



NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAIN RETIREE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

FALL 2019

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Forest Service Retirees:

I was struggling with how to write this Presidents message for our newsletter and I have been attending far too many funerals lately.

Makes me really appreciate the time we have together even though it is only one day a month. It is much more fun to have some time together when we can still share some ideas and thoughts with each other.

Our national association has been doing a great job of staying abreast of what is happening in the Forest Service today and I think we need to really support them in their efforts.

This summer I had the chance to take a couple of my grandkids into Moose Creek Ranger Station for a high school graduation present and we spent the weekend visiting Moose Creek and doing a little hiking. They got to visit the Ranger residence where their moms had grown up and see the place they had heard so many stories about over the years. When you raise your kids in the Wilderness it leaves lasting memories. Their

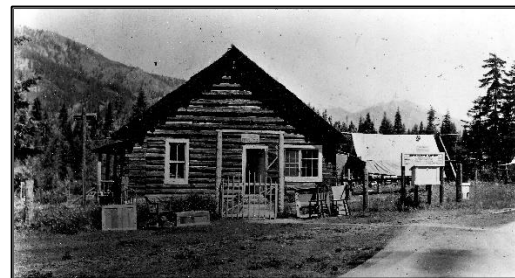
moms grew up reading real books and playing real board games with each other. They still love books today.

I would like to invite you to join us for our monthly lunch at Jaker's at 1130 the first Tuesday of each month. We usually have time for a story or two.

We would love to see you.

Barry Hicks,

President



Moose Creek Ranger Station, 1938

Monthly luncheon meetings are held the first Tuesday of the month at Jaker's Bar and Grill located at 3515 Brooks Street in Missoula. Join us for visiting and informational presentations from the RO. You don't live near Missoula? Consider organizing some get togethers in your part of the Region. A Christmas gathering, a summer picnic, anything to stay in touch.

BARK BEETLE WARS 1953-54 THE FORGOTTEN OFFENSIVE

by Ray Backstrom

In June 1953 two things happened. On 27 June, 1953 the armistice for the Korean War was signed, and that ended the Korean War, sort of anyway. However, on 23 June 1953 the first volume of the Spruce Bark Beetle News was published by the RO, documenting our effort to wipe out these pesky little characters with logging. In this first volume they state:

- During the 2-week period of 5 to 18 July 108 million Board Feet of spruce were sold.
- During the prior fiscal year (1 July to 30 June 1953) over 95 million board feet were logged off FS lands.
- Their 7,083 trap trees that were cut before the flight of the beetles are now loaded with beetles to be treated chemically.
- Six forests sent men to the school for bug detectors held at Packers Meadows on the Lolo.
- 70,000 board feet of lumber per day down the Marble Creek road (St Joe), estimating 35,000,000 board feet will be moved over the next few weeks.
- Spruce bark beetle larvae are tasty!
- 250 men working on spruce access roads \$500,000 so far on 102 miles, over \$2,500,000 of contracts have been let on 113 miles of spruce access roads.

The Clearwater is tracking progress of their invited guests, the 'hootpeckers.' You will have to read through the attached files (Volume 2, not included in this newsletter) to find about them and Smokey the Bears cousin 'Bug Bear' is talked about somewhere in these, don't remember where though. On page 2 of the report they have a short article titled –

Old Timers, can you top this?

“It happened in June on Wellington Creek in the high spruce type on the Kaniksu. It began with the selection of a camp site for crew spraying infested spruce trees with chemicals. There were eleven feet of snow at the time, so a camp site was selected in an opening where the top of the snow was relatively level. Camp was dropped from the air and tents were pitched without floors on the snow.

The business of eating, sleeping, working, and resting began. Men came in at night wet and cold. Hot fires

were made in the stoves in the tents. Each night the snow floors melted and receded downward. Each morning cots were tilted at crazy angles and tents had to be pitched again. Cold, wet shovel snow, pitch tent, on and on.

