

THE INSIDE TRAIL



Voice of the Glacier Park Foundation Winter 2023 Volume XXXIX, No. 1

JEFF MOW *A Superintendent's Story*



With Secretary of Interior Sally Jewell, NPS Centennial Day, 2016

(Photo courtesy of Flathead Beacon.)

In this issue:

- *Jeff Mow: A Superintendent's Story* • *A Glacier Park Kid's Story*
- *Gearjamming in the '70s* • *A Roadbike Runs Through It* • *Inside News of Glacier in 2022* • *My Family's Nine Decades* • *A Rising Sun Summer*

INSIDE NEWS OF GLACIER PARK

Ian Tippet Laid to Rest

Ian Tippet, the illustrious manager of Many Glacier Hotel, was laid to rest in the Swiftcurrent Valley last July. Mr. Tippet managed Many Glacier from 1961 to 1983. Scores of employees from that era attended

lists to steady their music stands and keep pages from flying away.

Father John Sauer read the great consolation from the prophet Isaiah: "On this mountain the Lord will destroy the veil that veils all peoples,

his elbows flourishing as he accompanied a vocalist: "When winter's come and all the flowers are dying/ And I am dead, as dead I well may be/You'll come and find the place where I am lying/And kneel and say an 'Ave' there for me."

Mr. Tippet managed Many Glacier from 1961 to 1983. Scores of employees from that era attended a memorial service at the western end of the lodge, near the shores of Swiftcurrent Lake.

a memorial service at the western end of the lodge, near the shores of Swiftcurrent Lake.

Carol Dahle organized the ecumenical service. A requiem was played by three accomplished cellists (Linda Young Kuhn, Jes Swihart Hagale, and Diane Steele Sine). A strong wind arose, and volunteers improvised in good Many Glacier fashion, squatting down in front of the cel-

the web that is woven over all nations; he will destroy death forever. He will wipe away the tears from all faces." Grinnell Point soared overhead like the mountain of Isaiah's vision.

Tex Dyer, one of Many Glacier's master guitarists, sang "Danny Boy." The song had been a favorite of Mr. Tippet. He had loved to play it on the piano at the Thursday Serenade,

The memorial proceeded with eulogies and memories. Veterans stepped to the microphone, praised Mr. Tippet's virtues, and shared stories of his amazing personality. Mike Painter recalled an episode involving the manager's irrepressible Britishness, which so delighted employees. Just after Prince William was born in June 1982, Mr. Tippet exclaimed (with a magnificent windmill gesture): "Mr. Painter! Mr. Painter! We have an heir!"

The memorial concluded with the Lord's Prayer. Then seven veterans (Einar Hanson, Greg Notess, Jim Hummel, Jerry Keck, Jim Donohue, Greg Hagen and John Hagen) took

(Inside News continued on page 28)

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 Park Foundation
P.O. Box 15241
Minneapolis, MN 55415
www.glacierparkfoundation.org
info@glacierparkfoundation.org

Board of Directors:

Joe Blair
Tessie Bundick
Laura Chihara
Janet Eisner Cornish
Carol Repulski Dahle
Joyce Daugaard
Ray Djuff
Emily Trapp Hackethorn
John Hagen
Einar Hanson
Paul Hoff
Mark Hufstetler
Jeff Kuhn
Linda Young Kuhn
Rolf Larson
Greg Notess
John Sauer
Laura Shearin
Rick Taylor
Mac Willemsen

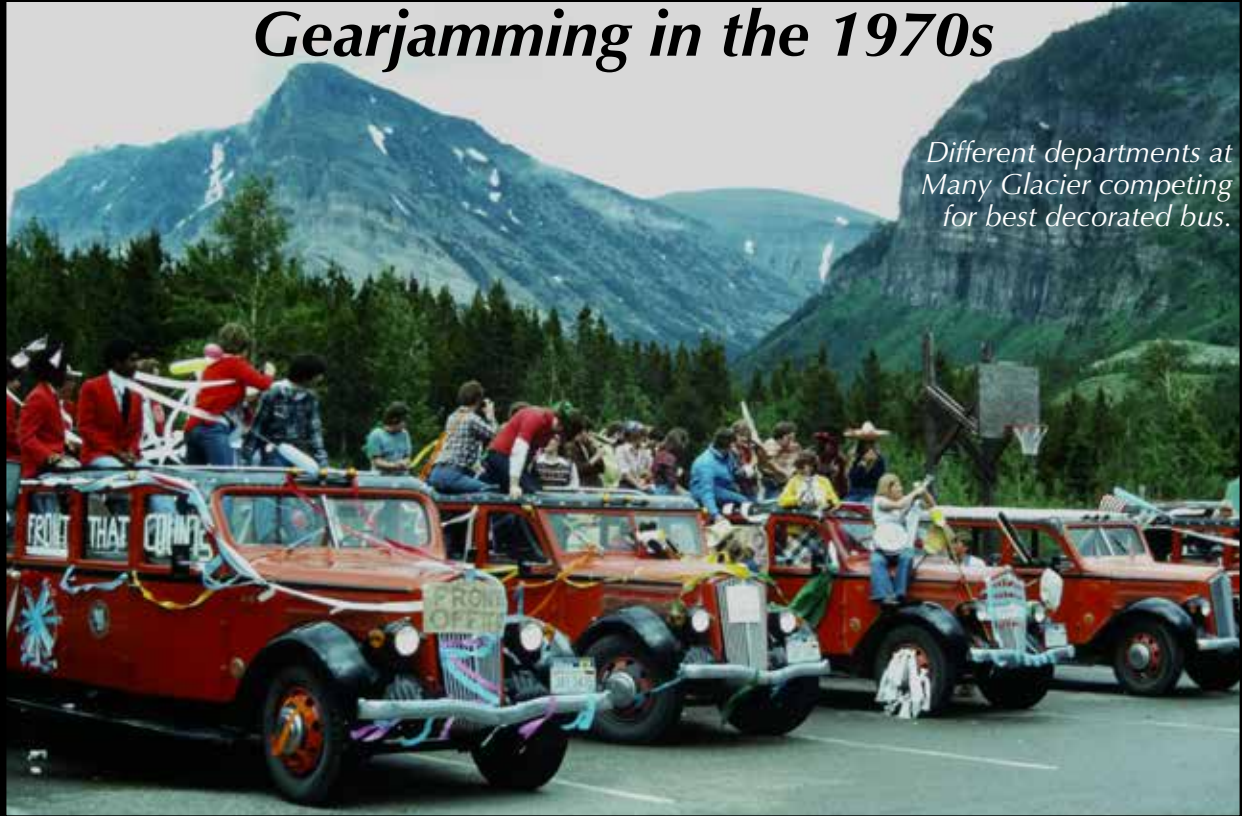
Officers:

John Hagen, President
Carol Dahle, Vice President
Mac Willemsen, Secretary
Tessie Bundick, Historian
Jim Lees, Treasurer
Laura Chihara, Webmaster
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.

SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL

Gearjamming in the 1970s



Different departments at Many Glacier competing for best decorated bus.

(All photos courtesy of the Jim Klosterman collection.)

By Jim Klosterman (Jammer 1978, No. 98)

I had the distinct privilege and pleasure of being a Red Bus driver in Glacier during the summer of 1978. I had just finished graduate school in Washington State and decided if I was going to spend a summer in the park it was now or never. I had been exposed to Glacier's beauty growing up as we spent many camping trips in the park. My father had worked at the Sun Point Chalets in the late 1930s, and my mother had worked at Many Glacier. This resulted in a lifetime love and connection with Glacier within our family.

I applied for the position in early 1978 via letter to Mr. Tippet. The application asked for a desired job position with a second and third

choice. I listed "Red Bus driver" in all three boxes. I definitely had my heart set on driving that summer!

I received a packet several weeks later from Mr. Tippet. It included information about job expectations, arrival date in the park, required dress appearance and clear instructions about hair length and lack of facial hair. Hair was not to be over the ears or the shirt collar in length. I had a few inches removed, much to the wonderment of my college buddies. I also arranged to get my CDL (commercial driver's license) by tak-

ing a school bus driving course in my college town prior to departure. The CDL or equivalent was a necessity for driving a Red Bus in the park.

I drove out from Seattle in early June of 1978 after my last academic quarter. Upon reporting at East Glacier, I was directed to the jammers' dormitory across the road from the main lodge. I was told to pick a room and pick a bus. I picked bus # 98 for two reasons: (1) it appeared to be in better shape than most and (2) it had an International Harvester stick shift. My father had owned an International

Upon reporting at East Glacier, I was directed to the jammers' dormitory across the road from the main lodge. I was told to pick a room and pick a bus. I picked bus # 98.

Harvester pickup on which I learned to drive a manual transmission.

I didn't realize how happy I would be that I'd chosen a Red Bus powered by International Harvester. The Reds all originally had White Motor

seasons under his belt in Glacier as a driver. We referred to him as "Dr. Allen" and looked up to him with awe and great respect. He was a tremendous source of information, and we tried to absorb as much as possible.

At that time, the gearjammers were

The 30-plus drivers hired for that summer all were about 22 years of age, give or take a year or two.

Company motors and transmissions. Over the years, the drive trains were replaced, and some of the Reds got Chevrolet equipment, and some got

an all-male fraternity. The first female drivers were not hired until the 1980s. Nowadays many of the jammers are retirees, and the average

The most senior driver was John Allen. . . . John had many seasons under his belt in Glacier as a driver. We referred to him as "Dr. Allen" and looked up to him with awe and great respect. He was a tremendous source of information. . . .

International Harvester. I'm glad that I didn't chose a bus powered by a Chevrolet motor and transmission, but more about that later! Like decades of drivers before us, one of our first duties was to wash and hand-wax and hand-buff the bus that was entrusted to us for the summer.

The 30-plus drivers hired for that summer all were about 22 years of age, give or take a year or two. The most senior driver was John Allen, who was almost 40. John had many

age is probably close to 60. Drivers in their early 20s are very much the exception today

The goal of our first week was two-fold. First, we were given written material on the history, geography, flora and fauna of Glacier, so that we could deliver a knowledgeable tour talk to our passengers. I recall being given an all-day tour of Glacier's roads in a larger bus (with permission from the Park Service since we were oversized). We were infused

with knowledge by Dr. Allen and a Park Service naturalist.

Second, we had to prove our competency behind the wheel of a Red Bus. Several of us would board a "Red" and take turns driving while we were evaluated by our Transport Manager, Mr. Bob Steele. Bob was an easygoing and affable fellow. I was grateful for this when I learned of the nonsense and hard-nosed approaches of some of the departmental managers in the lodges. I was beginning to learn how good I had it for summer employment!

I can't say that I remember my first tour, but I am sure that I was nervous. I didn't have any qualms about my driving capabilities, but I surely was concerned about being asked some question I couldn't answer.

We rarely spent two nights at the same location unless we had a scheduled day off. Our work schedule was unbelievably pushy by today's standards. Red Bus drivers were paid for 32 hours a week whether we worked them or not! We typically worked a half day taking tours from one lodge in the morning to another for lunch. This schedule allowed us to drive in the morning and hike in the afternoon – a source of jealousy for lodge employees who were working an eight-hour day six days a week. They had one day off a week to hike, and if it was raining that was the luck of the draw.

The jammers had their own dorm at Lake McDonald and had a separate room in the upper dorm at Many Glacier. However, many jammers chose to sleep in the back of their buses as the talented musicians of Many Glacier held impromptu jam sessions in the dorm late at night! At East Glacier we had our own dormi-

At that time, the gearjammers were an all-male fraternity. The first female drivers were not hired until the 1980s. Nowadays many of the jammers are retirees, and the average age is probably close to 60. Drivers in their early 20s are very much the exception today.

tory. For the very rare night spent at the Prince of Wales, we utilized a small room on the very top floor of that picturesque hotel. Many jammers, myself included, just lived out of a duffle bag that we kept in a storage compartment in the back of our bus.

Our schedules were posted at the lodge where we would be spending the night. Only then did we find out where we would be going the next day or whether we had the day off. This made advance planning difficult, but given the brevity of our work schedule we knew better than to complain! Once I went into service I only spent 3 or 4 nights all summer in my own room at the jammers' dormitory in East Glacier. The vast majority of the nights were split between Lake McDonald and Many Glacier.

I soon discovered that my chosen Red Bus, Number 98, could run with the best of them. As young men are often inclined to do with their vehicles, we debated whose bus was the fastest. In the first couple of weeks, I found that I had to slow down climbing hills behind a Chevrolet-powered bus. Those same buses also labored at anything approaching highway speeds.

One day, about eight Red Buses deadheaded from East Glacier to Lake McDonald. As we left, I deliberately positioned myself at the back of the procession headed west on Highway 2. A few miles west of East Glacier, a long straightaway was clear of oncoming traffic (visitation then was a fraction of what it is today). I pulled out from the last spot in the procession with my right foot buried to the floor. I'm not sure why Red Buses were equipped with a hand

throttle (often reserved for farm equipment) but I pulled mine all the way out to make sure my throttle stayed wide open.

