrounds. The public overwhelmingly opposed the plan. Art gave energetic leadership to the resistance. He organized a group called Friends of Glacier, conducted a public opinion poll, wrote letters to the editor and spoke out at public meetings. Through his efforts and those of the Glacier Park Foundation and many citizens, the

final Management Plan called for maintaining the traditional visitor facilities.

Art died in May 2008 at the age of 79. He played a great role in the history of Glacier, mentoring hundreds of employees and transporting hundreds of thousands of visitors. His many friends will remember him fondly whenever they see a white motor launch cutting a graceful wake in the waters of the Park.

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*Art Burch with son Scott. (Photo courtesy of Billy Ann Burch.)*



*Boats of the Glacier Park Boat Company. (Photos by Paul Meierding)*

# Red Eagle Pass

## *and other adventures*

*By Iain Smith (Prince of Wales, 1974-75, 77)*

In the winter edition of *The Inside Trail* I wrote about an off-trail hike over Jefferson Pass via the Valentine Creek Trail. A couple of years before doing Jefferson, my hiking partner, Phil Rhem, and I were invited to do Red Eagle Pass with a group of GPI employees. Apparently today there is some interest in this hike, and I've been invited back to describe another off-trail adventure. The Red Eagle section was a small part of the overall hike, so bear with me as I describe some other points of interest.

Phil and I had just finished the season at the Prince of Wales and were looking for one last hike before we parted ways. A jammer friend, John Allen, told us about the Red Eagle Pass trail which he had discovered by studying the old topographic map in the lobby of Glacier Park Lodge. He learned that early visitors to Glacier were able to ride horses up to Red Eagle Pass but the trail had fallen into disrepair after World War II. The Park Service eventually removed the trail from the hiking maps, and Red Eagle Pass saw very few visitors after that time.

Our plan was pretty simple -- hike from Waterton to the bottom of Glacier Park via Red Eagle Pass and end up at the Izaak Walton Inn for some apple pie. We started late in the season during the third week of September. The first day we hiked the 14.5



miles from the Waterton townsite to Stoney Indian Lake. The Waterton Lake trail follows the lake for about seven miles, gains and loses quite a bit of elevation, and comes out at Goat Haunt. A word of caution for late season hikers; the slats are removed from the suspension bridges and the only way to get across is to walk on the cables. Bring gloves!

From Goat Haunt we followed the Waterton Valley trail for five miles to another trail that goes 2.5 miles to the Stoney Indian Lake campground on the west side of Stoney Indian Pass. The weather was horrendous. I found Phil asleep on the trail just before the campground. We may have

overdone the first day by hiking 14.5 miles with very heavy packs.

The next day, we hiked five miles from Stoney Indian Lake over the pass to Glenn's Lake. The weather continued to be awful but we occasionally caught glimpses of the magnificent views on the east side of the pass. The 2<sup>nd</sup> night was quite eventful as I tried to catch dinner at Glenn's Lake. I was using a simple red and white lure that I dragged across the shallow water a couple of feet off the rocky shoreline. All of a sudden, a huge lake trout with a massive red jaw hit the lure and took off. I clamped down on the drag but it took all my line and snapped



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it off when it got to the end. I was in shock (and out of fishing line). Luckily I had an ice fishing rod along as backup and was able to catch another (much smaller) trout for dinner.

On Day Three, Phil and I hiked 7.5 miles from Glenn's Lake to Elizabeth Lake. The trail provides great views of Chief Mountain and the Belly River valley. The lake is a fisherman's paradise and one of the only places in the park where I've seen grayling taking flies. By day four the weather had finally cleared up and we headed off to Poia Lake approximately 9 miles away. The hike over Redgap Pass was beautiful with excellent views of Old Sun Glacier to the west. The Poia Lake campground, however, was terrible. We assumed that "Poia Lake" campground would be by the lake. No such luck. Getting water was a hassle.

By Day Five, Phil had horrible blisters and decided to hike the 5.5 miles out to Many Glacier in his moccasins. For some reason (probably my impatience) we got separated and I took the cutoff trail to the Many Glacier entrance station. Finally, after 41.5 miles and five days on the trail I was on a paved road and had visions of a cold beer, a hot shower and a real bed at St Mary's Lodge. But where was Phil? I couldn't believe that he wouldn't have taken the cutoff trail, but he was nowhere to be found. Cussing him, I headed off to Apikuni Creek where the Poia Lake trail meets the Many Glacier road.

