

Board Members

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Greetings everyone and welcome to a very nice Autumn! We had another great work party in September and the **final one for the year will be October 18**. This will be the only work party of the year in which we can drive in all the way to the Town site bridge. We hope everyone can partake and take advantage of the fall colors before it's too late. The Forest Service has been generous in giving us permission to use their new road on that day only. Please meet at their turnout by the gate on that new road, just down hill from Barlow on the gravel road toward Darrington. It is approximately ¼ mile north of Barlow Pass. We will wait until 9:15, and then proceed in to the Town site and we will lock the gate behind us. Then at the end of the work party we will once again lock their gate. So everyone must be out ahead of the last board member to leave.

As usual, lunch and drinks are provided by the MCPA but please bring extra food and water as well as rain gear, work gloves good sturdy boots or shoes. Lunch, of course, will be at the Town site. We plan to brush the Town site and Dumas. We also will have some work for chainsaws:

There is some wind fall by the Monte Cristo campground that can be cut and split for firewood and left at the camp sites for campers.

We printed more brochures this year so we plan to continue stocking the bulletin boards. Tourists really appreciate these brochures. There is garbage to also haul out, especially from the large outhouse by the main campground. We will be cleaning out both the Haps Hill and the large campground outhouse, and then bagging up any garbage left over from tourists.

Remember, you still need to have your signed and notarized MCPA waiver and County waiver on file as a lot of the road we are using is still County road. Please let us know if you need an MCPA waiver form; we carry extras with us at all work parties.

Please see our website for updates on the Hazmat cleanup. The Forest Service has the intention of keeping the closure next year restricted to as small an area as possible. They may leave access open at least to the Weden trail / Gothic Basin trail head but nothing is certain until they begin the work next year.

Mark your calendars now for our **winter social, FEBRUARY 7, 2015**. Our program is already confirmed and it is for a live raptor exhibit. Knowledge of local birds tells us a lot of the surrounding ecology (food sources, weather, etc.) and we look forward to being educated on these birds from Sarvey Wildlife Center. They will bring some of their rehabilitated birds to show everyone. So watch for future notices from us regarding this social and don't miss out. It will certainly be unique and exciting.

Complimentary trail park passes will go out in November or December to work party volunteers who volunteered a minimum of two work parties. Thank you in advance to all our volunteers, many who continue their work year after year with little or no recognition.

Ok that's it. We hope to see everyone at the last work party for the year on October 18, 9 am.
Remember it's better to come early than late—the gate gets locked at 9:15.

Cheers Everyone,
Kal Klass, MCPA President

Historical Essay A Brief History of the Mountain Loop Highway, Part 2

This concludes the highway history, which was begun last month.

In 1936 young men from the Civilian Conservation Corps were added to the labor force, and during the summer construction brought the route as far as the famous “sinkhole” clay deposit at the old Tulalip Mill Site above Red Bridge, now a group campground.



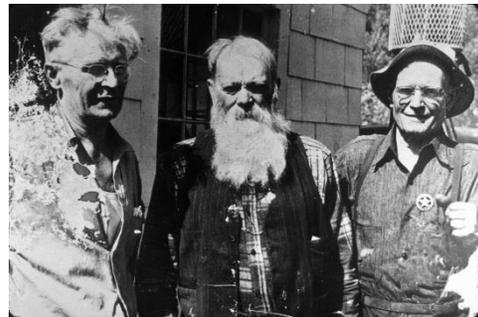
Courtesy Forrest Johanson

Big Four caretaker Martin Johnson finally was able to drive down to Silverton for errands after the highway reached the inn. The old E&M depot was a relic of the past by the mid-1930s.

