

*Board Members*

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 Advisor.....David Cameron [camlind@richpoor.net](mailto:camlind@richpoor.net)  
 Webmaster .....Mike Kahler



Greetings everyone! We have had very productive work parties this summer and the weather has been on our side. We continue to check Forest Service property and private property during our work parties to help guard against vandalism. And at our last work party in August, some of our members did some extensive brushing along the road between Twin Bridges and Haps Hill. We continue to stock the bulletin boards at the clay slide and in the town site with our brochures. They have been a popular item this year !



At our next work party on September 20, **we will meet at a different area, right at the Barlow Pass gate.** We may be able to use the new road on that day and will proceed together in a caravan if that is the case. If not, we will drive in to our usual meeting place by the MCPA picnic table. Remember, lunch and drinks are provided by the MCPA but please bring extra food and water as well as rain gear, work gloves and good sturdy boots or shoes.

You also need to carry your signed and notarized MCPA waiver form in your vehicle at all times inside the gate. Please let us know if you need one; we carry extras with us at all work parties.

As noted in previous newsletters, please **mail your membership forms to: MCPA, Box 471, Everett, 98206.** Sometimes they are, instead, mailed to one of our board members. This only delays processing the membership forms, so be sure to use the above address which will expedite it.

The next board meeting is scheduled for September 23 at 6 pm. We hope to see everyone at the next work party on September 20, 9 am, at the Barlow Pass gate. And as always, we appreciate your membership and support for Monte Cristo.

Sincerely,  
 Kal Klass, MCPA President

## Historical Essay A Brief History of the Mountain Loop Highway, Part 1

There was little need for the highway until 1932. In 1893 Snohomish County completed a wagon road to Monte Cristo up the South Fork Stillaguamish River from Granite Falls in conjunction with construction of the Everett & Monte Cristo Railway, which reached Monte Cristo that September. As long as the railroad operated, first as the E&MC, then as a branch of the Northern Pacific Railroad, and finally from 1915 to 1933 as the Hartford Eastern Railway, passenger and freight traffic moved fairly efficiently. Above Robe Canyon that dependability lessened sharply, however, due to frequent floods, problems with the six tunnels in the canyon, and a lack of revenue sources. This was especially true between 1897 and 1900, when the railroad was badly storm damaged and its owners decided not to rebuild for an extended period.



Courtesy Forrest Johanson

Slide at Tunnel #4, 1910.  
The Robe Canyon tunnels were a constant problem, keeping section crews busy and alert. This one eventually was blown apart and turned into an open

County. Starting money was allocated, and by the onset of winter a preliminary route was surveyed up the north side of the narrow valley as far as Wiley Creek (the railroad had run on the south side past the base of Mt. Pilchuck from Robe to Red Bridge).

A series of contracts were awarded generally to Seattle companies during the following years, administered by the federal Bureau of Public Roads. As this was the depth of the depression, pay scales reflected that. In 1933, for example, the minimum wage for skilled workers was \$.65 per hour, with \$.55 for the unskilled. The following year, under Democratic New Deal standards, the rates were changed to \$1.20 for skilled, \$.75 for intermediate level, and \$.50 for unskilled work.

With the goal a route from Verlot, where a new ranger station was completed in 1936 (the present Verlot Public Service Center) to Barlow Pass, construction was divided up into consecutive sections spread out over a decade and funded through separate annual contracts. Progress also was maddeningly slow for those dependent upon its completion. A 1935 petition to the Everett Chamber of Commerce from upriver citizens demanded more speed, noting that at the present pace Silverton would not be reached until 1947!

(To be continued next issue.)