I'll remember what happened next for the rest of my life. For the last 41.5 miles through some of Glacier's most remote areas I'd seen only a

couple of goats and a rabbit at Poia Lake. Here I was walking on pavement and I ran into a mother bear and two cubs not 25 feet away at the side of the road! All of a sudden a motor home drove up and I flagged them down. I explained to the driver in a soft voice that there was a mother bear and cubs on the other side of his motor home, and asked him to help me out. The guy looked at the bears and drove off, leaving me face to face with momma! I hightailed it down the road toward Many Glacier cussing both Phil and the idiot in the motorhome.

The beer, shower and bed at St Mary Lodge were wonderful. The next morning, on Day Six, Phil and I met up with six other GPI employees at St Mary. We headed off to Red Eagle Lake, 7.5 miles away, for the evening. The hike was pretty uneventful, except for having to cross Red Eagle Creek on the suspension bridge wires from west to east and then back again from east to west. I really can't remember the distance between the bridges but I do remember feeling a bit silly at the time.

By Day Eight, the weather was turning bad again as we left Red Eagle Lake along the Triple Divide Pass trail. There is a footbridge approximately 2.5 miles from the lake where Red Eagle Creek intersects the trail. This is where we started the off-trail portion of the hike. Glacier's terrain can be amazingly fragile, and although the trail had been unmaintained for many years it was quite easy to find the original horse track. We picked our way through trees and meadows in a southwest direction, following Red Eagle Creek. Our progress was really slow and

the weather worsened. We failed to reach the pass that night having gone only 4 miles the entire day.

The weather was no better on Day Nine, and there was talk about turning around. Phil, who was still hiking in moccasins, said he hadn't come this far to give up, so the group plodded on. We found the trail again and headed west along the southeast flank of Almost-a-Dog Mountain. The trick is not getting too close to the pass before ascending from the valley. (I made this mistake with Phil the following year, and it can be very treacherous.) The trail over the pass is well defined, with several stone cairns marking the route. I could see why a horse camp had been established on the pass with its series of wide meadows cutting southeast from Almost-a-Dog to the pass. Mount Logan is to the southwest, as are Red Eagle and Logan Glaciers. It would be a wonderful place to explore for a few days and I imagine that with a bit of work you could traverse to Gunsight Pass but I'm probably kidding myself. The distance off-trail from the footbridge on the Triple Divide trail to the pass is approximately 6¾ miles. We finished Day Nine, very wet and tired, trudging another half-mile past Red Eagle Pass and spending the night alongside Thompson Creek.

On Day Ten, we bushwhacked a very tough 1¾ miles out to the Nyack Loop trail. The trail from the pass to the Nyack Loop was almost impassible due to blowdowns. There was a trail marker at the intersection of the Red Eagle Pass and Nyack trails nailed to a large tree that read "Abandon Hope All You Who Enter Here" (the inscription above the door of

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Dante's Inferno). The Nyack trail is a loop that follows Nyack Creek to the southwest and Coal Creek to the east. We took the east trail and about 1¾ miles later came upon a patrol cabin where we had lunch. Some of our friends wanted to get back to East Glacier, so they took the Cut Bank Pass spur about 1¾ miles past the patrol cabin, and hiked over to Two Medicine to get their cars.

Phil and I and a couple of others decided to push on, and hiked another 4¼ miles to Surprise Pass. By this time, Phil and I had been on the trail 10 days and just couldn't face another pass. We discovered how Surprise Pass got its name -- it is as flat as a pancake. We were overjoyed!

The next day, we hiked the 15¼ miles from Surprise Pass to the end of the trail. We forded the Flathead and

walked up to Highway 2, where we hitchhiked to the Izaak Walton Inn in Essex and finally had our apple pie. Our adventure had taken us 11 days and covered approximately 85 miles (9 miles of which were off-trail, with another 25 miles in the Nyack wilderness). By now it was October 1. It took us three days to hitchhike back to Waterton! Note for next time -- leave a car in St Mary.



**Day 1**



**Day 3**



**Day 2**

*(Photos by Iain Smith.)*



**Day 4**



**Day 10**

# “Mugwumping” with Movie Stars

By Kay Schwenk Ek (Glacier Park Lodge 1952-54)

What was it about Glacier Park that even after many, many years of not seeing each other, we still feel a great affinity for those whose summers we shared? How is it that communication can immediately be restored as though it were yesterday? Why are we still saddened by the thought that we won't be going back to Glacier in June?

My summers were 1952, '53, and '54 at the Entrance Hotel (now called Glacier Park Lodge). We all thought that our hotel was the BEST, since we gave the first impression to those entering the park! I remember being surprised, when meeting some employees from Many Glacier, that they felt the same way -- that we just didn't understand that the best place to work was Many Glacier!