From Big Four to Barlow Pass the highway continued almost entirely along the railway grade, with much of the labor provided by the roughly 20 CCC enrollees staying at their Perry Creek “spike” camp. With few turnouts, it essentially was a one-lane gravel road. In May 1941 a visiting Arlington journalist noted that only 600 feet remained until reaching Barlow Pass. He traveled over the pass past the Forest Service guard station where the parking lot now is located, and descended the South Fork Sauk River valley to meet the Forest Service CCC crews coming up the other side from Darrington. Their route followed much of the 1891-93 wagon road built by the Monte Cristo miners and on the upper end improved by the Penn Mining Company at Goat Lake later in that decade. Based at Bedal, the fellows on the Sauk side still had a little over two miles to finish.

By December the link-up was completed, just in time for the restrictions and closures which would result from war. Access did allow Big Four Inn to be taken over by the United States Coast Guard as a temporary duty station for servicemen awaiting their active duty assignments, and finally also an extension of the county road to Wedin Creek in 1942 and Monte Cristo 1943.

Following the war years, money was allocated to improve road standards, especially in the building of concrete bridges, widening to two lanes, and improved grading by the county, which according to agreement had taken over maintenance. Above Perry Creek more of the original railway grade was bypassed, leaving portions intact, such as just below Barlow Pass, where our work parties have brushed and visitors may see the interpretive sign in a century old rock cut.



Courtesy Forrest Johanson

Silverton tavern/store/gas station owners Eric and Albert Shedin kept their place open into the 1950s and became well known characters, flanking C.C. “Carp” Weschedel, who also had been a merchant during the railroad years and earlier had worked at the Forest Service's Silverton Nursery.

Keeping on into the winter, crews advanced toward Silverton. The following season an automobile reached that tiny mining community, with the first truck making it through in 1938. It carried a load of lumber to build Ted Turner's home just west of town (now part of the Triangle Club) and could not turn around until it reached its destination. The original plan of building on the north side of the river from Verlot had been abandoned early on due to deep clay deposits up Benson Creek and unstable soils opposite Gold Basin, and instead wherever possible crews simply just widened the right-of-way, took up the former railroad ties, and smoothed gravel.

During the summer of 1939 many of the contract workers were based in Silverton and pushed the road up to Big Four Inn, which had been languishing for seven years since the flood. My mother spent the summer with her sister and her sister's husband in a house in the town, as he was working on the crew. She vividly recalls another housewife angrily smacking on the nose with a frying pan a marauding bear busily raiding the meager food supplies in her kitchen. Money was scarce and food not to be wasted, regardless of the size of the varmint!



Courtesy Forrest Johanson

Business revived at the inn when guests could drive the narrow gravel road, but it never recovered its 1920s reputation.

Snohomish County had opened the present steel truss bridge at Granite Falls in July 1934. Above Verlot, however, the narrow, awkward 1936-era steel bridges across the Stillaguamish River to Mt. Pilchuck and the one at Red Bridge were replaced, with the road straightened to its present location. These new structures were completed in 1955 and 1954 respectively, with BPR contractors Peter Kiewit & Sons responsible for Red Bridge and the Alton Phillips Construction Company of Seattle building the “blue bridge” at the base of the Mt. Pilchuck road.

During the same years the entire road was paved to Barlow Pass, with the N. Fiorito Company of Seattle handling the section from Red Bridge to Perry Creek. In 1975 resurfacing from Deer Creek to Barlow Pass was accomplished, and the Federal Highway Administration replaced the three deteriorating log bridges across the South Fork Sauk River with concrete ones. Although the portion of the road from Darrington to the Whitechuck River was replaced by a wide, paved, two-lane modern highway in the early 1980s, public reaction to an F.H.A. proposal similarly to alter the rest of the route up the river to Barlow Pass was immediate and negative. People enjoy the experience of traveling through the timber and winding along the Sauk side, while the Stillaguamish portion provides vistas, a large number of campgrounds, and the start of many popular short hikes to lakes, peaks, and the Big Four Ice Caves.

David A. Cameron

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, 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:

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

Name _____
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

Final Work Party - October 18th

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