Clearly, in retrospect this was not a wise or safe thing to do! My speedometer inched ever higher and settled in at just over 70 mph. I flew by the other Reds, especially the Chevrolet-powered buses which seemed to max out at about 55 mph. The memory reminds me of the song by Bill Haley and the Comets entitled "Shake, Rattle and Roll," as that is exactly what I was doing! My windows were rolling down by themselves, my rear-view mirror was blurred by vibration, and my canvas top was billowing and threatening to break loose. I must have looked like a pregnant caterpillar attempting to take flight! Needless to say, I did arrive at the head of the procession at Lake McDonald.

Sometimes passengers made amazing comments. One day I was driving up the McDonald Valley from Lake McDonald Lodge on a tour to Many Glacier. A small pond about 50 yards off the highway was marked "Moose Country," since moose occasionally fed on the aquatic plants there. As I slowed down approaching Moose Country, I habitually would say that if we were lucky we would see a moose feeding there. This was the only day all summer that there was indeed a large moose feeding contentedly. I immediately pulled over. In the rearmost seat, a woman was having difficulty spotting the moose. Her friend was urgently pointing out the largest member of the deer family. Suddenly she saw it and yelled with excitement in a New Yorker accent, "Look, a beaver, a beaver!" I cringed

and thought to myself, "The world's first 700-pound beaver."

In all fairness, though, dealing with the public can be a joy as those visiting Glacier for the first time see some of the beauty the park has to offer. Some tour groups were known to be well off, and naturally we hoped for a big tip. However, I remember a tour group of older widows from a church in the Midwest. At the end of the tour, they gathered together and assembled a tip. One woman came over and deposited change in my hand. From their conversation, I knew that this trip was a real financial extravagance for them. I thanked her and deposited the change in my pocket. It came to \$1.25, give or take a penny or two. It made me think of the parable of the poor widow in the Gospel of Mark.

One day I picked up a load of French Canadians at Lake McDonald and headed for Logan Pass. Fortunately, the tour guide was bilingual – my French was quite limited, as was their English. About two miles below the pass, we entered very thick fog where visibility was perhaps 50 feet. Speeds were sharply reduced for obvious safety reasons. I wasn't concerned about the fog, but I felt sorry for the passengers missing the glorious scenery. Just prior to entering the fog bank, they had seen the multi-hundred-foot drop on the right-hand side of the road. Everything was going fine, but I kept hearing mumbling immediately behind me. After about 30 seconds, I turned my head and took a quick peek to see what was going on. I saw a woman holding her rosary beads and undoubtedly saying "Hail Mary" in French. There was a quick

shout, far faster than my two years of French would allow me to understand. The tour guide immediately translated: “She says to keep your eyes on the road!”

Another memorable passenger event occurred at Logan Pass. When we parked there, we typically gave our fare-paying passengers the opportunity to stretch their legs and look inside the visitor center. We would usually say something to the effect of “Okay, folks, it’s 11 o’clock. Let’s have everybody back here by 11:25 for departure.” On this day, our departure time arrived. I made a head count and found that I was two passengers short. Five, ten, and fifteen minutes went by. Two women passengers were nowhere to be seen. Other passengers were obviously growing worried about the friends that they had made on the tour.

I finally told the group to sit tight. I found a ranger near the visitor center and asked if there were any reports of injured or disoriented women.

The ranger said no, so I returned to my bus and wondered what to do. A woman in the back of the bus was sobbing, convinced that bears had devoured her friends! Finally, they showed up safe and sound. They had hustled up the boardwalk to the Hidden Lake Overlook! I was so proud of them that I couldn’t get mad. Needless to say, we were late for lunch at Many Glacier that day.

Once I drove a group of Australians to the Prince of Wales and picked them up again next morning. They were a great, fun-loving group, as enjoyable as any tour group I encountered that summer. On the Chief Mountain Highway, we entered a long straightaway before the uphill that climbs out of the valley. One of the Aussies inquired, “How fast will this bus go?” Since they were such a fun-loving group, I responded “Let’s find out.” I firmly planted the accelerator pedal to the floor, knowing that the uphill section ahead would scrub off any excessive speed.

As on my earlier deadheading run,

I started to “shake, rattle and roll.” Once again, the windows started to roll down due to excessive vibration, much to the amusement of the passengers. The top was billowing once again. A male passenger leaned forward, peering over my shoulder at the instrument panel, and proclaimed loudly, “He’s got the bloody thing up to 70!” It made my whole day.

I’d be remiss if I did not mention how important the employees of the lodges were in my Glacier summer experience. We gearjammers had the good fortune, due to our traveling, to meet many of the lodge employees. Since all the jammers were guys, our only source of female company was at the lodges. We tried to perpetuate the “Jammer Mystique” in competing with the guys who worked there. We naturally viewed our “Jammer Steak Fry” as the social event of the season, and we assumed that all young women employed by GPI were waiting for an invitation. I recall attending two of these events but straining a relationship with a young woman at Lake McDonald.

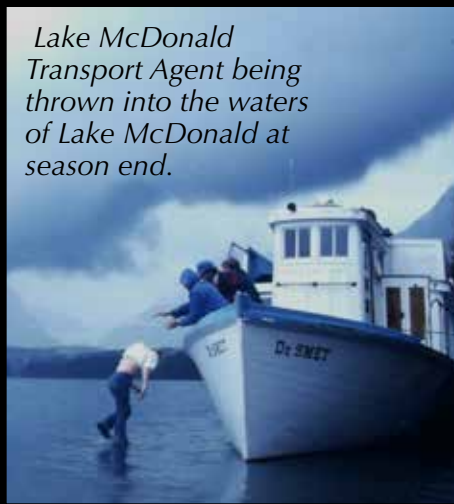
I heard of the agreed-upon date and location of the next steak fry while eating lunch at Many Glacier. Just prior to departing, I crossed paths with a very lovely young lady. I had spent an entire day with her hiking from Logan Pass on the Highline Trail to Granite Park Chalet and then over Swiftcurrent Pass and down to the hotel. I seized the opportunity to invite her to the steak fry, and to my pleasant surprise she agreed. All was fine until I arrived at Lake McDonald a few days later. Another young lady whom I had spent a whole day with spotted me. She inquired if I was attending the steak fry and said that she’d be avail-



Who can pack the most people into a phonebooth?

In & Out

Lake McDonald Transport Agent being thrown into the waters of Lake McDonald at season end.



able. Yikes! She was going to be my first choice, but I hadn't known when I would be at Lake McDonald, and I was sure that someone else would invite her. This excuse was not well received. I received the cold shoulder from her for the remainder of the summer.

Lake McDonald had a laid-back ambience, but Many Glacier seemed to have more going on with all the musical and theatrical productions there. I had the musical talent of a brick, but I very much enjoyed the Monday night Hootenannies. I recall some other events at Many Glacier with great fondness.

One of these events was the Fourth of July parade where Red Buses were decorated by different departments of the lodge. The weather was marginal as roving rain showers worked their way down the valley to the plains. The crepe paper which was draped on the buses proved not to be color fast. I was concerned that it would stain my canvas roof, and I made the unpopular decision to remove it and drape it on the sides instead. I recall that the putrid green-colored Park Service garbage truck was decorated with no great success. We did a slow trip through the upper parking lot and past the hotel portico honking our horns. A few of the employees risked subjecting their instruments to the rain and played on. The guests certainly enjoyed this annual tradition.

Another very fun experience at Many Glacier was viewing the "Many Glacier Olympics." I recall a large tug-of-war at lakeside between competing teams of the lodge employees. There also was a telephone booth on the north side of the hotel where they held a Telephone Booth Stuffing Contest. Teams competed

as to who could fit the most employees into the phone booth. Here diminutive employees were highly sought after.

I recall another humorous event at Many Glacier. In those days before cell phones, there were house phones mounted on the wall near the front desk. The hotel had an old-fashioned switchboard. The operator had to manually plug electrical cords into holes for the hotel rooms and for the outside world. When a guest picked up a room phone, a light would appear on the switchboard above the hole.

One day I went to make a call on a house phone. The operator asked what number I wanted. Then I heard her exclaim, "My, oh my! I've never had this happen before!" I stepped away from the house phone and glanced across the front desk. The switchboard was lit up like a Christmas tree, with dozens of rooms all wanting to be connected. She sat there not knowing what to do. After about 30 seconds the lights began to go out. The housekeepers and bell-

men swarmed the front desk. It was a practical joke where they all had synchronized their watches picking up room phones at exactly the same time. I wonder what Mr. Tippet thought of that one!

The lodge employees had annual traditions such as celebrating Christmas on July 25th. The jammers had a tradition as well. At season's end, we threw each transport agent into the nearest lake. Lake McDonald Lodge and Many Glacier had conveniently-located lakes a few paces away. Glacier Park Lodge required more effort, with a drive to Two Medicine to baptize the agent. The agents knew what was coming, and often a game of cat and mouse was played as we hunted down our elusive prey.

I would not trade that summer of 1978 for any other summer. Every trip I make back to Glacier sparks memories of hikes of unparalleled beauty with fellow employees, bus tours, entertainment in the lodges, free rides on the boats and long drives to Kalispell or Cut Bank to view a movie. They say you can't relive your youth, but it's sure fun to try!

*Author with Bus 98
at Logan Pass.*



*They say you can't
relive your youth, but
it's sure fun to try!*



*A creative Many Glacier
employee celebrating the
4th of July.*

My Family's Nine Decades in Glacier

From Sun Chalets in '36 to a Red Bus in '21

By Patrick Owen (*Gearjammer 2021*)

It was Christmas of 2020, when my wife Debbie said, "If you ever want to do that red bus thing, this would be a good year." That "red bus" thing was of course my long-held desire to be a jammer in Glacier. For the last ten years of my working life, I kept a model of the iconic red bus on my credenza in my office. I also kept the business card of Dave Eglsaer, the transportation manager for the Red busses that I kept from a chance meeting many years ago. Suddenly, I found myself with the real possibility of fulfilling the dream. After Debbie's comment, I gave the thought of being a Jammer some long thought (I think it was about 90 seconds) and I found the web site to apply and did. Shock of shocks, I got hired!

My history, or I should say our family history, goes back a long way. My uncle John Owen helped build the Going to the Sun Road, and one of my cousins worked as a cook for the tent camps in the 1930s. But the real family story starts in 1936 when a young 22-year-old girl from Excelsior, Minnesota took a summer job at the Sun Chalets as a chambermaid.

She had never traveled out of the state and her memoirs tell of her arriving at the East Glacier train station with a dozen or so young ladies escorted by the manager of the Sun Chalets (and my mother's seventh grade teacher), Helen Thorsen. They all stayed at Glacier Park Lodge that night and the next day took a red bus to the Sun Chalets. Never having seen mountains other than in books, she was overwhelmed by the majesty and beauty. She would talk about how hard the work was, but also never having so much fun.

One day a cowboy came to the laundry looking for someone to launder his shirts. My mother Beth volunteered on

the condition that the cowboy teach her how to ride a horse. A deal was struck between the young girl from Minnesota and the cowboy from Lodge Grass, Montana. He was the head wrangler at the Sun Chalets, a school teacher in the off season. A romance followed and they were married at the end of the 1937 season.

The real family story starts in 1936 when a young 22-year-old girl from Excelsior, Minnesota took a summer job at the Sun Chalets as a chambermaid. . . According to her memoirs, [those were] the best years of her life!

One of the wranglers who worked for my father at Sun was Ace Powell, the famous artist. They stayed connected over the years and in the 1960's Ace presented a painting of my dad rounding up horses in Sun Rift Gorge. One of the more interesting stories from the two years at Sun was that of the Saturday night dances held at Lake McDonald. At the end of the workday, everyone would get dressed up for the drive over Logan Pass and on to Lake McDonald for the dance. I never did hear how long these dances lasted, but the drive back at night over the then-gravel road and after some libations must have been interesting!

When they returned for the 1938 season, they found that there were no quarters for married couples, so they asked for and were transferred to Lake McDonald. He kept the same job as head wrangler, and she cooked for the wranglers. They worked there from the 1938 through the 1941 seasons. It was, according to her memoirs, the best years of her life! My sister Betsy was born in 1940 and spent the first two summers of her life at Lake McDonald. We have a picture of her naked on a bear skin rug in front of the lodge! She became quite the celebrity when sixty some years later she returned to the Lodge and worked two summers in the gift shop.

My first trip to Glacier was in the summer of 1958. Ever since, we have come back there either as a place to hold our family reunions or just to bring my family. In 1990, I took the job of "International Affairs Coordinator" working for the state of Montana. One of my tasks was to create tours for foreign dignitaries. I often found myself playing tour

guide to ambassadors, consul-generals, and the governors of Kumamoto, Japan and Guangxi, China. Showing off the Jewel of the Continent was an easy task!