This went on for seemingly endless days and nights; cold camp, wet cloths, rain, snow, melting tent floors; saplings and brush popped out of the snow floors; then windfalls began to show up under the tents --- most inconvenient. New tent sites were found. More windfalls. More tent pitching. Then a tent floor broke through into a creek.

Hank Viche warns that it will be dangerous for old timers to try to tell the MEN of the Wellington camp how tough and rugged things were in the early days of the Forest Service, when men were men.”

In their last issue, at least the last one I could find, they have a scoreboard. In this last volume they state that the three years tally of the 'Bark Beetle War', my name not theirs, was close to a billion board feet sold.

Ray works at the RO in cartography, in addition to the map related part of his job, Ray is very interested in FS history and is a wealth of information. In his "spare time" he has scanned many of the old Northern Region maps and seems to know where old interesting files and photos are stashed.



Counting cows (or sheep) is an age-old chore for employees working in range. Following are two tales of counting on cattle, one from the Deerlodge in the 1950s and one from the Helena in the 1980s.



COUNTING CATTLE ON THE DEERLODGE

By Jerry Stern

While on the Butte District I was told to count on cattle on the Highland grazing allotment. The grazing rights were held by the Melrose Grazing Association. Three ranchers had formed the association and were owned by Tom Connors, Don Smith and Jack Kearns. I reported to the “cow camp” an old homestead with a sleeping bag, but no food as that was furnished. The gate to the allotment was close by. The above-mentioned men plus Benny Reynolds (of Name That Tune fame), Don Smith’s stepson and J.D. Smith, Don’s son, were the cowboys. They rounded up cattle and I counted them on.

After two days of counting and waiting for more cattle I became bored and asked if I could also assist in the roundup – the answer was “yes!” Jack Kearns had a “form fitter” saddle (one with very high cantle that was

used in rodeo and bucking horse competition and helped the rider stay on). They had extra horses and even saddled it for me. They also put a burr under the saddle, and when I got on the horse, he and I had a “rodeo” and I got bucked off. The joke was on me. The ranger at Butte, Merle Hofferber, was transferred, and those same men asked that I be promoted to Ranger. I wasn’t promoted.

Jerry grew up in Wisconsin and graduated from the University of Montana in 1953. After a stint with the SCS and Montana Forestry he got his first FS assignment in Butte as assistant ranger in 1960. After that he was ranger on the Colville at Orient WA, Lincoln MT, Ranger and fire staff on the Coeur d’ Alene, ranger at Sand Point and Bonners Ferry where he retired from in 1986. Jerry and his wife of 68 years, Fran, live in Sagle ID

. COUNTING CATTLE ON BROWN’S GULCH

By Vicky MacLean

In my early years as a range tech I had a boss who figured that permittees were generally trying to scam the Forest Service. Much to my chagrin I was sent to count Hamilton Ranch cattle onto the little Brown’s Gulch allotment in the Elkhorns (Helena National Forest). While the allotment was not in the best shape, I had seen no reason to be suspicious of unauthorized cattle numbers, but I had my marching orders. I arrived at the lower end of the allotment early in the morning at

the location known as “Madam Queen’s place”, where years before a crazy old cat hoarder had lived. I had in hand a box of a dozen doughnuts as a peace offering. Shortly thereafter a loaded cattle truck appeared. Ranch hands were not in the best mood. Cattle about ran me over as they unloaded (I am sure they were pleased with that). Some years later while I was moving cows with the ranch manager, my horse got tangled in some old barbed wire that was buried in the pine needles he was

there in an instant to cut the wire and save my horse from further injury. Many years later one of the ranch hand's sons worked for us as a seasonal while he was in college. His dad had told him about the cattle counting and doughnuts – small world.

Vicky spent her whole FS career on the Helena working in range.



BOOKS BY FOREST SERVICE RETIREES

A number of Forest Service retirees have turned to writing in their retirement. Many, but not all, of their books focus on the Forest Service, either on their careers or some historical aspect of the agency. A number of these books have been published posthumously by their descendants. Your newsletter editor plans to present information about some of these books from time to time. If readers have some more titles to present please let your editor know.

