

Board Members

PresidentKal Klass klasstwin@gmail.com
Vice President.....David Cameron camlind@richpoor.net
TreasurerBill Rawlins
SecretaryRuth Danielson
Corresponding Secretary Louise Lindgren
Advisor..... Doug Hammond
Advisor..... David Hartzel
WebmasterMike Kahler



Hello Everyone !

We hope you all have had a nice Spring. Access is now open to the Town site. As many of you are aware, there was extensive damage to both the old County road and the new access road. So the Forest Service will be busy, probably starting in June, clearing slides and fallen trees. We also will have an extremely busy year, cutting down falls and starting to replace interpretive signs which were removed by us prior to the cleanup.

Our annual meeting for members is behind the Verlot Service Center on Saturday, June 4, at noon. Please bring a good side dish for our usual potluck lunch to enjoy prior to the meeting.

The MCPA will provide brats, drinks, utensils, plates, cups, etc. If you know you are coming late, contributing to the potluck is not necessary; we always have more than enough ! ☺

Please note we are not able to use the parking lot behind the service center. We will need to park in the front or across the highway.



We hope to have someone from the Forest Service present to answer any questions for the upcoming year. And our board will be present, as always, to also review our plans for work parties and answer any questions. All in all, it is shaping up to be one of our busiest years ever. So please consider volunteering for one or more work parties.

You will see our dues and membership forms are attached to this newsletter. Please send in your dues. There is no change in key at the Barlow pass gate.

Hope to see everyone at the upcoming annual meeting.

Kal Klass, MCPA President

Historical Essay

In the summer of 1986 I taught a field course at Monte Cristo for the history department of Western Washington University. Some of our current members took part, including Kurt Munnich, Bill Rawlins, Doug Hammond, Louise Lindgren, Julie de Rouche, and her mom. It was well received and also made the front page of the *Everett Herald*. A key part of my plan was to invite a number of guests to share their knowledge and memories of Monte. They gave their own points of view rather than have the class hear just mine.

Among the special elders who visited with us during the week-long stay in the town were sisters Edith Bedal and Jean Bedal Fish. Legendary Forest Service District Ranger Harold Engles drove them up from their homes in Darrington to sit around a shady circle in front of Gene Tune's Sauk Lode log cabin.

It was familiar territory for the three of them. Harold had arrived sixty years earlier to take over the newly combined Silverton and Darrington districts, then returned after a stint serving on the Mt. Hood National Forest. Edith and Jean's mother Susan was the daughter of the last chief of the Sauk-Suiattle tribe, Wa-wet-kin, and they had been born on the homestead named for their father, James Bedal. Harold always referred to the sisters as "the girls," although Edith then was 83 and Jean 78.



Photo by Louise Lindgren

Edith Bedal and Jean Bedal Fish at Monte Cristo, 1986.

You may recall Elof Norman's telling of the school fight incident in his memoir of growing up in Monte Cristo, *The Coffee Chased Us Up*. Since Elof and his sister Ely were the only children left in town and more were required to justify hiring a teacher, the decision was made to ask the Bedals if their son Harry and daughter Lucy could board with the Normans for the session. That worked pretty well until Elof and Lawrence got into a disagreement which escalated, and that night the two Bedals left for home on foot without telling anyone. Mr. Norman caught up with them at Barlow Pass, escorting them down the wagon road to their homestead at the forks of the Sauk River. That year of 1908 was the last for school to operate at Monte, as mining had shut down. Lucy died before adulthood, while two other brothers drowned as children. Edith and Jean, the youngest in the family, later went to school on land the Bedals donated for a building in 1909. Both a class room and later a teacher's cabin were erected. In the future the school would become part of the Darrington School District, while the lot on which the Monte school house stood eventually became part of the Granite Falls district, as did those at Silverton, Gold Basin, and Robe, which survived until 1936.

James Bedal operated a shingle bolt camp at the homestead, assisted by oldest son Harry especially during driving the cedar blocks downriver to the Darrington mill. After 1917 when James was partially paralyzed by a stroke the family had to move down there for winters, returning home when the weather improved. During the 1920s Edith and Jean earned a reputation as mountain packers, leading strings of horses to the Goat Lake mines, supplying hunting trips, and carrying tourists back into the hills. Jean went to work for John and Estella Andrews in 1929, cooking at their Monte Cristo Resort. It was there that she met and married Estella's son Russell Fish in 1932. They managed the lodge through the lean depression years until it closed in 1941 due to a lack of business. After he returned home from military service they took over again between 1952 and 1956, first for Andrews and then Rosemary and Del Wilkie when they bought the resort in 1953. They divorced in 1958.

Edith took on the role of family caregiver, continuing to pack, run trap lines, and do her best to maintain the homestead during the summer, but it was too great a task. Her father died in 1932, then brother Harry doing defense work in California during the war, and finally her mother in 1947. Edith worked for the Forest Service in Darrington during the war and inherited her mother's great skill in traditional basket making, being named one of the state's honored artists during the centennial.

They dedicated their later years in keeping alive their Sauk-Suiattle culture, finally achieving federal recognition in for the tribe in 1975. Jean served as chairman from 1979 to 1983. Hearing them break up into giggles while trying to carry on a "realistic" conversation in their Lushootseed language so the class could hear it spoken made that sunny day at Monte Cristo. It was an honor to have known them, and Harold too.

MEMBERSHIP FORM - June 2016-May 2017

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.mcpc.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

**Annual Meeting & Potluck
Saturday June 4**

«FirstName» «LastName»
«Address1»
«City», «State» «PostalCode»