All of which brings me back to becoming a jammer for the 2021 season. After three weeks of great training and obtaining my Class A Commercial Driver's License, I readied myself for the first tour. One day Debbie and I were exploring the lobby of Glacier Park Lodge and looking at the picture boards in the lobby that give some history of the various chalet complexes, now long gone. As we scanned the pictures, I saw one that showed five young ladies in their Swiss costumes on the deck of one of the chalets at Sun Point. Much to our surprise, one of those young ladies was is mother! This was a total surprise as no one in the family had ever seen it before!

I have flown high performance aircraft in the Marine Corps, landing on aircraft carriers, and I've flown Cobra helicopters in combat. The thrill of driving the iconic Red Buses of Glacier is right up there as one of the most exciting things I have ever accomplished. What a rush! Driving out of Glacier Park Lodge on the Big Sky circle, relating the cultural and natural history of the Park to the passengers, I found each of the fifty-two trips over Logan Pass were just as exciting and fulfilling as the first. What a summer!

JEFF MOW

Diverse adventures

(including being mayor of Alaska's smallest city)

prepared him to be superintendent of Glacier Park

Jeff Mow first heard about Glacier Park while ironing maps for the Geology Department at Carleton College in Minnesota. Two fellow student workers, Dan Maturen, and Dan Spencer, talk about summer adventures, working at Swiftcurrent Motor Inn.



Whitefish Winter Carnival 2015

(Photo, courtesy of The Whitefish Pilot.)

By John Hagen (Many Glacier 1970-80)

Jeff Mow first heard of Glacier National Park while ironing maps in the Geology Department at Carleton College. Ironing maps?! In the pre-internet age, the school was a repository of maps for the U.S. Geological Survey. A sturdy cloth backing was attached to each map's underside with glue that was activated by a hot iron. Mow did this as part of his student work duties. As he went about it, he heard two fellow students – Dan Maturen (later a Glacier Park ranger) and Dan Spencer – talking about their summer working at Swiftcurrent Motor Inn.

Mow's path from that episode to the superintendency of Glacier, he says,

was "anything but a straight line." A picturesque variety of jobs and of experiences prepared him for the challenges of managing Glacier.

Mow grew up in Los Angeles. He learned a love for nature through family trips to the Sierra, Scouting, and the Yosemite Institute. In the eighth grade his school took him to the Institute (on which the Glacier Institute is modeled) – a nonprofit organization partnering with Park Service, which offered education programs in Yosemite National Park.

An instructor who had a strong influence on him worked summers as a ranger in Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve.

Mow completed a bachelor's degree in Environmental Education. He then attended graduate school in geology at the University of Michigan. He taught geology at a community college and worked as an electrician in Los Angeles. Reading blueprints and working in a construction trade were useful background for his later work on infrastructure issues.

Mow's path from that episode to the superintendency of Glacier, he says, was "anything but a straight line."

Mow spent four years as an instructor at the Yosemite Institute. During that time, he enrolled in law enforcement training to qualify him as a ranger. He followed his mentor in taking a position at Glacier Bay.

Alaska

Mow was hired as a seasonal backcountry ranger. In Glacier Bay, the “backcountry” designation referred to patrols afloat, in kayaks and small motorboats. Mow checked licenses and permits and assisted private boaters in distress. He remembers rescuing a grounded fishing boat, using his patrol boat to keep tension on a line to keep the fishing boat from swamping as the tide came back in.

Mow’s second summer at Glacier Bay was in 1989. The catastrophic Exxon Valdez oil tanker spill had happened a few months before. It befouled beaches with raw petroleum, and it devastated wildlife. Over the course of two winters, Mow helped lawyers for the Department of Justice prepare for litigation over the spill. He assembled documentary evidence and exhibits, including a warehouse full of freezers stuffed with oil samples, dead sea otters and oil-soaked birds.

Next Mow was hired for a permanent Park Service position. It was at Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in Skagway, Alaska. He managed the transboundary Chilkoot Trail, which is half in Canada and half in the U.S. This was excellent background for his later work with Parcs Canada in Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park.

Initially Mow saw Skagway as a “turnstile park,” where young Park Service officers start their careers

but move quickly to other locations. Mow, however, loved the Klondike Gold Rush assignment and stayed in Skagway for four years. He met his wife Amy, a seasonal archaeologist, there.

Adventures in the Arctic

Mow applied for a District Ranger position in Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. It was based in the Inupiat village of Anaktuvuk Pass, 125 miles north of the Arctic Circle, in the heart of Alaska’s Brooks Range. The Anaktuvuk Pass Ranger Station is the northernmost duty station in the National Park Service.

The Inupiat people in that area were the last nomads in North America. Until 1959, they had followed caribou herds around the Brooks Range. Discovery of oil on the North Slope in Prudhoe Bay transformed their lives. An airstrip was built; there were jobs; there was money to build homes and schools. The people continued hunting, fishing and other traditional pursuits, while absorbing modern culture. Mow recalls, “The challenges of a traditional culture adapting to modern lifestyles were both wondrous and sad.”

As district ranger, Mow worked with visitors hiking and camping in the park. The goal was to minimize disruption of the village by tourists and to ensure that natural and cultural resources were not destroyed. Mow also sought to keep people from camping where their tents would be blown down by landing planes. He designed a visitor center on the Dalton Highway, for travelers headed further north to Prudhoe Bay. Amy’s skills in archeology were also put to good use by the Park Service.

One of the counterintuitive aspects

of life in the Arctic is limited travel in the summertime. Mow observes, “For Native Alaskans living in the Arctic, summer is a cruel joke of tussocks, wet ground, and mosquitoes. In wintertime when the tundra is frozen, travel can be limitless.”

After two years, Mow and Amy took a promotion to an even smaller village – Bettles Field. It had a population of around forty people and a 5,000-foot airstrip, built during World War II. Bettles served as operations center for the 8.5-million-acre Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve. Most visitors to the park catch floatplanes in Bettles, and it is a hub of summer activity.

As Chief of Operations, Mow followed his predecessor and joined the Bettles Field City Council. He was late to his first council meeting. Upon arrival, he learned that he’d been nominated as mayor of Alaska’s smallest incorporated city. Mow asked the Department of Interior’s Ethics Office whether he, as a federal official, could hold local elective office. They concluded that, in such a rural location, “everyone needs to take their turn.” Mow was elected in a landslide, by a vote of 17-0.

The mayorship was no idle formality. Mow recalls: “People whom I’d had dinner with the night before were in my face the next day over where planes were parked at the airfield or why a road wasn’t plowed.” He oversaw construction of the 35-mile-long Ice Road which connected Bettles Field to the Dalton Highway in the winter. He also was obliged to act as fire chief (the fire chief needed a break from duties), and he was the only EMT in town.

After three years of these adventures, and with a child on the way, Mow

transferred to the Park Service offices in Fairbanks, where he managed subsistence issues for Gates of the Arctic and the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve.

The discovery of oil in Prudhoe Bay and the infrastructure needed to transport that oil required settlement of state and tribal land claims. The ANILCA statute, passed in 1980, created 50 million acres of parkland. It provided for hunting, trapping, and other subsistence uses by local residents. The Park Service had to balance these uses with recreational and environmental values. This balancing, while unique to Alaska, was useful for Mow's leadership in Glacier.

Adventures in Washington

In 2001, Mow was awarded a prestigious two-year Bevenuto Fellowship in Washington, D.C. During the first year, he served on the staff of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and as a legislative specialist for the Park Service. It was a turbulent time in the capitol, marked by 9/11, the D.C. sniper attacks, and anthrax in the Senate Office Building.

Mow prepared legislation, attended hearings, briefed members of Congress, and experienced vigorous lobbying. He was involved in heated discussions on expediting the completion of a World War II Memorial on the National Mall. It was vital to honor the urgency felt by aging veterans, while retaining the integrity of laws meant to protect the mall from being overrun with memorials and souvenir stands.

During the second half of the fellowship, Mow worked in the main Interior Building, in the Office of

Legislative and Congressional Affairs. Recalling Bismarck's quip that "laws are like sausages; it is better not to see them being made," he says that he now "learned the other side of the sausage-making process" – administration.

Mow was given Park Service projects in the Northeast region, which were vastly different than those he'd handled in Alaska. Park units in the east tend to be smaller and much more reliant on partnerships with counties, states, private landowners, and nonprofits.

In the aftermath of 9/11, Mow was assigned to work on draft legislation for a Flight 93 memorial in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. He had to identify the stakeholders in the project (e.g., victims' families, local communities, and landowners) and involve them in the planning. Mow notes that it's crucial to give stakeholders a voice in the design of a memorial, but not in its maintenance and operation. He drafted legislation for the memorial, which later was approved by Congress, designed by stakeholders, and placed in operation.

Florissant Fossil Beds

Next Mow became superintendent of Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument in Colorado. Volcanic silica there has preserved the fossils of insects, leaves, and massive Sequoia trees, helping us to understand what life was like twenty or thirty million years ago. The park's offices were located in old farm buildings. Mow had to handle major infrastructure problems, including rodent infestation and deferred maintenance.

Although the park was small, its proximity to Park Service regional offices in Denver meant that new initiatives often were tested there.

One was a collaborative interagency forest management initiative following the biggest forest fire in Colorado history. This was helpful background for Mow in handling forest fires a few years later in Glacier.

Back to Alaska

In 2005, Mow returned to Alaska as superintendent of Kenai Fjords National Park. Climate change was impacting it dramatically. When Kenai Fjords was established in 1980, trails and interpretive waysides had allowed visitors close contact with the Exit Glacier. Twenty years later, the glacier had melted too far away for a meaningful experience, and some of the infrastructure had been flooded. Mow and his staff innovated with flexible and less expensive infrastructure that could be adapted to rapidly changing conditions.

Mow explored ways to make the park's operation carbon neutral. Using Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs), he convinced local utilities that there is a market for renewable energy. Kenai Fjords also invested funds in electric vehicles, hydrogen fuel cell technology, and alternative fuels.

The park's climate change and adaptation efforts drew attention. Kenai Fjords hosted many notable visitors, including President Obama, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the American Evangelical Association. One delegation, in 2006, included Senators Hilary Clinton, John McCain, Lindsey Graham and Susan Collins, focused on the impacts of climate change in Alaska. McCain recalled learning Robert Service's Arctic poem "The Cremation of Sam McGee" in Morse Code tapped by another prisoner of war in an adjacent cell in Hanoi.

Deepwater Horizon

In 2010, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill devastated beaches in the Gulf of Mexico. States, counties, cities, federal agencies and British Petroleum worked together to shut down the flow of oil and clean the landscape. Mow (with his Exxon Valdez experience) was assigned to take leave from Kenai Fjords and serve as the Department of Interior's Incident Commander. Between the Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Department had as much land affected by the spill as any state.

During the beach cleanup, machines were used to sift oil from the sand. If they cleaned too deeply, they'd sterilize the beach, killing microorganisms that played important roles in the ecosystem (including breaking down of oil). Some authorities placed an overriding value on bringing tourism back to the area and opted for the deeper sterile cleaning. The Park Service chose to emphasize integrity of the natural ecosystem and sifted at a coarser degree.

Glacier Park

In 2013, Mow was appointed superintendent of Glacier Park. Railroad issues were an immediate priority. Grain spills, which sometimes lured bears to their deaths on the tracks, had recently been addressed. Now oil trains were an urgent issue. Trains of 110 oil cars, heading westward from the Bakken oil fields, were traversing Glacier's southern boundary. There was danger that a derailment might spill oil into the Flathead River.

Mow drew on his experience working with oil spills, with corporations, and with laws such as the Oil Pollu-

tion Act. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad was genuinely cooperative. It slowed train speeds, held drills, pre-positioned response equipment, and funded inventory and mapping studies. Fortunately, there were no spills, and the number of oil trains has sharply decreased.

Blackfoot Relations

Mow set a high priority on good relations with the Blackfeet. In 2014, Mow attended an historic treaty-signing ceremony with his counterparts from Parcs Canada. The Canadian and American tribes of the Blackfoot Confederacy signed an "Innii Initiative" for reintroduction of bison. Mow worked personally with the tribes and with associated bands to advance this project. It would place a free-ranging buffalo herd on a shared landscape including Glacier, Waterton, and tribal lands on both sides of the border.

The Innii Initiative fostered other collaborations between Glacier and the Blackfeet. One is the Chief Mountain Initiative to reduce cattle grazing in the Many Glacier and Chief Mountain areas. Elk studies and range health studies are underway both in the park and on the reservation. The park is working with the tribe on managing culturally sensitive areas such as Chief Mountain, which has seen increased recreational use.

Mow's paradigm for tribal relations was "to sit around the table, rather than sitting across the table." Large landscape collaborations, such as the Crown Managers partnership and the Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent, provide excellent opportunities to work on shared issues.