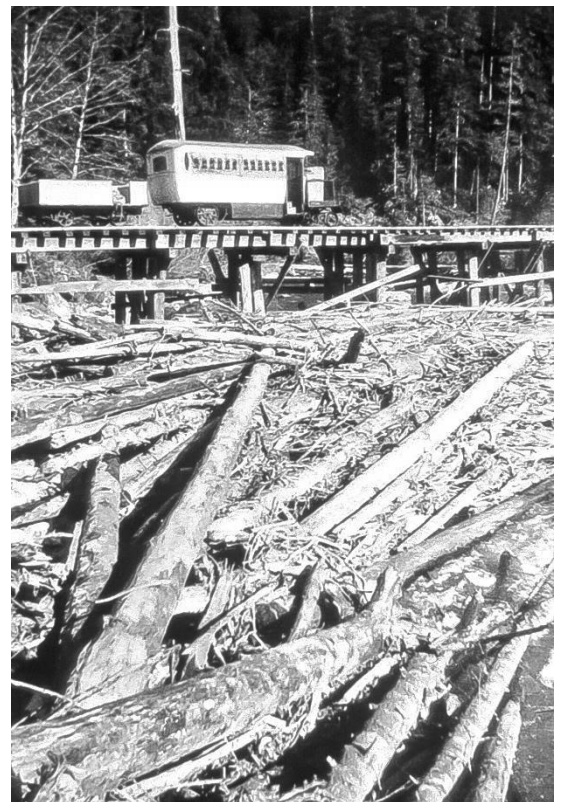
David A. Cameron

Another severe flood caused closure from December 1921 to July 1922. This prompted the U.S. Forest Service to attempt construction of a road on the north side of the river from Turlo to its ranger station at Silverton. From Granite Falls to Robe the county had improved its section, but not into the National Forest lands. The Forest Service work, however, bogged down due to little equipment, a lack of money, and competing needs, notably construction of the Index-Galena Road on the Skykomish Ranger District. By the beginning of the Great Depression these combined efforts did allow motor vehicles to reach Verlot.

In the spring of 1932 a combination of yet another massive flood and the effects of the financial crisis on the railroad's logging business and tourism to Big Four Inn above Silverton led to a permanent closure of regular service - cutting off residents, the Forest Service, and recreational opportunities above the end of the road.

Intense pressure was exerted on the Forest Service and the federal government to create a Mountain Loop Highway from Granite Falls to Darrington as a way to alleviate these problems. Most active was the roads and highways committee of the Everett Chamber of Commerce, chaired by attorney Perry Black. With strong backing from the Snohomish County and Seattle chambers, along with the commercial clubs of Arlington and Granite Falls and the Washington State Good Roads Association, Everett Congressman (later governor) Mon Wallgren, local residents, and property owners demanded action.

They got it.  
The railroad agreed to abandon its right-of-way, which it turned over to Snohomish



Courtesy Forrest Johanson

Debris buildups at Red Bridge were especially challenging for the Hartford Eastern during fall and spring high water events and caused its closure when its center support pilings were swept away.

**MEMBERSHIP FORM - June 2014-May 2015**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Area(s) of Interest/Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

**IF YOU WISH AN OPTIONAL BARLOW PASS GATE KEY:**

**For new members:**

Please download the required "MCPA Waiver/Release" at [www.mcpa.us](http://www.mcpa.us), have it notarized, then mail it to us with your check for \$42 to begin the process.

**For renewing members:**

For renewing members the present key is still valid, but if you need a new key: check here  and include the additional \$18 cost of a key to your membership dues.

**\$24.00 - Annual Membership**

Mail To: **MCPA**

**\$42.00 - Annual Membership + Key**

**PO Box 471**

**THANK-YOU!**

**Everett, WA 98206**

**MCPA CHARITABLE DONATION FORM**

I wish to donate to the MCPA. The amount I wish to donate is:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50    \_\_\_\_\_ \$100    \_\_\_\_\_ \$200    \_\_\_\_\_ \$500    \_\_\_\_\_ \$1000    \_\_\_\_\_ Other

**MCPA INTERPRETIVE CENTER DONATION FORM**

I wish to donate to the MCPA Interpretive Center. The amount I wish to donate is:

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Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail To: **MCPA**

**PO Box 471**

**Everett, WA 98206**

**THANK-YOU!**

**C.D. ORDER FORM**

This is a C.D. with pictures from Monte Cristo, up to 100 years ago. Cost: \$20.00 -Includes Shipping

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail To: **MCPA**

**c/o Kal Klass**

**3815 E Garfield St.**

**Seattle, WA 98112**

**Thank you for your order!**



Monte Cristo Preservation Assoc.  
PO Box 471  
Everett, WA 98206-0471  
[www.mcpa.us](http://www.mcpa.us)

**Work Party - September 20th**

«FirstName» «LastName»  
«Address 1»  
«City», «State» «PostalCode»