“Up the Swiftwater” by Sandra A. Crowell and David O. Asleson, Northern Region retiree. This book is a history of the upper St Joe River Country. It contains lots of historic photos and covers a variety of topics including fires, the CCC, the Forest Service, the railroad, logging and more. It is available through the Museum of North Idaho, P.O. Box 812, Coeur d’Alene, Idaho 83814 or (208) 773-9304

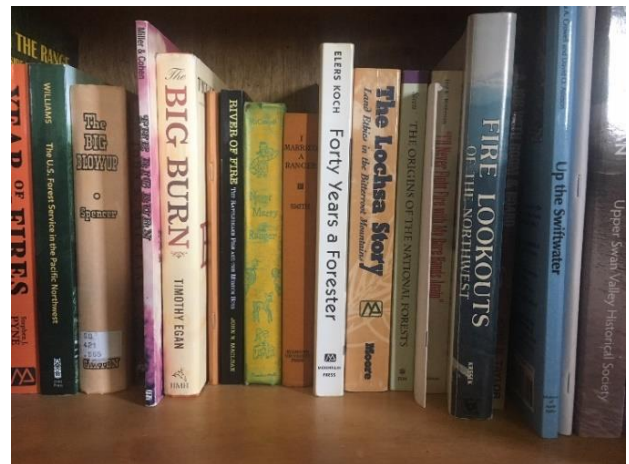
“Six Hundred Generations” by Carl Davis, retired RO Archaeologist. This is a recently published very enjoyable book for those people interested in Montana’s mostly pre-European history. It is an easy read even for non-archaeologists. The book highlights 15 important and varied archaeological sites throughout Montana which document Montana’s long Indigenous human history. The illustrations and photos are outstanding. Available through Amazon.

“The Ghost of Schafer Meadows” and **“Stealing the Wild”** by Flathead NF retiree Beth Hodder are two fun books for middle school aged children (for your grandchildren). They detail the wilderness adventures

of the 12-year-old daughter of the Ranger at Schafer Meadows. Available through Amazon.

“31 Years on the Upper North Fork of the Clearwater River” by Tom Keller. Tom worked mainly in recreation, was a packer and spent most of his career on the North Fork. His book covers his years working on the North Fork. It is self-published and is available from him directly: buffalorun@mtida.net

“Did I Say That Out Loud” by Shelley Douthett, is a recently published collection of short stories that pertain to many aspects of Shelley’s life, mostly not her Forest Service career. These stories range from hilarious to slightly off color to contemplative. This self-published book is available from the author, Amazon, and at an assortment of Montana book stores. Shelley is working on a sequel.



“High Mountain Two Manner” by Frank Fowler is a detailed accounting of a young smoke jumper’s career

in the 1950s. Frank was a University of Montana forestry student when he spent his summers smoke jumping out of Missoula. Much of his book is compiled of letters he wrote home to his mother during that time. It is very detailed with regards to the fires and his fellow smokejumpers. Although Frank went on to a

professional FS career, this book ends with the end of his jumping career. Available through Amazon.

FONTS AND FORMAT

By Vicky MacLean

Questions about the format of the newsletter prompted me to do a little bit of light research on the internet and on my own messy coffee table. Columns versus full page text makes a difference in the amount of space an article takes up. Columns actually take up more space, but are more readable as the reader does not have to read across a whole page which requires added attention to move from one line to the next. Full page texts are usually used for longer articles and smaller page size as it makes better use of space. The internet did not say how long is “long”. Spacing between lines also affects readability.