Since 2015, the park has held spring blessing events at Logan Pass with

tribal officials and Blackfeet employees of the park. In 2020, Mow cooperated with the tribe in responding to the covid pandemic. In 2021, the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council gave him the Blackfeet name of Nas-toyiistakiimitsi, or "Holy Backbone."

The Reynolds Creek Fire

Mow's tenure as superintendent was marked by three big forest fires – Reynolds Creek (2015), Sprague Creek (2017), and Howe Ridge (2018). Each fire required complex decision-making and evacuations. Mow has vivid memories of them all.

The Reynolds Creek Fire erupted in steep terrain south of Going-to-the-Sun Road, close to Deadwood Falls and the Gunsight Pass trailhead. Mow got word of the fire while traveling to Missoula. He turned around and quickly was confronted with major decisions.

Explosives rarely are used to fight fires in national parks, but Mow permitted their use here. The terrain was so steep that he didn't want to expose firefighters to risk. Detonation cords were laid down the hill-sides, and fire lines were blasted with dynamite.

The fire lines prevented the blaze from moving toward Logan Pass, but it spread quickly eastward. The summer had been intensely dry. Not only the lodgepole forest but alpine dwarf pines at higher elevations and even moss on the ground took fire. The main blaze blew rapidly along the highway corridor. Mow ordered evacuations at Rising Sun and at St. Mary. Employees were told, "Get out! Don't take anything!"

Fortunately, few other fires were in progress. The Reynolds Creek Fire

was the highest priority fire in the nation. Resources immediately were available. A Type 1 fire incident team (the highest classification) was brought, and a large base was set up quickly near St. Mary. Mow recalls Chinook and Sikorsky helicopters hovering over St. Mary Lake gulping up huge amounts of water and dumping it on the fire.

Mow also remembers, “Our biggest fear was that the fire would go over the hill [over Siyeh Pass] and burn the forest on Boulder Creek.” Had that occurred, Babb, Many Glacier and Swiftcurrent all would have been at risk. He says, “We dusted off the Many Glacier evacuation plans, and we established trigger points.”

The firefighting effort continued for weeks. St. Mary and Rising Sun were saved, but many days elapsed before employees’ belongings could be retrieved. Mow recalls that some longtime employees came back “shaken to the core” by trauma. “Moving forward,” he says, “we needed to make our staff more flexible, adaptable, and mentally prepared.”

The Sprague Creek Fire

In August of 2017, a lightning storm ignited seventeen small fires. Park Service crews extinguished sixteen of them. The remaining fire, on Sprague Creek above Lake McDonald, was in steep, difficult terrain. Firefighters who sought to rappel from helicopters found the approach too dangerous.

Hundreds of thousands of gallons of water, dropped on the fire by helicopters, failed to put it out. The fire team was short of equipment. By contrast to 2015, there were many other fires competing for resources.

Mow recalls that members of the incident team went home on leave and plundered their local fire caches for hoses and rolls of fire wrap.

The protective wrap was placed around several buildings threatened by the fire, including the Mt. Brown fire lookout and the Burton Wheeler cabin. At Sperry Chalets, however, the rolls of wrap were too heavy to place on the upper storey of the main chalet.

Unusual weather doomed the chalet. Fires typically simmer down at night, but thermal bands at high elevation made the Sprague Creek Fire more active. The prevailing winds shifted perversely. A flying ember penetrated the building and it burned in a nightmarish fire, leaving only the stone walls.

Next morning, Mow talked with Doug Mitchell, executive director of the Glacier National Park Conservancy, and several of the members of its board. The Conservancy raises private funds for the park. They agreed on the profound historical value of the chalet and discussed how it might be best preserved.

With winter approaching, they agreed that the first priority was to stabilize the stone walls of the chalet to preserve the option of rebuilding. There was no time to go through the complex procedure of advertising for a government contract. The Conservancy hired an engineering firm to assess the project, then paid for a crew to stabilize the walls.

Meanwhile, intense effort had to be focused on containing the Sprague Creek Fire. The fire made menacing runs down the forested mountain slopes toward Lake McDonald. Lake McDonald Lodge and miles of

precious cedar/hemlock forest were at risk.

The McDonald Valley had been evacuated. Smoke was exceptionally thick. The Park Service set up “Rainwater for Rent,” a commercial irrigation system, at the lodge. Sprinklers also were set up at Avalanche Campground.

Mow resisted suggestions aggressively to cut down trees in the valley. The mature forest there (the furthest eastward extension of cedar/hemlock forest in the Northwest, juxtaposed with nearby prairie) is a precious aesthetic and natural resource. Well-balanced firefighting methods preserved it from the Sprague Creek Fire.

Autumn rains and snows finally extinguished the fire. The stabilization project preserved the historic stone walls at Sperry Chalets. The chalet was magnificently rebuilt, through an ongoing public/private partnership between the Park Service and the Conservancy. The effort was given vital support by Ryan Zinke, the Secretary of the Interior, who grew up in nearby Whitefish, Montana.

The Howe Ridge Fire

The Howe Ridge Fire in 2018 began on the southwest side of Lake McDonald. The ridge, on the west side of the lake, had burned in the Roberts Fire fifteen years before. Firefighters believed that fuel on the ridge was mostly expended and that the new growth there would be too fresh to burn. Historically, fires in so recent a burn scar had not supported high levels of fire activity.

“Super scooper” aircraft dropped hundreds of thousands of gallons of water on the fire. Mow attended a

late-afternoon briefing with firefighters in Apgar. The weather forecast seemed benign, and no one anticipated a crisis.

Just after the briefing, the fire exploded. A soaring column of smoke and embers collapsed and very rapidly spread the fire. As evening fell, it fiercely ran up Lake McDonald and around its northern end. Mow issued evacuation orders for Lake McDonald Lodge, Kelly's Camp, and other locations on the lake.

Local communities sent resources to help defend the park. The Whitefish Fire Department sent a fire boat, and other boats were jerry-rigged with portable fire pumps. Several towns sent structural firefighting trucks. The Burton Wheeler cabin was saved through heroic firefighting work. Lake McDonald Lodge survived once more.

Mow reflects on the Paradise Fire, which blew up in California shortly after Howe Ridge. It displayed very similar behaviors and tragically killed about 80 people. The Howe Ridge Fire mercifully involved no loss of life, but there were narrow escapes amid the urgent evacuation.

Firefighting efforts continued for weeks. To the west, a fire break was created along the Inside North Fork Road, with the help of "masticator" machines that devoured brush and fallen timber. Mow remembers fire smoldering in the duff in the "deep, dark and decadent" cedar/hemlock forest to the north of the lake. The fire burned into the roots of tall trees, causing them to collapse and endangering fire crews.

Mow recalls that the U.S. Climate Assessment for 2018 had a photo of Howe Ridge on its cover. He states

that "from a climate change perspective, fire was the big agent of change in my time."

Covid

In March 2020, Mow remembers, there was a stretch of beautiful weather. He received emails from rangers saying, "We've never seen so many cars at Lake McDonald!" Vehicles overflowed the lots at Lake McDonald Lodge and were parked along the sides of the road.

Then came a telephone call from Steve Bullock, who was governor of Montana. He said, "We're really concerned about levels of visitation in the park. We'd like you to shut it down." The covid pandemic was breaking out, and authorities everywhere were scrambling to respond.

Mow met with public health directors for Flathead County, Glacier County and the Blackfoot Tribe. All agreed that Glacier Park should be shut down, with no definite sense of when it might reopen. Mow gave orders to close the park.

When May came, Flathead County was willing to have Glacier opened for visitation. The Tribe, however, concerned for its elders, did not want non-local people in. Mow decided to open the west side entrances and leave the east side entrances closed.

Mow reflects, "That was hard for the park, to have the two sides treated differently." He adopted a creative approach that allowed some use of the East Side while respecting the Tribe's desire to keep the gates closed. Going-to-the-Sun was opened as far east as Rising Sun, so that travelers could enjoy the St. Mary Valley, then turn around and depart through West Glacier.

Mow salutes "great collaborators" who worked with the park on an ongoing basis during the pandemic – the Public Health Service, the Indian Health Service, the Tribe, and Glacier and Flathead Counties. He commends the lodging companies, Xanterra and Pursuit, for their cooperation with covid testing and other protocols. He kept in touch with the West Side and East Side business communities, and he's pleased to recall how those relationships worked out.

The Visitation Surge

Visitation to Glacier took a monumental surge of about a million annual visitors during Mow's tenure. It was driven largely by social media. Mow reflects: "Glacier is visually so powerful. When you look at visitor social media posts of Iceberg Lake, it's clear that everyone's trying to outdo each other."

Mow recalls a striking vignette illustrating this point. Bob Adams, a veteran ranger, reported extraordinary lines of people at the outhouses at Iceberg Lake. Most people weren't there to use the toilet. They were waiting to change into bathing suits to take photos at the lake!

Mow encouraged his staff to try new approaches in dealing with the visitation surge. He often left decision-making in the hands of local rangers, notably with parking problems at Polebridge and Many Glacier. He notes that Sally Jewel, a business executive who became Secretary of the Interior, found that there was little incentive to experiment in the department, for fear of failure. Mow sought to encourage experimentation.

A prime example of this was the reservation system for private vehicles using Going-to-the-Sun Road. The

Mow observes that “a national park is like a ship. The executive officer, the assistant superintendent, keeps it running well. The superintendent is like the captain, makes sure it is headed in the right direction.”

Montana Department of Transportation planned a Highway 2 reconstruction project for 2021. They bluntly told Mow that the project could not succeed unless the park ended closures of Going-to-the-Sun. Those closures had taken place more than 30 times in 2020, when the road was saturated with traffic. They often caused backups of two to three miles of cars idling on Highway 2.

Mow and his staff consulted with

spend more time with his 99-year-old father and with his son who lives overseas.

Mow continues to work in Glacier as a volunteer at the Burton Wheeler cabin on Lake McDonald. The cabin was an inholding owned by a famous Montana senator in the early twentieth century. Mow recalls a recent visit to the cabin by Phil Jackson and Bill Bradley, a former senator. Bradley noticed David

and committed to the park and its resources.”

Mow reflects that he did a lot of public speaking about the park and that audiences appreciated candor. He says that they welcomed “a look behind the curtain – a behind-the-scenes perspective about how the park functions and thinks about issues. I was always comfortable about being transparent because I was genuinely interested in hearing from

Through seas that were frequently turbulent, with covid, the visitation surge, and three big fires, Mow masterfully kept Glacier Park on course.

local business owners and communities. They designed the reservation system in weeks – very quickly, by the standards of Park Service planning. It was a difficult undertaking, but it was effective, and the Highway 2 project succeeded. Moreover, as Mow notes, “after the first year, many of those same stakeholders encouraged a second year of ticketed entry.”

Retirement

In 2021, Mow was asked to take an 8-month assignment as Regional Director for Alaska. He left Glacier in the hands of “a well-oiled staff” who successfully managed the second year of ticketed entry for the road. Mow retired in December 2021 to

McCullough’s biography of Harry Truman, pulled it down from a shelf, and surehandedly found a passage on Wheeler, which he read aloud. That historical awareness left an enduring impression on Mow.

Mow recalls speaking with another former senator, Pat Roberts, who worked at Lake McDonald Lodge in the 1950s. Mow recalls him musing over and over, “It hasn’t changed a bit,” which he took as a success on the part of the park. Mow notes that, unlike his other assignments, “Glacier is an old park, deeply rooted.” He says that “I never have felt local communities being so tight

the public about their perspective.”

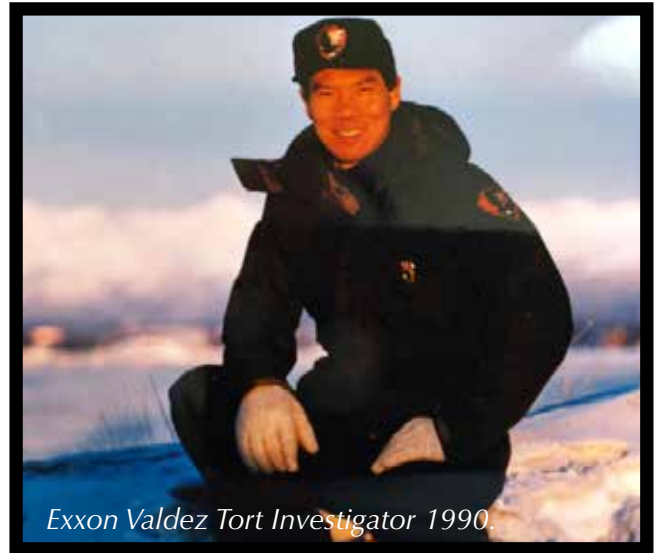
In conclusion, Mow observes that “a national park is like a ship. The executive officer, the assistant superintendent, keeps it running well. The superintendent is like the captain and makes sure it is headed in the right direction.”