I don't know where the Many Glacier employees danced the night away, but for those of us who worked at East Glacier it was Dusty's, where the cowboys and Native Americans gathered and purchased their beer with silver dollars. The evenings often ended so late that the following day would involve a nap after serving breakfast, and a nap after serving lunch to be prepared for serving dinner -- and so it would go day after day, night after night.

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*Movie-making was a big adventure for those of us on the Entrance staff in those years. We had the pleasure of watching the cast and crews filming a couple of Westerns.*

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In the early 1950's, a specific talent was not needed to get a prized job in Glacier Park. It was “who you knew” or who recommended you. I was delighted to get a call to say that there was an opening in the laundry. Work there was not bad. We had time to visit with each other as we dutifully ran the mangle or folded the white linen. Early in the season, however, I was asked if I would like to be transferred to the dining room. This news was exciting and was the beginning of a great adventure serving guests. We always had to be well kept in our maroon dresses and our little white starched cotton aprons and hats (pinned to our hair). As I recall, the inspection of our uniforms was quite thorough.

Movie-making was a big adventure for those of us on the Entrance staff in those years. We had the pleasure of watching the cast and crews filming a couple of Westerns. The most notable star was our



*Dennis Weaver, Ronald Reagan and Victor Mature enjoyed “mugwumping” at Glacier Park Lodge while filming there in the early 1950s. (Photos courtesy of Kay Schwenk Ek)*



## *(Continued from previous page)*

former president, Ronald Reagan. The film was *Cattle Queen of Montana*, with Barbara Stanwick and Lance Fuller. It was great fun watching the filming on our day off and serving those charming people in the dining room.

I had met Ronald Reagan the year before when we were “mugwumping” -- that is, sitting with our mugs on one side of the wooden fence and our “wumps” on the other side, waiting for the train to come in. It was great fun to meet passengers arriving at the Park or just passing through, and that was the case when I met Mr. Reagan. I was very impressed with him and the time that he took just to visit.

Another movie, *Dangerous Mission*, featured Victor Mature, Piper Laurie, Vincent Price and Dennis Weaver. We invited them to go to Dusty's with us. Some of the crew did, and Vincent Price came to one of our parties. I got into trouble when I was invited to play Scrabble with Dennis Weaver, Piper Laurie and Victor Mature's double. The problem was that we played (very innocently) in one of their hotel rooms. The hotel manager was angry when he saw me being escorted through the lobby and back to the dorm by the handsome double. He warned me of the trouble that I could have gotten into with those Hollywood types (and maybe in particular with this one).

I've kept in touch with numerous employees from my era. One of my roommates, Rosellen (Finley) Doherty, was the “Indian Girl” -- greeting guests in the dining room in full Indian attire. Her father, Charles Finley, was a vice president of the Great Northern Railway, who

when visiting would arrive in his own private railroad car. Rosellen once brought a horse into the dorm. “Horse in dorm!” she announced (a variation on the more common warning “man in the dorm!”). Rosellen was envied for her beauty and charm and her connections. She died of cancer in 2008.

Another of my roommates, Mary Ronning (nicknamed “Sarge”) worked at the Entrance Hotel for five summers. She was in charge -- new employees in the dining room thought she was the boss, as she ordered waitresses and bus boys about. She loved giving them a hard time, but later they would learn that her underlying personality was soft and sweet. Sarge married and taught kindergarten for over 30 years. One year she was first runner up for the Illinois “teacher of the year” award. We might have forgotten some of the employees whom we worked with, but nobody forgot Sarge. She led us in song with her ukulele, and she was the kingpin for anything fun. She was my roommate and cherished friend until her death in 2008.

Sarge's sister Carol was the nurse at the Entrance in 1947. She married the Front Desk Clerk, “Dusty” Hanson. Their meeting was an instant attraction, and by Christmas of 1947 they were planning their wedding for May 1948. They recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary by taking their three children and the children's spouses to Glacier. I saw them recently, and they appear 20 years younger than their chronological age.

A couple of the friends whom I keep in touch with recall disasters in the Entrance dining room. Mary Shepherd Phillips recalls, “We had to carry

those large trays with many dinners and all the little dishes piled up, and it was such a trick to carry them on one's shoulder. Once I took a full tray through the swinging door. It caught the tray closing, and the whole thing went down with a terrible crash. I thought I would be sent home on the next train!” Mary says that she never had to work that hard again ever in her life. About 25 years ago, she went back to the hotel and ate in the dining room, finding that there were no linen tablecloths. Everything seemed much more casual to her -- and she was surprised to learn that there was no longer a “dorm mother!”