We use a Garamond font in this newsletter. It is more readable for most people which results in better comprehension and the internet said “timeless, very readable, traditional, elegant”. One internet article said that the government could save \$370 million by using this font in their publications. This represents a savings of 24% in ink costs. My friend who does our newsletter layout works at the fire lab and Arial is what is mostly used for training manuals. It is what is recommended by Health and Human Services for readers with vision issues. According to my research it is “simple, unadorned, and homely”. I had a question about the use of blue for website links. This is the industry standard and what an email or website address defaults to. Other colors may be problems for color blind people or may appear as another color when read on a computer screen.

My “research” then switched from the internet to my coffee table: National Geographic, High Country News, Montana the Magazine of Western History, and Foreign Affairs. All except Foreign Affairs use a format with several columns – either two or three. Foreign Affairs is smaller; about 7’ x 10’ and mostly uses full page lines rather than several columns. The subject matter is not highly readable which is why I stopped subscribing. Some more artsy publications use a mix of formats which, when blended with photos, are lovely and more eye catching despite not being the most efficient use of space.

A look at the various newsletters from other regions shows a total hodgepodge of formats, fonts and densities even within one issue. Some are more readable than others. So, there you have it: why most of our newsletter is done in columns and why we use the font we use. I did not have a clue, but many thanks to my friend who puts together the newsletter (for a small remuneration) because without her, the newsletter would not be nearly as nice as it is.



HIRING A FIRE LOOKOUT AND OTHER INTERESTING FACTS

By Dick Rath

My very first exposure to fire and lookout towers took place in the summer of 1969. In the spring, I had been hired as a GS-3 fireman for the Clarkia Ranger District of the St. Joe National Forest in north Idaho. I had become interested in the Forest Service in 1968, when my older brother Tom, an engineering student from South Dakota State University had spent the summer working for the Kootenai National Forest in Eureka, Montana.

Upon arriving home in September, said to me, “Dick, there is a government agency that will pay you for working in the woods, versus not being paid to work on Dad’s farm.” Well, that sure made great sense to me. The following winter, I applied to all fifteen National Forest in the Northern Rockies Region.

In March of 1969, I received an offer letter from the St. Joe, which I immediately accepted. Upon arriving at the Ranger Station in Clarkia, I was amazed at the beauty of North Idaho. The Clarkia Ranger District had one fixed detection site, which was Crystal Peak. In 1969, the lookouts for Crystal Peak were a newly married couple. They attended the Forest Guard School and Lookout training with me.

The main trainer for the Lookout training was the Fire Control Officer from the Palouse District of the Forest, named John Krebs. John was a kind man and took all of us transplanted seasonal fire persons under his wing. John was raised in the mid-west as the son of a Presbyterian Minister. The most significant take home memory for me from his training is this. John looked over the new lookouts and said. “As you stand along the rail of the lookout and look down, you will see a

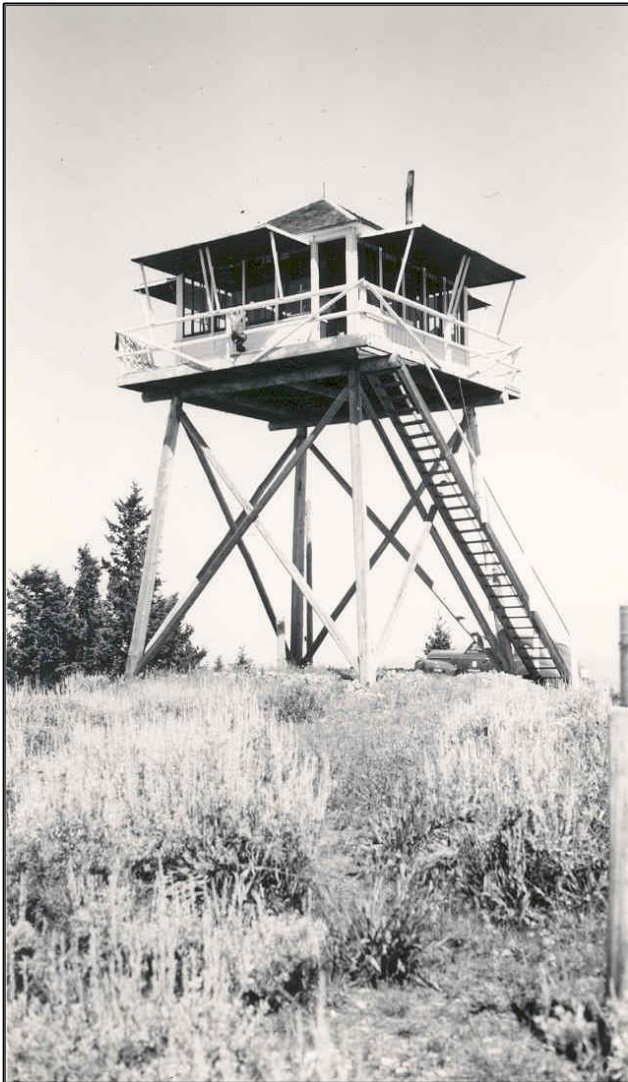
little green outhouse. That is your toilet, so I don’t want any of you peeing over the rail and possibly peeing on me when I come to visit.” Over the next forty-seven years, John and I became dear friends, a relationship that is still intact today. One could write a book of John Krebs stories and sometimes it makes him a little nervous when I bring some of them up.