Through seas that were frequently turbulent, with covid, the visitation surge, and three big fires, Mow masterfully kept Glacier Park on course.

Mow continues to work in Glacier as a volunteer at the Burton Wheeler cabin on Lake McDonald. The cabin was an inholding owned by a famous Montana senator in the early twentieth century.

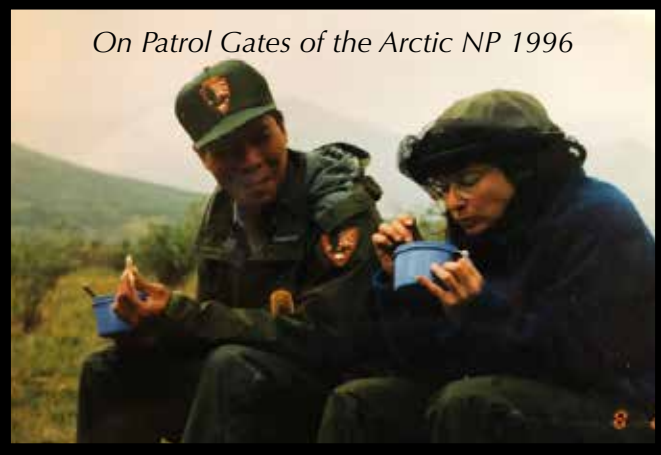
Adventures in the Arctic

Glacier Bay NP Seasonal Ranger Staff 1989



Exxon Valdez Tort Investigator 1990

On Patrol Gates of the Arctic NP 1996



Brooks Ranger 1998



*(Photos from
Jeff Mow's
personal
collection
unless
otherwise
identified.)*

Back to Alaska

Adventures in Washington, DC



*Senate Energy and Natural
Resources Committee 2001.
(Photo courtesy of Sam Bishop,
Fairbanks Daily News-Miner.)*



Glacier at Kenai Fjords NP 2006.

Glacier National Park, Montana

At Sperry Chalet with Dick Anderson Construction Crew, 2018



Waterton and Glacier Park Management Teams, 2018

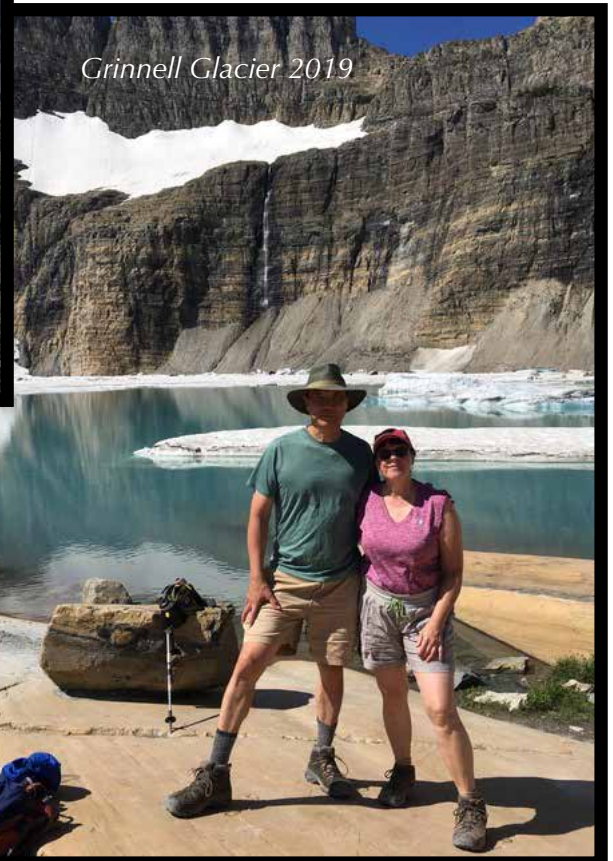


Jeff Mow on trail in Glacier National Park.



(Photos from Jeff Mow's personal collection.)

Grinnell Glacier 2019



Mow observes that “a national park is like a ship. The executive officer, the assistant superintendent, keeps it running well. The superintendent is like the captain, makes sure it is headed in the right direction.”



A Road Bike Runs Through It

(All photos courtesy of the Gary Slater collection.)

By Gary Slater (*Many Glacier 2006*)

Witnessed at Logan Pass at dusk on August 22, 2019, was an unusual sound. It was poetry. Rising and dissipating into the clouds that billowed eastward across the pass, the words came from memory and stirred with righteousness and conviction. I'll admit no longer knowing whose idea it was to recite entire poems from Robert Service or lyrics from Townes Van Zandt. Yet there, at the apex of an adventure that had been anticipated for years, it was unquestionable that regular words simply would not suffice.

Had you been there that evening, you would have seen two bedraggled men sitting on a bench by the Visitor Center parking lot. These men, both 36, were the poetry's source, and though they grimaced from exhaustion and their cycling clothes stank from sweat, still they yawned as could best befit such a momentous occasion. If you were to ask, "Were these men Zac J. Rubin and yourself?" I would answer: yes, we were they. And if you were also to say, "Isn't it a little odd for two grimy, grown men to sit by themselves in a parking lot reciting poetry?" I would concede that, sure, yes, it would be reasonable for you to have that impression.

But then you've also probably never circumnavigated half of Glacier National Park by bike in a single day. To borrow a line from Townes Van Zandt, then, I'd ask that you please "hold your tongues until after I've spoken" and let the story thus begin.

First of all, there was nothing particularly poetic about most of what we experienced that day. Oh sure, I could share some profound moments—and I will. But across a giant

Wind, rain, sunlight: you're exposed to them all, just as you push up every climb, glide down every descent, modulate speed for every turn, or bump across every pothole.

For the longer rides, you also get a lot of time to look around and think, which may seem boring, but it's usually not. There's a physicality about it that's enough to keep your thoughts from becoming too untethered, propelled as you are by the strength of your own legs as

"Isn't it a little odd for two grimy, grown men to sit by themselves in a parking lot reciting poetry?"

governed by your will. Still, challenges do exist; the bike becomes an agent of pain,

particularly in the saddle, and the stresses and strains and isolation of the journey become a test. This all comes amidst other risks, whether those are from extreme or unusual conditions like avalanches or rock slides, from harsh weather, or above all, from drivers on the roads. But it's almost always worth it, and not just in retrospect, but also in the doing.

That was certainly the case for our ride that day. It was an unlikely story that had brought us to that moment, though perhaps no unlikelier than anything else. I'd flown into Kalispell the day before, being met by Zac at the airport and taken to retrieve my bike, which I'd shipped to Montana

counter-clockwise loop that began and ended at the West Glacier Park entrance, a loop that encompassed seventeen hours, 136 miles, and 9,000 feet of elevation gain, a lot of the day consisted in a kind of low-grade plodding. That's how it goes with road biking, which is a mode of transportation that bears some distinct features. Unlike mountain biking, for example, road biking offers comparative smoothness and speed, with bikes that have thin tires and lightweight aluminum or steel frames. Unlike driving, road biking entails traversing a landscape not just in terms of what you can see or the ground you can cover, but in the direct feeling for every contour of the land as it interacts with the weather.

particularly in the saddle, and the stresses and strains and isolation of the journey become a test. This all comes amidst other risks, whether those are from extreme or unusual conditions like avalanches or rock slides, from harsh weather, or above all, from drivers on the roads. But it's almost always worth it, and not just in retrospect, but also in the doing.

That was certainly the case for our ride that day. It was an unlikely story that had brought us to that moment, though perhaps no unlikelier than anything else. I'd flown into Kalispell the day before, being met by Zac at the airport and taken to retrieve my bike, which I'd shipped to Montana

from Texas. I'd first met Zac in 2006 working at Many Glacier in the first summer after college. I'd been drawn to work at Glacier from all the stories about my parents having met there while working at Many Glacier in the era of hootenannies in the late 1960s. Zac and I had had adventures before, including scaling Glacier's Heaven's Peak in 2006 and pursuing multi-day cycle treks in the Scottish Highlands (2009) or near Big Bend National Park

in Texas (2013). But still, this was the big one, this ride. This was the biggest unfinished business.

I wish I could give you a clear explanation for what

motivated us to take on the task of doing the ride, though maybe it's best not to try to overthink it. Let me at least put it this way. In addition to road biking's unique attributes and the fact that Glacier is singularly spectacular, we had a drive to find out whether we could actually pull it off, the can-we-really-do-this charge that adds such frisson to the challenge. This is important since I suspect that, like a lot of life experiences that seem rare, the biggest thing preventing more people from doing a ride like this is the feeling that they can't do it. In that regard, it certainly helped that I'd done big road biking adventures before, even if nothing within a single day quite so majestic as the ride I'm retelling now.

Also crucial was the element of teamwork. Zac and I have lived different lives since we first became friends fifteen years ago. He owns and operates his own company,

Glacier Glamping, on his land in Coram, just a few miles from the west entrance to the park. Zac also recurrently works in Antarctica as a craftsman, as well as inside Glacier Park. As for me, I am a researcher in religious ethics living in Germany with my wife, Anne, and our twin 4-year-olds James and Rosie—though at the time this story took place in 2019, we were living in Austin, Texas. Whatever the diver-

day, we figured it would be better to do the Highway 2 stretch mostly in morning daylight as opposed to after dark in the evening—all the better to avoid fast-moving and dangerous traffic. Third, since the West-to-West loop has an obvious crescendo along its Going-to-the-Sun stretch – do I even need to name it? – we thought, how much better wouldn't it be to hit that at sunset and know that all that remains is a flat or descending

I wish I could give you a clear explanation for what motivated us to take on the task of doing the ride.

. . . Let me at least put it this way. In addition to road biking's unique attributes and the fact that Glacier is singularly spectacular, we had a drive to find out whether we could actually pull it off[.]

final thirty miles, as opposed to the late morning, when there would still be more than a hundred undulating miles remaining? Altogether, the case for counter-clockwise

was open-and-shut. The story of the day breaks down into its three key stretches. These can be taken in turn.

gent life circumstances, the factors that initially caused Zac and me to become friends remain constant, and certainly one of those factors is a shared love for adventures like this.

So, reasonably in shape and reasonably young, we'd put a little thought into how we'd go about the day. The obvious strategy would be the counter-clockwise approach with an early start and, assuming decent progress, with stops for meals in East Glacier and St. Mary. There are at least three reasons why it makes sense to proceed this way. First, the West-East stretch along Highway 2 is long – just over 55 miles – but not particularly steep for the bulk of the stretch. This is a good way to start, not having to push too hard when all the day is still ahead, and also with the prospect of the psychological boost of knocking out over fifty miles before breakfast. Second, since we knew that it would be well past dark when we'd be finishing the

was open-and-shut.

The story of the day breaks down into its three key stretches. These can be taken in turn.

Stretch number one:
West Glacier to East Glacier; distance: 55.4 miles; climb: 2,812 feet; duration: 5:30-9:45 am.

We set out early at 5:30: early, though not as early as we'd planned. We'd driven over in Zac's truck from his place in Coram and parked in the lot at the west entrance to the park. Feeling stiff, we filled water bottles and got the gear on, which for me was just a waterproof windbreaker and Arkansas Razorbacks jersey and stretchy shorts and plastic shoes that click into the pedals. It was, of course, dark, and pretty cold, and the area was completely deserted. The road shone with the water from a rain that had fallen earlier in the night. Setting out on Highway 2, we proceeded slowly alongside the

Middle Fork of the Flathead River, paralleling the tracks of the old Great Northern Railroad. I mentioned that I'd share some poetic moments, and here is one: watching the sky change from black to blue in those first moments of the dawn, I could see silhouettes emerge of the range of peaks that includes Mount Pinchot, Mount Phillips, and Mount Stimson. I thought: how big are those mountains, how vast this land of rocks and trees and forms of life so little altered by human powers! How ceaseless is the sunrise, mundane and even monotonous, but so striking when noticed, as with now, in the right context. Life, baby. Life!

The rest of this stretch was, as hoped, basically smooth, as High-

way 2 dips to the southeast before turning to the north at about its halfway point. There is a crest over the Continental Divide near Bison, plus a steep-ish gradient rising out of the river valley, but a lot of the stretch is steady but not sharp. We faced a little rain in the middle of the stretch, at about 8:00 am, and the climb out of the Flathead Valley was a moderate push. Most striking was the shift in landscape as we crossed over the crest of the Continental Divide, as green forests give way to a huge expanse of rolling prairies of brown grass stretching endlessly toward the eastern horizon, which that day sat below heavy clouds. Crossing over the divide, I recall experiencing a strange melancholy that took the form of doubt about strength and thoughts about senescence. But this is not a story about senescence; it's a story of triumph. So let's move on. We were able to cross over into the east-

ern side of the park reasonably on schedule, at a bit over four hours for 55 miles. That's not a fast pace, but it would turn out to be the fastest of the day. We ate breakfast at the Two Medicine Grill in East Glacier. It was delicious.