Michaela Walsh of New York City (who became quite famous for starting “Women's World Banking”) treasures the memories of her days at Glacier Park, but recalls another fiasco in the dining room. Once at lunch she spilled boiling hot soup down the back of the manager's wife. The scalded matron screamed, leaped out of her chair, and raced from the dining room. Michaela thinks it that it must have taken her days to dry out the huge corset she wore!

I had a similar dining room catastrophe which was equally bad or worse. I once dropped a tray of four dinners on a table. I never will forget the lady in the beautiful suede suit who was the recipient of most of those dinners!

The cherished memories of those great and wonderful years in Glacier Park will live with me forever. Living in St. Cloud for a number of years, I shared my love of Glacier with the recently deceased Bishop George Speltz. He often went to Glacier during his summer vacations, and always referred to it as “God's Country.” I must go there again!

# A Reunion at Lake McDonald

By Janet Eisner Cornish (*Lake McDonald Lodge 1973-76*)

On July 9th, 2009, the 1976 employees of Lake McDonald Lodge will gather to share memories and to reestablish friendships. The reunion is the result of the tireless efforts of Joanie Virgil, who was a member of the linen crew in 1976. Armed only with a 33-year-old list of employees, Joanie managed to find nearly 70 people, who are now sharing memories, pictures and middle-aged humor via the Internet

In her original reunion announcement, Joanie wrote, "We've won-

dered what, exactly, made that summer special? Maybe it was the air, the terrain, a blanket of brilliant stars to smart the eye, and a wild flower bouquet of college kids from across the map who came together at such a tender time.... Some employees who returned in the years that followed, or who worked at other parks before or since, say it didn't compare to Lake McD, 1976.... A piece of my heart still lives in Montana; maybe it was a divine appointment that put each of us in the same place, at the same time, a lifetime and so many memories ago. And now, three

decades later, we have the chance to get together and recapture those feelings...."

My experience at Lake McDonald has led to a life long love affair with Montana and the Park, and so, of course, I've never left. It will be wonderful to visit with the people who helped to shape my path in life. I hope those of you who worked at Lake McDonald, or who as GPI employees, spent time there, will consider joining us in July. Here are the particulars:

**What:**

Reunion -- Glacier National Park, 1976-2009

**When:**

July 9th – 12th 2009, Thursday – Sunday

**Where:**

Heaven on Earth @ Lake McDonald Lodge

**Wear:**

Play clothes, hiking boots, & wide grins

**Who:**

YOU! – (feel free to invite family & friends)

**Why:**

Life is short – Live it in Montana!

**Pack:**

Memories, photos (old & new), camera

**Contact:**

Reunion Coordinator Joanie (Saltzberg) Virgil, joanievirgil@charter.net

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## Blog With Us!

By Laura Chihara (*Many Glacier 1976-80*)

The Glacier Park Foundation website features a forum (<http://www.glacier-parkfoundation.org/Forums>) where members of GPF as well as any visitors to our site can post comments or questions on any topic -- relevant to Glacier, of course!

We have established several categories for former employees, including one for former Glacier employees, one for former jammers and one for those who worked for the National Park Service. We encourage members to post their own stories from their time in Glacier. Here are a couple of sample entries:

From a former waitress: "I always dreaded the day we served Mountain Trout for dinner, as part of the service was deboning the trout and I couldn't get it quite right--the fish

head always seemed to fly about three feet away from the plate, and the sight of that occasionally involved calming down my diner. If one was lucky enough to get to serve the table right behind the swinging kitchen door, it would have been prudent to be wary of the waiter/waitress who liked to kick it open especially hard--I forgot once and doused one diner squarely on the head with a full glass of iced tea!"

From a former worker in the Many Glacier snack bar: "We also were instructed to take the hotdogs we hadn't sold out of the heated roller thingie after each shift, and refrigerate them until the next shift, then put them back under the lightbulbs. Day after day, those weenies got just a little darker, a little harder, a little more shriveled and dried out. Voila -- jerky! Very tasty, too."



# A Close Call on the Golden Stairs

## A Hitchhiking Adventure

By Don Loeffler (*Glacier Park Lodge, Sun Camp, Many Glacier 1940-42, 46-48*)

While working at Many Glacier Hotel, Barbara Burrets and I decided to hitchhike over Logan Pass to Lake McDonald Hotel. The trip to Lake McDonald was swift and uneventful. We got rides with very little waiting from nice tourists who apparently enjoyed my running dialogue about the flora, fauna, and geology of the park.