In the late 1970’s I was working as the Assistant Fire Management Officer for the Fortine Ranger District of the Kootenai National Forest. At that time the Kootenai had seven fixed detection sites. One of them was located on Mt. Marston on the Fortine R.D. As the AFMO it was my responsibility to hire the seasonal lookout that staffed Mt. Marston from mid-June until the fires season ended in the early fall. From Mt. Marston, one could look well into British Columbia to the north, the North Fork District of the Flathead NF and Glacier Park to the east and the Fortine and Rexford Districts to the west and southwest. This scenic area was truly a remarkable piece of northwest Montana.

Staffing the lookout was never as easy as it seemed. It was my goal to hire someone, who was interested in returning year after year, which was very important to me. In the spring of 1982, I received an application from a woman, whose cover letter indicated that she was very interested in the position. As I reviewed her application, it seemed to me that she was overqualified, but I was not in the business of checking over qualifications and offered her the position. She arrived at the Ranger Station along with the fire crew and within a week we were headed to the Forest Fire Guard School

Reminder: dues for 2020 are due sometime before the spring newsletter comes out. There is a form inside the back cover. Please let us know if any of your information has changed so your newsletter can find you. Life members are free as are all spouses.

that was held annually at the Upper Ford Guard Station on the Yaak Ranger District.



Our lookout jelled well with the crew and the other lookouts on the Forest and I had some pretty high expectations for the fire season. Within a week of finishing lookout training, we moved her into the lookout and began her training. The Osborne Fire Finder is the toughest instrument to master along with learning the scene area of the tower. Earlier, I had made several sets of scene area photos with a grid system attached. These photos helped me in determining a more exact location of a newly detected smoke.

We were well into July, when a local couple who had visited the tower stopped by the office and reported

that upon reaching Mt. Marston, that the lookout did not have any clothes on.

After a short discussion with the Ranger and FMO, I found myself headed up the Marston Road to have a talk with our lookout. Upon arriving, I made some small talk and eventually brought up the no clothing subject. She quite frankly, told me that she was a nudist and showed some photos of her and her boyfriend. I told her that being a nudist was fine, but she now worked for the Federal Government and that required her being fully clothed. I felt that I had settled the matter and returned to the office. Little did I realize that she felt that wearing clothing was confined to those eight hours that she was on the clock. All went well until we had a second report from a visitor that upon arriving at the tower had found it empty and unlocked. They scanned with binoculars and soon focused in on the female lookout at another site. Again, without clothing. At this point, it was decided that we needed to let her go and find a replacement. Since I was her supervisor, that meeting was left up to me. It was a bit of a strained conversation on my part, but she took it well and resigned.