Stretch number two: *East Glacier to St. Mary*; distance: 30.4 miles; climb: 2,861 feet; duration: 11:00 am-2:45 pm.

If you were to guess the single most painful moment of the day, what would you say? Would it be the biggest climb, the most extreme weather, the road construction we were about to face? No, the most painful

"[G]et back on the bike." "Get back on the bike."

moment was none of these things. Rather, it was simply the moment I sat back down on the bike after our long and leisurely breakfast. Stiffness and soreness, creakiness and tenderness all wrapped together in one raw and painful moment: that was the beginning of stretch number two, which was the shortest of the three in terms of distance, but also the most consistently rugged in its topography.

While stretch number one had been mostly one long steady climb with a slight drop at the end, this stretch had essentially no flat parts, but was mostly a series of ridges and hills. Wearying. And wow, that first rise! Coming up off Lower Two Medicine Lake toward Kiowa junction, we faced what was by far the steepest and most intense climb thus encountered. It's the sort of climb that involves just shifting to your lowest gear and pedalling as slowly as you need to without falling over. I recall that the sun had also come out by

then, and the air was warmer, and the uncomfortable cold pre-breakfast had given way to its opposite. But as the ridge got crested, the struggle was instantly redeemed. Behind, off to the southwest, through and beyond the Two Medicine area of the park, were mountains upon mountains and sky upon sky. Ahead was an exhilarating bobsled-track-style series of turns and drops toward Kiowa Junction.

We dropped past Kiowa down into Highway 89, settling into a groove of rising and falling with the ridges. This became, frankly, a bit of a slog. Not helping was the fact that the stretch of 89 here was undergoing

significant road construction and repaving, which meant a series of

stretches along gravel and mud and other crappy, bumpy surfaces. Somewhere right around Cut Bank Creek and Starr School Road toward Browning, we came across a road closure for serious construction. This resulted in a moment where we genuinely weren't sure how to proceed. Do we walk the bikes up the hill? Try to find a detour? In the end, we were given a lift by a road maintenance worker, who let us ride in the bed of her pickup truck for 1-2 miles through to the end of the construction zone. (Perhaps you think that being given a lift for 1-2 miles means that we didn't actually complete our accomplishment of circumnavigating half the park, or that we somehow cheated; if so, then I invite you to complete the day on your own.)

Eventually, we came into view of a brown, grassy ridge we were sure meant the beginning of a drop into St. Mary. It must have been about 2-3:00 pm by now, and the temp-

tation to sit in the bushes and the brush was stronger than you might imagine. It was here that a simple phrase came to mind: “get back on the bike.” “Get back on the bike” became a sort of mantra for the day. The thinking here was that, yes, my body feels horrible, and there are pains in my hands and knees and tendons, but this is also just one single day, one single huge day, and if we just keep going we will finish eventually, no matter how late at night. After another push up the ridge, less long but more exhausting than the one toward Kiowa, we got to enjoy a huge rush of a drop down into St. Mary. Whoosh! I’d driven that Highway 89 stretch into St. Mary more than a few times over the years, but never until that day had I known – really known – how dramatic it could be. That’s just one of the things about road biking. We settled into the Park Cafe for a late lunch. It was delicious.

Stretch number three: *St. Mary to West Glacier*; distance: 50.2 miles; climb: 3,317 feet; duration: 4:15-10:30 pm.

The Going to the Sun Road needs no introduction. Our task for stretch three was simple but significant: traverse the entirety of the Glacier National Park’s most iconic road from east to west. In some ways, this stretch was more familiar than those that had preceded it. Aside from having driven this road lots of times, I’d actually cycled stretches of it before – at night in the moonlight, for example, having been shuttled up to Logan Pass and coasting down to Rising Sun (it’s a life experience I very much recommend; my wife and I did this, in fact, as part of our honeymoon). And of course cyclists ride this highway all the time—at some

peril, I might add, including here in 2021 with a near-disaster of an avalanche in May that almost buried three cyclists west of Logan Pass. Still, after more than eighty miles already behind us, and a mix of stiffness and exhaustion and sheer excitement at the fifty-plus miles yet remaining, the sense of something special, of a reckoning, was palpable.

Honoré de Balzac supposedly said that our worst fears lie in anticipation, and that may well be true. But there’s surely also an opposite effect that’s possible, which is to say a kind of empowerment that comes from knowing that the biggest test is about to begin, and that if you get past it, you’ve made it. There was a sense that getting to Logan would be decisive; if we could do that, we knew all would be victorious, no matter how long it took us. That’s highly motivating. But we knew it would be hard, and it was. Heading through the park entrance just before Rising Sun, the riding was eerily calm, deceptively so. A climb deferred: when does it start? The answer to that question lies near the western end of St. Mary Lake, as the road rises sharply toward the sky. This was a tough segment coming up off St. Mary Lake and up to Jackson Glacier Overlook, with low visibility and a sharp climb amidst dense forest. It’s as though someone took the line of a straight road and just slanted it upward by an angle of about 45 degrees.

Oh, but how transformative is that landscape, especially as you approach Siyeh Bend and Logan Pass comes into view! The world opens, the trees become sparser, the sky becomes somehow nearer, and the peaks become sharper and better defined. After a big, optimistic stop at Si-

yeh Bend, we were riding on pure excitement. Get back on the bike. We were in the upper echelons now, the rarefied climes, having entered an empire of moss and rock and ice. I savored the approach to Logan Pass. It was the culmination of some kind of life aspiration mixed with a profound sense of present-awareness. Looking back on this moment now, an ancient maxim comes to mind, which is that one should strive to be worthy of the things they encounter. For us then, encountering on our two-wheeled machines a landscape carved into spectacular shapes across millions of geologic years, gliding on pavement engineered to give the public some access to this land, our worthiness was debatable. But the striving was real. Thankfully there are some photos from this stretch, which capture not only the changing light of the late afternoon approach to the Pass but also the billowing of the clouds from west to east. When we did at last reach the Pass, Zac and I paused for some photos. Which is how we arrive at two bedraggled men reciting poetry on a bench.

Telling it this way makes it sound like Logan Pass was the end. It wasn’t. What followed in that last stretch was descension and darkness: first glorious, then grueling. We stopped at a look-out immediately upon setting out to the west from Logan, and with the light from the setting sun at peak brilliance and the clouds continuing to blow through, we felt like the lords of all creation. Light, clouds, wind, earth... and bicycles. Titans of the elements we were. And then we descended, down past the Garden Wall, and I can’t remember whether it was raining or if we just felt the spray from the waterfalls along the wall (but I

think it was raining, even though the sun was also shining), and I can't remember if the drop down into the valley lasted twenty minutes or for a thousand eons (as Townes Van Zandt put it in a passage I'd just recited: "time was like water, but I was the sea/ I wouldn't have noticed it passing"), and I think it must have been just enough of a slow glide so as not to die by riding off the side of the cliff, and I think the ride at that point must have been just punctuated to allow a triumphant glance over at Heaven's Peak and ponder the thirteen years that had passed since we'd climbed it. But not-dying and punctuated glances aside, mostly this period was an undifferentiated blur, a continuum from high into low, light into dark, day into night. And at the far end of that spectrum, were we done? We were not, not at

all, since there is, after all, over thirty miles between Logan and West.

The segment along Lake MacDonald was a weird postscript to the day. It was dark. We were tired. The incline of the road was purgatorial, sloping neither up nor down. The stretch certainly felt longer and slower than expected. And I suddenly realized how hungry I was. (That's another detail about long road bike rides: the intense appetite you work up. You're burning so many calories, after all.) So somewhere near the beginning of Lake MacDonald, in dark trees, we stopped for a final shot of trail mix. We'd brought headlamps, and the bikes had lights on front and back, but these are of course more to be seen than to, ourselves, see. Get back on the bike. The effect upon resuming the ride was to feel like a strange

sort of free-floating consciousness, which is another poetic moment worth sharing. Darkness surrounds, and yet still the bicycles float forward toward their destination. As the lights of Apgar Village at the end of Lake MacDonald came into view they appeared fixed, like stars, which flickered as their light was obstructed by the trees we passed alongside but could not see. They mocked us, those Apgar lights, but we triumphed, making it to Apgar and then turning toward West for the last two miles, past Glacier Park housing and then past the park entrance and then, weary, worn, but unquestionably victorious, rolling back up to Zac's truck.

We had returned from whence we'd come, the parking lot at West. And

(Continued on page 27)

A Rising Sun Summer

By Tess Wentz (Rising Sun 1977)

I was a freshman at the University of Minnesota Duluth when a friend brought a brochure to the Dining Hall about working in Glacier National Park for the summer. Thinking it sounded like a fun adventure, I sent my application in, and after a few weeks received notice of my job placement (dishwasher) and the location (Rising Sun Motor Inn).

Two days after school ended, several others and I boarded the Amtrak and headed out to Glacier. There were lots of laughs and stories and guitar playing and singing the entire way out. We arrived late at night, and homesickness hit me hard immediately.

Everyone was very friendly, and it didn't take me long to feel comfortable at Rising Sun. I roomed with Monica, whose hometown was Las Vegas, and Robin from Montana. We had a blast getting to know each other, and even though we had very different personalities it worked out great.

We started working early the next day, reporting to the kitchen and meeting the head chef Tiny (who wasn't Tiny at all!). He made us a huge breakfast and showed us the ropes, giving us our white aprons which were required in the kitchen. There were always two of us stationed at dishwashing duties during the busy times, and when it quieted down we would also bus tables and take down the buffet. The work days went really fast because once the season was in full swing it was always busy.

I was a little unprepared for hiking in the mountains as I had only brought my tennis shoes. My roommate, Robin, was so kind and offered to lend me her hiking boots. Each day we had off, employees not scheduled for a work shift would pack a lunch and go on all day hikes together. To get to the trailheads, we would usually hitchhike, as most of us did not have a car. The hike I remember most vividly was the one where three of us were coming down the mountain and we heard a bear

growl. It sounded very close to us, and even though we had been warned not to run, we ran the entire way down the mountain!

A good friend of mine worked at Lake McDonald, and I would go over to hike with her when we had the same day off. One of my favorite hikes was Sperry Glacier, so breathtakingly beautiful. One time after a long hike it was decided that I would stay at Lake McDonald for the night, sleeping on the hardwood floor as no extra beds were available. I still remember that as the worst night sleeping (or not sleeping) ever.

My family came out to visit me late in the summer, and I decided to take the train back home with them, cutting my summer job short by a few weeks. The night before I left, everyone threw me a big party, giving me a poster of a mountain goat and signing it with well wishes. It was a wonderful experience, and I have no regrets about spending the summer of 1977 at Rising Sun!

A GLACIER PARK KID'S STORY

Glacier Park Adventures in the 1940s and '50s



My camera was a Kodak Baby Brownie. It probably didn't cost more than a couple of dollars, but it brought me a lifelong interest in photography.

(All photos courtesy of the Ralph Chase collection.)

By John Chase

I had the good fortune to get a start in life just down the road from the railroad station in what is now East Glacier Park. In 1937, when I was born, the community was known as Glacier Park Station. My family lived

move luggage from the railroad station to the hotel and back.

My uncle Ralph continued working as a porter into the 1930s. He played a small role in bootlegging operations during Prohibition. Large packages wrapped in brown

by the Glacier Park Hotel Company as an electrician on the maintenance staff.

By 1932, all the Chase boys had married local girls. Jim established Chase's Cabin Camp on the present site of Jacobsen's Cottages in East Glacier. Ralph established Cut Bank Sheet Metal Works. My father did what little electrical work was available and leased and operated the Standard Oil service station for several years, beginning in 1933.

I had the good fortune to get a start in life just down the road from the railroad station in what is now East Glacier Park.

on the corner where the Mountain Pine Motel is located today.

A Family Legacy

My father, Myron Chase, and his brothers Jim and Ralph grew up on a farm in Wisconsin. In the 1920s, they were hired as baggage porters at the Glacier Park Hotel (also called "the Entrance," now Glacier Park Lodge). Porters were responsible to

paper arrived in baggage cars. Ralph delivered them to designated parties at the hotel, who dealt with distribution to interested guests.

My father enrolled in electrical school in Chicago following the 1926 season. He listed his address as Glacier Park, so he clearly intended to return there. In 1927, he completed his course work and was hired

Clark Gable arrived at Glacier Park Station in the '30s for a hunting expedition. He was skunked, and he disgustedly decided to get rid of his rifle. He stopped at the Standard Oil Station, and that Remington .35 and the story of its acquisition is still with the Chase family.

In late 1941, my father got a job with Boeing in Seattle. December 7th rolled around, and anti-aircraft cannons and barrage balloons appeared in our neighborhood. I remember being fingerprinted, at the age of

My family lived on the corner where the Mountain Pine Motel is located today.

four, so that I could be identified if I were killed in an air raid.

After the war, in 1946, my family returned to Montana. We bought my grandparents' house in Kalispell and visited friends in the townsite at Glacier Park. One of them was Cy Stevenson, Chief Engineer for the Glacier Park Hotel Company.