At Lake McDonald Hotel, we visited with friends with little regard to what time it was. It was a beautiful day, so typical of early August weather in the mountains. Finally we became aware that the day was rapidly coming to an end. We walked out to Going-to-the-Sun

feeling told me that we should get into the cab with the driver. When the door was opened, I noticed that he was not alone, but had a buddy with him. In spite of this, I squeezed in with Barbara, holding her on my lap. It was more than cozy in the cab. My level of concern increased when our companions told us that they were “powder monkeys” working on the Hungry Horse Dam, and that their destination was Browning -- before the bars closed!

It was apparent that they had been drinking, so I engaged them in technical talk about their jobs. We noticed that every time the driver talked about aspects of his occupation, he drove slower and with more caution. I got him to elaborate on the Hungry Horse Dam project. He

the driver that we had a dangerous 180-degree curve coming up, and that perhaps he should reduce the speed of his company-owned vehicle. He took my advice and slowed to about 60 miles per hour. The last words spoken in the truck were “Hold ‘er, Joe!” as we careened into the curve and rolled over.

It happened so fast that I don’t remember if we rolled more than once. We ended up with the truck on its side precariously balanced on the retaining wall, where I could look directly down into the water below. The driver started to push open the driver’s side door and lift himself out. As he did this, I pushed with all the strength in my legs against the mass of bodies above me. I hoped that the center of gravity would not shift and topple us over the edge. One at a time, we very carefully exited the pickup truck until we all were out.

The driver and his buddy easily rocked the truck back onto the road. They climbed back into the cab after pulling the fenders away from the front wheels. The vehicle started up right away (a good commercial for Ford trucks!) and they asked us if we wanted to climb aboard. We both chimed in, “Thanks, but NO THANKS!”

That particular section of road is known as the Golden Stairs because of the sloped banding of the yellow rock structure. Fortunately we didn’t “climb the Golden Stairs” that evening! The “powder monkeys”

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*That particular section of road is known as the Golden Stairs because of the sloped banding of the yellow rock structure. Fortunately we didn’t “climb the Golden Stairs” that evening!*

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Highway to hitch a ride back to Many Glacier. Cars were few and far between, and it was starting to get dark. My concern was equally divided between the bear problem and the transportation problem in standing out on a lonely road in the rapidly diminishing twilight.

We had waited for about an hour when a pickup truck slowed to a stop and the driver said, “Jump in!” My first instinct was to get into the open back of the truck, but a strange

finished describing it while pulling into the parking lot of Logan Pass for a relief stop and another can of beer.

We opted again to jam ourselves back into the cab. Since the road is much better on the eastern slope, the ride down to Siyeh Bend was tolerable. Then they began to gain speed, flying past the turnoff to Sun Point. I was familiar with every curve on this portion of the Sun Highway, having worked at Going-to-the-Sun Chalets before the war. I cautioned

*(Continued from previous page)*

drove away in the direction of Rising Sun Camp and left us standing in the middle of the road looking at the full moon rising behind Divide Mountain. After our pulses returned to normal, we analyzed our actions during the past hour:

(1) What strange feeling made us get into the front seat with two guys we didn't even know rather than sitting in the back of the pickup on a romantic evening?

(2) What made us get back into the truck with them a second time at Logan Pass, after a less than serene trip up from McDonald Creek?

(3) What caused the truck to end up teetering on that narrow three-foot-high stone retaining wall? (Thank God for the CCC boys that built it!)

If we had been going a few miles per hour faster, we would all have bought the farm. The truck would have sailed a couple of hundred feet through the air before it hit the water and sank. The National Park Service estimates the water to be over 150 feet deep at that location.

when expelled and possibly crushed by the rolling truck. I guess it just wasn't our time to go.

We finally got a safe ride to Babb from a couple of Canadian salesmen returning from a business trip in Missoula. We then caught another ride to Many Glacier Hotel with the parents

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*What strange feeling made us get into the front seat with two guys we didn't even know rather than sitting in the back of the pickup on a romantic evening?*

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We thought our names must surely be in the book of fate (Glacier Park Edition). If we had opted to sit in the open back of that pickup truck, we probably would have been killed

of a hotel employee. Even to this day (61 years later) when rounding that curve, we stop and look across St. Mary Lake to Divide Mountain and think about that event.

*Don and Barbara Loeffler on the Golden Stairs. (Photo courtesy of Don Loeffler.)*



# Hiking the Inside Trail in the 1940s

I am a recent member of the Glacier Park Foundation and was reading my first *Inside Trail*. I wondered what that was but then I turned the page and found out. I worked six summers at the Glacier Park Hotel and one at the Transport Company, and had never heard that designation. I resurrected my old *George Ruhle Guide to Glacier*, turned to *Trails from East Glacier Park*, and there it was. Maybe I had forgotten it after all these years, but I suspect I was so busy reading about the trails themselves that I simply never noticed. I hiked all of these trails one year or another, so let's see what I can remember.