At that point, I had a lookout to staff. I did a short advertisement, which netted me one application. The applicant was a local man, named Dick Glacier. Dick had a poor work record, due to an issue with alcohol. I met with Dick and told him, that I would offer him the position, but he could not have any alcohol at the lookout. Dick accepted my terms and soon was on the way up to the lookout. True to his word, Dick remained sober and finished the fire season. The following year, I rehired Dick, as I did annually until I transferred in 1988. Another memory I had of Dick, which makes me smile to this day. Each spring as we brought our seasonal fire force together, Dick would arrive looking pretty haggard, then would staff the lookout for three to four months. At the end of each season, he would leave the lookout in a much better physical condition, with his gray skin look becoming pink as the season rolled on. As the years went by, I began to extend Dick's employment and used him to drive one of our water

tenders, when the prescribed burning program kicked into high gear in the fall.

Prior to transferring to a new duty station on the Gallatin N.F. I was trying to get as many units burned as I could. On one particular day, we were doing a day burn on a south aspect and during the execution, we experienced a bit of slop over on one side of the unit. Actually, I liked to use the word, “over attainment” which I always thought sounded better. While the crews were trying to catch the slop over, Dick and his co-driver Benny Webb were very busy shuttling water to the unit. Dick and Benny were both up in years, hence the driving job. They both took their duties to heart and always tried to live up to my expectations. After we had completed the burn and cool down was taking place, the two of them approached me. A third old guy with them, whose name is Donnie Rosean. Donnie, was one those persons, who could build or fix anything and a key player in the prescribed burn program. Well, Donnie approached me and said, “Benny and Dick need to talk with you.” So, we gathered and Donnie said “go ahead Benny.” They both had this nervous look on their faces, so I knew that something must be up.

They both said “do you remember when the slop over occurred and you were calling for more water?” I nodded my head and they continued, “Well, we got a little excited, and as were headed out of the fill site, we looked in the mirror and saw that we had not taken the fill line out of the truck and the volume pump was bouncing down the road behind us.” “How bad is it beat up,” I asked? “It’s not good,” Dick said. I looked at Donnie and he said that he could certainly fix it. Sounds good to me. They both looked relieved, when

one of them said, “do you need to tell the FMO”. No, he does not need to know about this one and we let it rest. After I transferred to the Gallatin, Dick would remain the lookout for Mt. Marston for many years.

In 1982, John Pritchard, the Fortine District Ranger charged me with developing a plan for the removal of the remaining lookouts on the district. At that time, there were four remaining Lookouts. Mt. Stahl, Pinkham Mt, and two others. Once I finished with the plan, I provided him with a draft. I could tell that he was not totally pleased, since I had recommended that three of the four be spared removal and one be placed out for bid, then removal. He did accept my recommendation and Pinkham Mt. was placed on the excess list of government properties and offered for sale.

In the first round of bidding, no bids were received. On the second round, I asked my neighbor, Fred King to bid \$10 for me and was awarded a contract for its removal. During the summer of 1983, a forester from the Rexford District and I tore the lookout down and left a small pile for burning that fall.

During the demolishing process and not being overly bright or experienced, we took some risks, that I now consider quite foolhardy. The person who designed the tower did so, with intentions of it lasting a hundred years or so.

The two of us split our bounty and over the years, the materials and cabinets slowly went by the wayside. Two items in particular stand out in my mind, the first being a stand that the Osborne Fire Finder sat on, is still in my possession. I converted it into a stand for my

Information and stories wanted

Your newsletter editor would like to continue to highlight retirees who have interesting hobbies, a new career, or who are volunteering in various organizations. I would also appreciate any stories about your adventures with the Forest Service. They need not be long, a page or two is great. Long articles I will save for a future volume of “Early days in the Forest Service”. If you or a retiree you know would be interested in sharing information please contact Vicky at agillabs@mcn.net or 406-459-6731.

shotgun shell loader. The second was a small brown USFS New Idea note pad. The significance is the owner who was the lookout in 1939 and toward the end of the season, wrote, "Today, Germany invaded Poland, I guess a new war in Europe has started." I have looked for the notebook, but have not found it. I suspect it is in one of my many boxes of things that are stored in my crawlspace. One day one of grandchildren and their children will locate it.