Cy's residence was along the second fairway of the golf course. When we arrived, an airplane was parked beside his home. It appeared to be an ex-military training plane, an AR-6 Texan. Local gossip had it that the plane belonged to Cy's younger sister. During the war, lots of women were employed to ferry aircraft from factories to places where they were needed. War's end resulted in thousands of aircraft being available for

my first bike excursions was intended to be to the train station. The way went past the horse concession, and I stopped to admire the horses.

Bill Salois waved at me to come in. Bill was several years older than I and was tending the horses while all the adults had dudes out on rides. He wanted to make a deal – if I would let him ride my bike, I could ride his horse.

The next thing I knew, Bill was tooling down the road on my bike and I had the reins to a horse in my hand. Bill apparently presumed that I was smart enough to get myself up on the horse, but it didn't work out. I was just too short to get a foot up to the stirrup. The horse was really gentle and willing to put up with my failed attempts to get aboard.

ing trip with my father and me up Midvale Creek, Moe decided to bite a porcupine. That did not turn out well. After a fast trip back to the cabin, Moe was wrapped in a blanket to more or less immobilize him. The extraction process with needle nose pliers began, a most unpleasant experience for all concerned. That was followed by a trip to the vet in Cut Bank.

Train Photos

My camera was a Kodak Baby Brownie. It probably didn't cost more than a couple of dollars, but it brought me a lifelong interest in photography and some professional employment. Taking pictures of trains became an obsession that I've never been cured of.

The photo of me at the start of this article captures an experience vivid in my memory banks. I still have kind thoughts for the engineer who helped me get up into the cab and then used my Baby Brownie to record the event. Being in the cab by myself was intimidating – HOT, HOT, WOW, and the roar of the fire in the firebox was spooky. Every time I see that photo, 74 years later, I relive the experience. I wouldn't trade it for anything!

Elsewhere, the Glacier Park golf course beckoned. My brother Myron Jr. and I hunted for lost golf balls and occasionally caddied. (Father Halligan, who had baptized us long ago, was problematic to caddy for, since he was prone to remark that he hadn't seen us in church on Sundays.) My earnings from the sale of golf balls and a few caddy jobs were enough to pay for a new folding camera, a step up in the photo world.

We went fishing in Midvale Creek

In 1948, I was equipped with a camera, a fishing pole, a good set of boots, and a new bicycle.

a very small investment. The plane ended up at the Kalispell City Airport, where it sat for years, evidently needing repairs and parts.

At Home in East Glacier

In 1947, my parents rented a place for the summer in the Glacier Park townsite. What a great place to spend a summer as a kid! My brother Myron Jr. and I had a great deal of freedom, provided that (1) we let mother know where we were going and (2) we were on our best behavior at the railroad station and at the hotel. Father knew almost everyone in town, so there were to be no wayward antics.

In 1948, I was equipped with a camera, a fishing pole, a good set of boots, and a new bicycle. One of

Bill eventually came back with the bike. He boosted me up into the saddle, but my ride only lasted a couple of minutes. All I could lay claim to was that I had actually been on a horse – a first for me. It all worked out okay in the end. Bryant Graves (another family friend) owned the horse concession, and I did get several free rides later in the summer.

The prospect of peddling the bike around town proved to be mostly an illusion. The free-ranging local dogs had no experience with bikes, and their instinct was to chase them and take a good bite out of them. So the bike didn't get much use.

We had a dog of our own, a cocker spaniel named Moe. On a fish-

with grasshoppers for bait. We figured out that the best fishing was behind the dam in the reservoir. We soon were emphatically told that this was the town's water supply, and that the practice must stop.

Mother had friends from previous days whom she liked to visit. Often Myron Jr. and I would go along. One favorite, for obvious reasons, was Harry Dunn and his soda fountain in the Mike's Place building. We also visited Theodore and Emma Last Star, Julia Wades-in-the-Water and others in the Blackfeet camp on Midvale Creek just west of Glacier Park Hotel.

Electrical Adventures

My father was working as an independent electrical contractor, under the name Chase Electric. We went with him on small jobs at Lake McDonald Hotel and various ranches.

In 1950, when I was in junior high school, my father worked much of the summer at Hugh Black's St. Mary cabin camp. The restaurant's

electrical service was being replaced, and there were several other upgrades and an emergency job or two.

One task was placing a new wooden pole outside the St. Mary restaurant to support electrical wires running into the building. The former pole had rotted off. To protect the new pole from rotting, I was sent to the garage across the street to procure some buckets of used motor oil. We poured the oil into the ground around the base of the new pole. Environmental consciousness was minimal in 1950!

I remember an emergency project when the water pump failed at St. Mary. The water supply would have been exhausted by the next morning. I took a midnight trip with my father to the Equity Supply Co. in Kalispell, rousting someone out of bed for a new motor.

Rewiring St. Mary Lodge

In 1952, Hugh Black expanded his cabin camp by building St. Mary Lodge. My father had otel the electrical contract, and Myron Jr. and I were his crew. I had just completed my freshman year in high school. If there were child labor laws in that

era, they were not being enforced at St. Mary.

The building was framed and completely enclosed when I arrived in June. I was wide-eyed when I entered the second-floor transformer room. There were three transformers, all taller than I was and about as big around as 55-gallon barrels. A custom-built electrical panel covered an entire wall. It had a very large master switch and a number of smaller switches to feed electrical panels throughout the building.

I often have wondered how my father and his assistant got those extremely heavy pieces of equipment to the upper floor. There was an "elevator" of sorts, with lifting power supplied by a truck outside the building with a winch. Had OSHA existed at that time, it would have disapproved of the arrangement, which sent someone to the hospital later on.

My brother and I were put to work on a platform outside the building. It was about 20 feet above the ground and just below a framework that anchored the incoming power lines. Nothing was energized at



LEFT. Julia Wades-in-the-Water, one of the first female police officers in America, at the East Glacier Blackfeet encampment.



RIGHT. Blackfeet with Glacier Park Hotel baggage porters in the late 1920s.



Baggage porters moved guests luggage between the railroad station and Glacier Park Hotel. Pictured from left to right are Harold Bender, Lu Shepard, and Ralph Chase. Photo was taken in 1928 in front of the Glacier Park Hotel Annex. Print is from the Ralph Chase collection.



The author's parents in the 1930s.

that point. Our job was to install a special cable that would allow high voltage lines to pass safely through the wall into the transformer room.

The cable was encased in a heavy steel pipe with end fittings called pot heads. The “heads” needed to be filled with an insulating compound after the wires were run through them. The insulating compound was like hot tar.

The wind was blowing as we poured it. Droplets of hot tar flew all over. Unfortunately, a worker was tending to newly-poured cement on a sidewalk below our platform. He bolted and roared at us when droplets of hot tar splattered on his back! Myron and I were not very popular for a while.

On the following days, we ran conduit from the main electrical panel to sub-panels scattered throughout the building. We pulled wire through the conduits, and we placed electrical boxes for switches, outlets, lights, and cases for heaters and exhaust fans. We got the wiring roughed in so that the carpenter crew could insulate and sheet up the walls. Father always inspected our work to ensure that it was done correctly. I look back and marvel at the level of responsibility we were tasked with.

Father explained that “on a construction job, time represents money. One trade’s lack of commitment must not interfere with another craft’s need to do their job.” We were expected to keep one step ahead of the carpenters!

During that summer, the movie Cattle Queen of Montana was filmed at St. Mary. Father took me to watch one sequence being filmed. The stars, Ronald Reagan and Barbara Stanwyck, were on horseback in a grove of trees. I treasured a couple of shots which I took with my 35 mm. camera.

I put those slides in a special "safe place," forgot where it was, and have not seen those pictures since.

Rats!

St. Mary Adventures

During that summer, the movie *Cattle Queen of Montana* was filmed at St. Mary. Father took me to watch one sequence being filmed. The stars, Ronald Reagan and Barbara Stanwyck, were on horseback in a grove of trees. I treasured a couple of shots which I took with my 35 mm. camera. I put those slides in a special "safe place," forgot where it was, and have not seen those pictures since. Rats!

Sometime during the summer, a crew showed up to film a commercial for General Motors. My father was asked to appear as a smiling driver operating his new Chevy on Going-to-the-Sun Highway. Dad emphatically declined. Marty James (Hugh Black's brother-in-law) got the job. I later saw that commercial and thought that Dad should have been the star! Oh well, opportunities lost!

Earlier I mentioned the "elevator" at St. Mary Lodge, which had no power source in the building, but was powered by a winch on a truck parked outside. Sadly, the inevitable occurred. The elevator, a load of construction material, and an unfortunate occupant made an unscheduled trip to the bottom. He had to be hauled to the hospital in Cardston, Alberta.

Midway through the summer, St. Mary Lodge was complete enough to operate. We worked all night getting the last of the kitchen equipment

installed for the opening day. That summer was a first-class learning experience for me, with lots of life lessons. It was great to be a Glacier Park kid!

That summer was a first-class learning experience for me, with lots of life lessons. It was great to be a Glacier Park kid!

Road Bike continued from page 22)

not that I thought of it then, but I name it now, the lines of the ancient philosopher Heraclitus, that you cannot step in the same river twice. Agreed, nor can you return to the same West Glacier parking lot twice, certainly not having cycled 133 miles through Glacier National Park. It was a moment worthy of Robert Service, who wrote words that had been quoted not so long before, but which bear repeating here. From

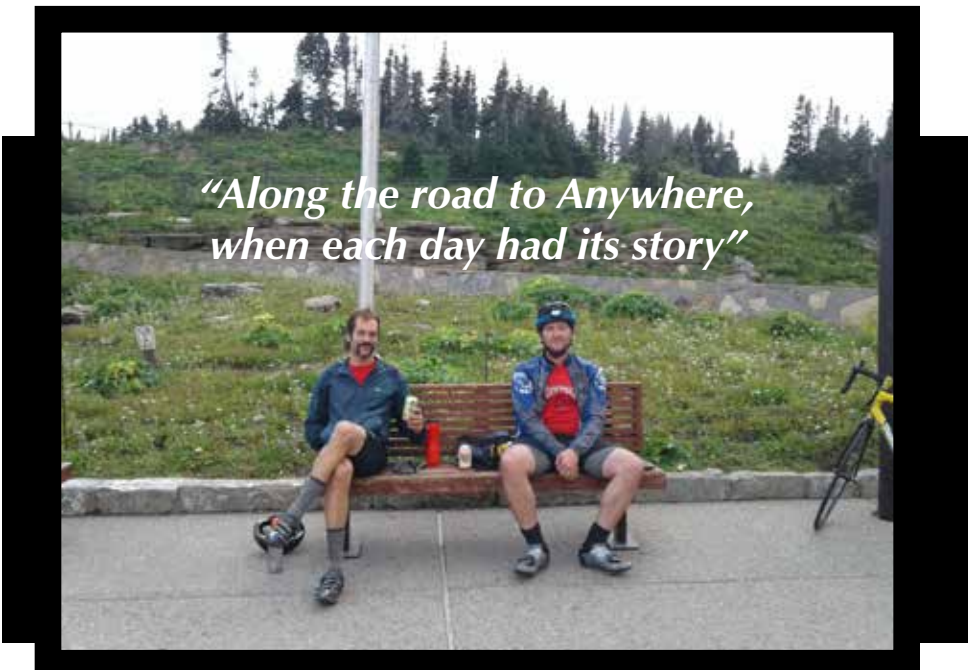
the middle verse of "The Tramps," a benediction:

"Along the road to Anywhere, when each day had its story!

When time was yet our vassal, and life's jest was still unstale!

When peace unfathomed filled our hearts as, bathed in amber glory!

Along the road to Anywhere we watched the sunsets pale..."



(Inside News continued from page 2)

Mr. Tippet's ashes up the steep slopes of Mt. Altyn to the South America snowfield. We prayed again and reposed the ashes in a natural grotto under a shelf of rock, looking down on Mr. Tippet's beloved hotel, many hundreds of yards below.

The Many Glacier Reunion

Mr. Tippet's memorial was part of a reunion of Many Glacier alumni. About a hundred people took part. The gathering was masterfully organized by the indefatigable Carol Dahle.

Two musical performances were staged in the hotel lobby. They reprised the great performances of the Tippet Era: the folk-themed Hootenanny and the classical-and-show-tune-themed Serenade.

Two musical performances were staged in the hotel lobby. They reprised the great performances of the Tippet Era: the folk-themed Hootenanny and the classical-and-show-tune-themed Serenade.

nanny and the classical-and-show-tune-themed Serenade. The gift shop, the backdrop of the Tippet Era shows, has moved downstairs. The reunion shows took place in front of the graceful balustrades of Many Glacier's Circular Staircase.