By Ginny Leach Mouw (*Glacier Park Lodge 1940-42, 48-50*)

## East Glacier to Two Medicine

This is the easy one. It was the hike that I took every summer that I worked there, sometimes more than once. It was a trail that one almost always took in that direction for two reasons — first, the trail up along Mt. Henry was an easy but long grade, while from Two Med back was a steep switchbacking climb, more difficult and far less interesting, scenically speaking. Second, you could start early without having to waste time hitchhiking. The hike was about eleven miles, by far the shortest of the Inside Trail.

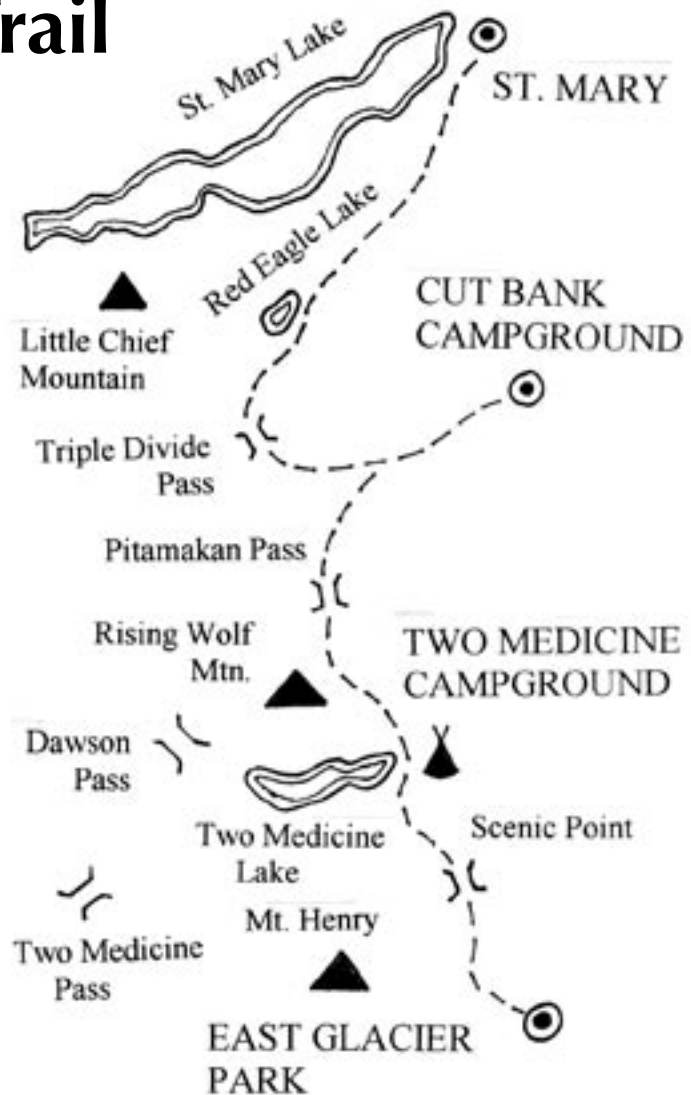
The first time I hiked it was in 1940. You had to cut across the golf

course, climb the stile, and seek out the path. Early on that day we ran across a Basque shepherd with his flock. I was fascinated. Who knew there were Basque shepherders here? I learned that there were a number of them in Montana, and I wanted to find out when he had come, why he left his home terrain, how he had come to Montana, and what life here was like for him. But, alas, he couldn't speak my language, nor I his. I never saw him again.

My most embarrassing episode while hiking occurred on this trail. Lorraine Hartman and I were headed toward Two Med. It was an awfully hot day, and we finally shed our shirts. The trail was perfectly open,

and we knew that if we saw anyone coming, we could quickly cover up again. Fine reasoning as far as it went! As we came around the shoulder of Mt. Henry to view Two Med, suddenly here were two fellows coming around the bend. Embarrassment and laughter, but after recovering our clothing, the four of us sat around and chatted a while before going our separate ways.

One year the G.P. employees were treated to a moonlight boat trip on Two Med Lake. It was one of those perfect summer nights for a marvelous outing. We got back to the dock about midnight, and as we headed for the bus, Karl Klein and I looked at each other and said simultane-



## *(Continued from previous page)*

ously, "Let's hike back!" Everyone else boarded the bus, no doubt thinking what complete idiots we were. It was a long haul up the mountain and much darker through the trees than we had expected. The full moon didn't penetrate as we had thought it would, and we were both afraid we'd run into a bear, although neither of us confessed that until later. As we rounded Mt. Henry, the plains stretched out endlessly before us, bathed in moonlight, with a few lights scattered here and there. It was breathtaking, and one of my loveliest memories. Oh, the joy of being young and crazy!