Dick began working seasonally for the St. Joe National Forest in 1969, first as a fireman on the District Crew, then on the Hotshot Crew. In 1973, trained as a smokejumper. In the spring of 1977 Dick became the Assistant Fire Mgt Officer position on the Fortine District of the Kootenai N.F. In 1988, Dick transferred to the Gallatin National Forest as the East Zone Fire Management Officer for the Gardiner, Livingston and Big Timber Ranger Districts. In 2001 he became part of the Northern Rockies Fire and Aviation group in the Northern Regional Office. He retired in 2004 and lives in Big Timber MT.

THE PERMITTEE, THE RANGE CON AND THE CELL PHONE or TRAVELS WITH CHARLIE

By Vicky MacLean

The Blossburg grazing allotment along the Continental Divide on the Helena Forest was one of the largest on the Helena District and the largest with regards to animal units – 500 plus cow calf pairs and multiple permittees. To complicate the picture, the area was well-roaded which resulted in cows getting paint balled and shot at, wet areas getting mud bogged, tons of firewood cutters leaving a mess of branches, private inholdings which were a mix of mining claims (some with cabins) a couple of homestead entries and several railroad sections which were owned by two of the permittees. On top of that were natural resource concerns; miles of riparian zones which had been designated as historic bull trout habitat, a lack of beavers because they had all been trapped out, wolves, including a den site, and a travel corridor for the occasional grizzly bear. On top of this were some of the most cantankerous permittees that I ever had to deal with.

One fall day, probably in late September, as we approached the "off date" for the allotment there was a reason (long since forgotten) for me to ride with Charlie G, the most contrary of the bunch. I was to meet him in the Dog Creek pasture at a given time. I parked the truck and trailer and unloaded my horse. When I went

to get my saddle out of the tack room compartment the door partially fell off. Well hell, I would have to deal with that at the end of the day – yank it off? Try to secure it back on? I rode up the road to where I was to meet Charlie. He was saddled and ready to go, but his truck had died and he did not have a cell phone. This was in the days of flip phones and not much cell coverage, especially up on the Forest. I'm sure I probably had a radio, but Charlie figured we should get up on some high point so he could try to call his wife on my cell phone. As we came out of the timber it started to snow, then there was thunder and lightning so we scurried for better cover and waited for the weather to calm down a bit. Then the cell phone circus started. Charlie tried to call his wife and, like the old cell phone ads, it was "Rita can you hear me? Can you hear me now?" as he turned to face another direction. Poor coverage - we moved on and made several more attempts to call and repeated the old TV cell phone ad again. Eventually the phone started to die and I whipped out my camera and said "Charlie can I get a picture", then my camera died. This hoopla actually elicited a small grin from Charlie who seldom smiled and I missed one of the best photo ops of my FS career; a pissed off permittee on horseback in a snow storm with a dead cell phone.



We rode on, talking about the usual stuff, “Charlie, you have got to keep cows off the creek bottom”, “I know it’s your land, but your private land permit says that your land will be managed to the same standards as the FS term permit”. Eventually we

completed our loop, amidst more whirling snow and distant rumbling of thunder. By the time we got back to his truck we must have tried my radio to relay a call through the district to his wife. Either Rita had heard enough of the cell phone calls to know what was going on or we got through on the radio to say that someone needed to come out to get Charlie’s truck going. Help was on the way and I was spared from having to haul him and his horse back to his place in a government horse trailer and, though I do not recollect for sure, there were probably also a number of cow dogs

involved that we would have had to stuff in the truck. After eating our soggy lunches late in the day in Charlie’s fogged up deceased truck, I headed back to my trailer to deal with the tack room door. I loaded my horse, stared at the door for a while, then went to see if I could shut and secure the door. I grabbed the handle and the whole door just fell off. I wrestled it into tack room and headed back to the district. Just another day riding the range on the Helena National Forest.