Mr. Tippet would have been pleased by the excellence of the performances. The Serenade was preceded by half an hour of preludes by a brass ensemble (the "Glacier Winds"). The shows concluded with group singing of Many Glacier's anthems – "Goin' Home" for the Hootenanny and "Jerusalem" (Mr. Tippet's school song) and "Hail to Thee" for the Serenade.

Xanterra

"Every season has its distinctive challenges, often in a progression which makes it seem that there were several summers." Andy Stiles, general manager for Xanterra's lodging concession, offered this reflection on the 2022 summer season.

"2022 began with an atmosphere of normalcy," Stiles continued, "where 2020 and 2021 had been marked by uncertainty." Those recent summers were overshadowed by the coronavirus pandemic. It shut down Glacier's East Side completely in 2020 and drastically impacted visitor service in 2021. Staffing was reduced by housing restrictions, whole floors

of guest rooms were shut down, food service was strictly grab-and-go, and bus drivers were encased in plexiglas.

By May 2022, these dislocations seemed to be resolved. Dorm room capacities were restored and international students were returning, although not yet in pre-pandemic numbers. Food and beverage departments could operate normally, and masking no longer was required.

At the very outset of the season, Many Glacier experienced a surge of covid cases among employees, who fell ill and had to be quarantined. Guest rooms were taken out of service at Swiftcurrent and on some Many Glacier floors to isolate covid-positive staff. Their symptoms

mostly were mild, but the impact on lodge operations was dramatic.

The Food & Beverage department made operational changes, which included going to buffet only. This continued for many weeks. Switching back to a la carte dining was a challenge, as cooks had to master making small individual portions again.

Many Glacier was the only lodge to have a large covid surge. Lake McDonald and other properties had cases on a smaller scale throughout the summer. By mid to late summer, conditions had settled somewhat. Stiles looks forward to a normal season in 2023, "back to what guests expect."

Red Bus News

Stiles notes that hiring and housing red bus drivers was a challenge last summer. Xanterra was able to fill about 80% of the driver positions, but some of the 35 historic Reds had to be left idle each day. Most drivers lived at RV parks a few miles outside Glacier, both on the east and the west side.

The red bus fleet is receiving another renovation. The buses were built by the White Motor Company from 1936 to 1939. Their motors have been replaced several times. In the early 2000s, chassis and axle failures led to a two-year shutdown, with the Ford Motor Company donating large-scale renovation work on the fleet.

The current renovation is being performed by Legacy Classic Trucks in Driggs, Idaho. It involves new chassis, new engines, and many other features – new heaters, new speakers, captain's chairs in the front, and legacy dashboards (with old-fashioned

speedometer dials plus up-to-date instruments for the drivers).

The buses are being renovated incrementally, in batches of several buses per year. Xanterra is paying the cost of \$250,000 to \$300,000 per bus, under its contract with the Park Service.

Pursuit

Pursuit (the former Glacier Park, Inc.) welcomed a new general manager last summer. Rob Spence is a Canadian, with background in Alberta's Fairmont hotels and in Colorado ski resorts. He succeeds Gary Rodgers, who was promoted to Chief of Operations for Pursuit's northwestern properties, including properties in Alaska, and will continue to work at Pursuit's offices in Columbia Falls.

Pursuit was able to fill 95% of its staff positions this summer, including international students from Europe, Japan and Thailand. It had excellent continuity in department managers and location managers. (the only new location manager, Bronson Albano at the Prince of Wales, had worked at the lodge for 12 previous years). Mike Rihner, the longtime director of music and performer at Glacier Park Lodge before the pandemic, was back at the lodge for two engagements.

Pursuit looks forward to hosting a major reunion of Glacier Park Lodge alumni and gearjammers from July 21 to 24, 2023. The reunion, a follow-up to GPL's centennial reunion in 2013, will mark the 110th anniversary of the lodge.

The Conservancy

The Glacier National Park Conservancy, which sponsors private philanthropy in support of Glacier Park,

resumed a number of programs this summer that had been suspended or scaled back in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic. One was ranger outreach to local schools. With Conservancy support, park rangers made monthly visits to classrooms in East Glacier Park, West Glacier, Babb, Browning, and nearby Hutterite colonies.

The Conservancy resumed its annual Logan Pass Star Party, in partnership with Glacier and the Big Sky Astronomy Club. About three hundred people enjoyed using telescopes and hearing presentations by astronomers and Blackfeet storytellers. Waterton-Glacier is the world's first designated International Dark Sky Park. Logan Pass features some of the darkest road-accessible skies in America, with no campgrounds or lighted facilities for many miles.

The Conservancy funded many environmental projects in Glacier. It supported conservation work by Blackfeet youth and young adults, and it staffed its traditional retail stores and book shops at Logan Pass, St. Mary, Apgar and West Glacier.

Mountaineering Tragedies

It was a summer of climbing tragedies in Glacier National Park. Among the victims was a prominent figure in Glacier's history – Brian Kennedy, editor of *The Hungry Horse News* from 1978 to 1999. A previous fatality, in May, involved a teenager on Mt. Brown. A fourth fall claimed the life of a 79-year-old man climbing up the lower slopes of Rising Wolf Mountain above the Two Medicine Campground.

Kennedy and his climbing partner Jack Beard were climbing Dusty Star Mountain, high above Victoria Falls at the southwest end of St. Mary

Lake. The rocks in which their ropes were anchored apparently gave way, and the two men fell about 800 feet down sheer cliffs. Glacier's sedimentary rock is notoriously prone to fracture and treacherous for anchoring pitons and pins.

Kennedy and Beard were expert mountaineers, with decades of experience in the park. The Glacier Mountaineering Society reported that Kennedy had climbed 230 of Glacier's 234 named peaks. He was widely respected. Lake McDonald alumni recalled his sensitive and respectful reporting of tragedy that struck them in 1980, when two employees died in a grizzly bear attack.

Snowpack and Fires

Glacier had a heavy snowpack last winter and an unusually cold and rainy spring. This led to one of the latest openings ever of Logan Pass and Going-to-the-Sun Road. After plowing of the Big Drift west of the pass, the road was opened to trans-divide travel on July 13 (the latest date in history, matched in 2011 and 2020).

Thanks in part to the heavy snowpack, Glacier had only one major forest fire this summer. This was the Quartz Fire, which burned around 1900 acres in a remote location on high mountain slopes south of Quartz Lake. There were a couple of extremely small fires on Flattop Mountain and near Park Creek.

Commercial Air Tours

The "Thirty Years War" over helicopter tours and airplane tours over Glacier is drawing to a close. The Park Service called for an end to these tours in Glacier's General Management Plan, in 1999. But the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has jurisdiction over the airspace, and it refused to impose a ban.

For decade after decade, the CHOP-CHOP-CHOP of overflights remained a constant annoyance in the park. The Quiet! Glacier coalition of citizens' groups worked doggedly to end the stalemate and implement the General Management Plan. (See *The Inside Trail, Fall 2018*.)

Eventually, a lawsuit was brought against the FAA and the Park Service by a group called Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER). A federal appeals court ordered the agencies to take action in Glacier and other national parks in 2021.

In September 2022, Glacier issued an Air Tour Management Plan in conjunction with the FAA. The plan will end all commercial air tours by Dec. 31, 2029. In the intervening years, the park will allow a maximum of 144 tours per year. These flights are restricted to the Going-to-the-Sun Road corridor on the west side of the park, and cannot extend to Logan Pass.

A Famous Ranger Passes

Famed Glacier Park ranger Lyle Ruterbories died in December 2022 at the age of 102. Ruterbories was the longtime ranger at Kintla Lake. He likely was the oldest ranger in America when he retired at the age of 97, after the 2017 season.

Ruterbories and his wife Marge originally worked in Glacier as volunteers at Avalanche and Apgar. In 1991, they were hired by the Park Service to work at Kintla – Lyle as ranger and Marge as the campground host. Marge died at the age of 87, but Lyle returned to Glacier year after year.

His robustness was legendary. He split wood for campers and went on hiking patrols from Kintla Lake

to Bowman Lake, over towering Boulder Pass. His amazing longevity supports John Muir's famous observation that time spent in Glacier is not subtracted from your life span.

Izaak Walton Inn Sold

The Izaak Walton Inn, just outside Glacier on Highway 2 at Essex, has been sold by its longtime owner Brian Kelly. The new owner is Loge Camps, a hospitality company based in Oregon that focuses on outdoors enthusiasts. Loge has said that it will preserve the hotel's historic character.

The Izaak Walton was built in 1939 beside the Great Northern Railway tracks. It originally served as a dormitory for Great Northern workers. It has preserved a railroad ambience and a focus on railroad history through a succession of private owners.

GPF director and historian Mark Hufstetler offers this memory of the hotel: "In the 70s and early 80s, it was owned by Sid and Millie Godrich ... Millie collected wind-up wall clocks, and there were maybe a dozen of them in the dining room, and when they all chimed at once the din was remarkably cool."

Glacier Mountaineering Society Founder Dies

Denis Twohig, age 83, founder of the Glacier Mountaineering Society died in early January, 2023.

Denis led the Mountaineering Society by example. Accompanied by his

ties with others of a like spirit.

Early members included a number of Glacier 'Old-timers' who dated back to the first days of park history. Early supporters included J. Gordon Edwards (author of the original Glacier Climber's Guide); Bill Wanzer, (son of early horse wranglers who grew up in the early horse camps); Warren Hanna, a Many Glacier employee during the park's early years, (he was an influential lawyer and author of many legal textbooks and historical books dealing with Montana and California history); and John Mauff, a Chicago social worker and musician who spent time in Glacier throughout his adult life. (He was best known as an accomplished pianist and long time climbing companion of Gordon Edwards.

As the old-timers passed on, leadership and participation was taken on by younger mountaineers who shared his passion.

During the early 1980's, both the Glacier Mountaineering Society (GMS) and the Glacier Park Foundation (GPF) organized, grass root groups of park supporters to emphasize the importance of people as part of both the ecology and history of Glacier National Park.

The GMS emphasizes backcountry access and safety (emphasis on 'off trail use'). The GPF focuses on people's history as an integral part of both the history and values of park

The Twohigs explored the park with great passion, sharing its beauty with others of like spirit.

wife Shirley, they were inseparable on Glacier's slopes. They were one of the most productive "climbing families" in Glacier's history, only to be bested by the Edwards' family (Gordon, Alice and Jane). They explored the park with great passion, sharing its beau-

management, maintaining a balance between use and protection of Glacier's special resources.

Both groups have flourished, asserting themselves into the evolving destiny of Glacier National Park.

Glacier Park Lodge Reunion Approaching!

John Dobbertin, Jr. (GPL '62 & '63)

Coming soon! Snow is falling on the peaks of Glacier National Park. And the summer of 2023 is just around the corner.

So pleased you have made your reservations for the great reunion in the historic Glacier Park Lodge. We'll celebrate the Lodge's 110th year this

coming July 18 to 21.

Please go to the Glacier Park Foundation's website and watch the video on the history of Glacier Park Lodge. Of course, you'll want to see the video for Lake McDonald and the video on the history of all the lodges as well.

We're planning great daytime events for the reunion. There will be eve-

ning entertainments in the Grand Lobby.

If you're coming from a distance it's a good idea to look at travel plans. Glacier National Park has been discovered and advanced planning is advised.

Looking forward to seeing you at Glacier Park Lodge in '23!

Thanks to our generous donors!

The Glacier Park Foundation gratefully thanks the generous donors who've recently contributed funds beyond their membership dues. GPF remains an all-volunteer effort. We deeply appreciate the extra contributions which help fund our projects and our publications.

Tom Anderson

(in memory of Bill Rollie)

Gary Barron

John Mulrooney

Laura Chihara

Fergus Prestbye

Rosella Dambowy

Sally Rollie

Wendy and Lenny Dupre

(in memory of Bill Rollie)

(in memory of Bill Rollie)

Dean and Martha Sayles

Brian Dutcher

(in honor of Bill and Marie Blunk)

Todd Eliason

Mark Schneider

John and Patricia Endicott

Sharon Schimnowski

William and Sondra Fondren

Steven Schultz

Estate of Tom & Ellen Francis

Byron Schwab

Dr. Russell Gersten and

Laura Shearin

Dr. Joseph Gimino

John Slater

(in memory of Bill Rollie)

Robert Slater

Sylvia Geshell

Gail Sonnemann

John Hagen

Jim Thompson and Margaret Dowling

Karen Heller

Carl Van Valkenburg

Susan Krebs

Alan and Lynn Wegner

Steven Marquardt

Mac and Judy Willemsen

Conn McKercher

John Wolcott

Gretchen Miller



Superintendent Jeff Mow and Blackfeet Tribal Chair Tim Davis reopen the St. Mary Entrance to Glacier National Park in 2021, after a year's closure for the pandemic.

(Photo from Jeff Mow's personal collection.)

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.glacierparkfoundation.org) or send your name, address, phone number, and park experience to Glacier Park Foundation, Box 15241, 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.