### **Two Medicine to Cut Bank Chalet**

Dawson Pass is not really on the Inside Trail, but it played its part. The pass is a steep difficult six miles from Two Med, but when you reach the pass, it is, to my mind, the most wild and wonderful view in the Park. It explains, in a way, my fascination with hiking in Glacier Park. Every time you cross a pass, you have an immediate spectacular new view, and you are rejuvenated by the beauty and the sense of accomplishment. I often felt like the bear who went over the mountain to see what he could see.

While we were at Dawson, I could see a game trail that stretched out to the right at the same level as the pass. On returning, I sought out Rum Cashman, hiker par excellence, and asked her about it. She said you could follow it, stay at that level, and you would come out at Cut Bank Pass. I had to wait a year before I could try it, and then Rum told me that when they hiked it, they took canned goods along for lunch and what they didn't eat,

they buried about halfway between Dawson and Cut Bank Passes, and erected a cairn to mark the spot. So Clare Williams and I tossed a can opener and a couple of spoons into our lunch sacks and headed out. Again, that gorgeous view at Dawson Pass, and then off on the game trail. Sure enough, we found the cairn, dug up the cans, and sat there eating baked beans and peaches. Then we headed on to Cut Bank and Pitamakan Passes and down into the valley to Cut Bank Chalet.

Cut Bank Chalet and Campground presented a real problem to hikers as you couldn't depend on hitchhiking in or out. There simply wasn't enough traffic, so you had to arrange for someone to pick you up. The only employees who were allowed to have cars were the office force people who worked year around for the Great Northern. They spent winters in St. Paul and summers in the Park, and

nesota, and Vaughn Merrill from Arizona into accompanying me. We had a ride to St. Mary, and the driver was kind enough to take us as far as he could on the primitive road, thus saving us a mile or two, a big help on what would have been a 23 mile hike. We made it to Red Eagle Lake where we ate lunch. From there we hiked along a stream which eventually had washed out the trail completely. We slogged back and forth across that stream trying to find our way, and I remember thinking that we had come all this way and might be forced to give up the hike. Eventually, miraculously, the trail reappeared, and we headed up to Triple Divide Pass where we stopped to rest. It was then I discovered I had thrown away the remains of my lunch and had hauled a bag of trash all that distance! Still, I was happy to be sitting there, thinking about the water that drained off to the Gulf of Mexico, the Pacific Ocean, and Hudson Bay.

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*We got back to the dock about midnight, and as we headed for the bus, Karl Klein and I looked at each other and said simultaneously, "Let's hike back!"*

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they were good sports about picking us up in isolated places. We kept our requests to a minimum, but they enabled us to go places we never could have managed otherwise. This leg of the trail was about 18 miles, although going via Dawson was farther.

### **Cut Bank to St. Mary**

The last leg of the Inside Trail turned out to be St. Mary back to Cut Bank Campground. The year was 1950 and I was keeping the red bus records for the Transport Company that summer. I talked gearjammers, Hal Henkel from White Bear Lake, Min-

When would I ever be in such a spot again? All I remember about the rest of the trip was being extremely tired and dragging in to the Cut Bank Campground after dark. Nothing was left but to collapse in the car while someone else took us home.

Thus ends my saga of the Inside Trail. I'm disappointed, for apparently I didn't complete it, having missed the direct trail from Two Med to Cut Bank Pass. Hey, I'm 88, and I won't be hiking there again, but if I were, I'd head straight for Dawson Pass and its incomparable view.

# Fire Drill Memories

By John Hagen (Many Glacier 1970-80)

Lodge employees who worked before 1980 will recall the colorful firefighting arrangements of that era. The technology was antique. Our equipment might have been used to respond to Mrs. O'Leary's cow kicking over the lantern a hundred years before.

When I first came to Many Glacier Hotel in 1970, you could find old red metal buckets, stenciled in yellow FOR FIRE USE ONLY, tucked away in odd closets and corners around the lodge. Those buckets had done good service in helping to save the hotel in the great forest fire of 1936. In our era, they were mostly used for gardening or catching leaks in the roof (which was in deplorable repair), but they exemplified our antique safety arrangements.

Many Glacier's chief line of defense in those years was standpipe hoses and hand-drawn hose carts (described in Ian Tippet's article, at right). The carts resembled artillery caissons from the time of the Civil War. They had two big spoked wooden wheels, a big spool with fire hoses wound around it, and a long iron tongue with handles for the fire crew to grab.

The carts were kept in wooden sheds at several points around the hotel. (I recall an indignant German tourist, unhappy over his first-floor room, blustering that "der windows look out on der *shed!*") When the fire siren sounded, the hose crews would drop their work or jump out of bed and run to the sheds for the carts.

The fire drills were picturesque. The carts came rattling and clattering to the front doors of the hotel. Ladder crews, first aid crews, runners and housekeepers (the evacuation crew) swarmed onto the portico from all sides. At the vortex of all this activity was wizened old Cy Stevenson, chief engineer of the Glacier lodges for decades, legendary for his ingenuity and for his cantankerous temper.

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*Many Glacier's chief line of defense in those years was standpipe hoses and hand-drawn hose carts. The carts resembled artillery caissons from the time of the Civil War.*

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Cy would bellow orders and the crews would dash away to imaginary fires at distant corners of the hotel. The hose crews would quickly unspool the hoses, attach them to a fire hydrant, turn the water on with wrenches, and blast away at the hotel. We were always amazed at the sheer force of the water surging through the hose. It would buck wildly, sometimes staggering the six or eight men who held it. We felt like zoo employees wrestling with an unruly boa constrictor.

White cascades of water crashed off the building as the hose crews did their work. The housekeeping crew was responsible to see that all the windows had been closed, as they went from room to room with passkeys. Once in awhile a window was missed, and the fire hoses would drench the beds. Then Cy would bellow with indignation.

In the late '70s, the Park Service purchased a fire truck which was kept at the Many Glacier Ranger Station, a mile from the hotel. The truck made the ancient hose carts superfluous, so they were done away with. Renovations also have made Many Glacier much more fireproof than it was. We all are glad for this safer era, but old-timers still think back nostalgically on our picturesque fire drills.



# The Cy Stevenson Era

By Ian B. Tippet (*Glacier Park Hotel Co.; Glacier Park Inc. 1955-2009*)

Thinking back over all the memories from my dozens of years in the Glacier Park hotels, the safety aspect for our guests and employees is amongst the top of the list. During the ownership of Mr. Don Hummel, the former mayor of Tucson, his retired chief of police, Joe Weinzaple, worked at Glacier Park Lodge as the company security officer -- so we had a real "cop" in charge, which was brilliant!

Our Chief Engineer, for most of his life, was Cy Stevenson. Cy was always hot on security. The night guards at all locations patrolled their premises with Detex clocks, punching in at around 20 stations, 12 times a shift. They put in about five miles of walking each night. Each punch put a hole in a paper dial, which was inserted into the clock before each shift and taken out afterward. The punches were proof that

a guard visited each station at regular intervals. The dials were sent to Cy directly, and woe betide the guard who missed a station!

Cy formed fire crews at all locations -- hose teams, ladder teams, emergency runners, first aid teams. He

Cy personally controlled all engineering aspects at all the locations. When Don Hummel took over from the Great Northern Railway, he told Cy, "I want Tippet to have Grand Master keys" -- and Cy just about passed out! Master keys had never

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*Cy formed fire crews at all locations -- hose teams, ladder teams, emergency runners, first aid teams. He held unannounced fire drills where it was mandatory for all employees to participate. The location teams actually became very competitive. . . .*

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held unannounced fire drills where it was mandatory for all employees to participate. The location teams actually became very competitive, wanting to prove that they were the most efficient, and more speedy and effective than their opponents.

been assigned before to anyone but Cy! He muttered to me how aggravated he was about it, and demanded a \$100 deposit on each key! I still have the same master keys and they are working fine! God rest Cy's soul!

## JOIN THE GLACIER PARK FOUNDATION

All friends of Glacier Park are invited to join the Glacier Park Foundation. Membership includes a subscription to The Inside Trail and the right to vote for directors. Please download a membership form from our Web Site ([www.glacier-parkfoundation.org](http://www.glacier-parkfoundation.org)) or send your name, address, phone number, and park experience to Glacier Park Foundation, Box 15641, Minneapolis, MN 55415.

An annual membership in the Foundation costs \$10. A "Friend of the Park" membership costs \$25 annually, cumulating to a Lifetime membership in five installments. A Lifetime membership paid in one installment costs \$100.

The Glacier Park Foundation is a § 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.



(Panorama by Christine Baker)

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AND CELEBRATE

## GLACIER CENTENNIAL

*by attending*

*Many Glacier Hotel's Employee Reunion*

July 29 - August 1, 2010



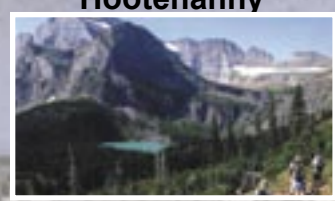
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Rick Taylor (vaarks@comcast.net)

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