Vicky spent her whole career on the Helena Forest working in range, first as a seasonal tech then as the district Range Management Specialist as they were called by then. She retired in 2008 and lives in Ronan MT.

GRAPHIC TALENTS NEEDED.
If you can sketch or surf for clip art to accompany our articles from time to time, please contact your editor at: agillabs@mcn.net

THE 1930S ERA COMBINATION BUILDING

By Vicky MacLean

In the 1930s there was a building boom on the National Forests of the Northern Region. During this era many ranger stations expanded from small facilities to ranger stations that accommodated a larger work force, vehicles rather than horses, residences for the ranger and perhaps the assistant ranger, and often summer field going crews needing bunkhouses and a mess hall/cookhouse. This was also the era of the CCC which built a lot of these facilities.

Old photos and records often show or mention what was called a “combination building”. These buildings accommodated an office, warehouse space and sleeping quarters. There were many of these built, mainly in western Montana. These were mostly very similar in style and the slight differences are mainly in size. Most of these would be considered a craftsman style with

triangular knee braces under the roof lines, exposed rafters, wide unenclosed eaves, and gabled roofs.



Bonita Ranger Station combination building 1930s. The remodeled and deserted building can be seen off the Rock Creek exit off Interstate 90 towards the end of the north frontage road.

Photos from the 1930s show these as mostly boxy rectangular buildings 1 ½ to sometimes 2 stories high. Most of them also had a loading dock area in one corner of the building. Doorways were generally covered with a small shed roof that extended down from the main roofline.



The original Superior Ranger Station combination building in 1937

Windows were horizontal or vertical depending on location on the building wall. Photos and records indicate that within a few years many of these buildings were too small for the district's needs and were added onto, whether by extending the length of the building or by adding a wing in another direction or both. Dormers were also often added and the loading dock area sometimes enclosed.



The remodeled Superior building in 2012. There is also a substantial addition in the back which is not visible in this photo.

In western Montana 3 atypical buildings are combination buildings that were only one story high and with hipped roofs. These were at Libby, Plains and Darby. The Libby building has been removed, the one at Plains added onto and very much modified. The one at Darby appears to be pretty much in its original form and is used as a museum and visitor center. The old plans show an office area, sleeping area, warehouse area

and loading platform. The set of plans are not easy to read; however, it appears that this building is 30 x 40'. Plans for any others remain elusive.



The Plains Ranger Station combination building, probably in the 1930s.

Records or photos of what I would call “typical” combination buildings show that these existed on the Kootenai Forest at the Cabinet Ranger Station (now Troy), Noxon, Sylvanite, Warland, and Upper Ford. Only the one at Upper Ford retains its original form and recently got a new paint job and repairs. The National Christmas tree came from here in 2017. The one at Sylvanite remains, though modified.



The large combination at the Lolo Ranger Station in 1934. This was the only two-story model that your editor is aware of. This area is now a little campground along Highway 12, west of Lolo. Only the barn and a garage remain.

On the Lolo Forest there were combination buildings at Superior, St Regis, Lolo, Seeley Lake and Bonita. The one at the old Lolo Ranger Station site was a large two-story building and has been removed. The ones at Superior, St Regis, Seeley Lake and Bonita have all been modified enough to make them unrecognizable as the original simple buildings they once were.

On the Bitterroot a log combination building exists at Magruder and old photos show a similar style building at Trapper Creek.

Visitors, who, in their travels on the national forests this summer, climb to a mountain lookout house or scale the ladder of a lookout tower will automatically become eligible for membership in the new "Ancient and Honorable Order of Squirrels." John N. Kinney, Forest Service Fire Control Chief, announced today.

"With no dues to pay or meetings to attend, the new fraternity, begun on the intermountain national forest for the first time this year, seeks to enroll a big army of cooperators who will act as volunteers aiding in forest fire prevention," Kinney said.

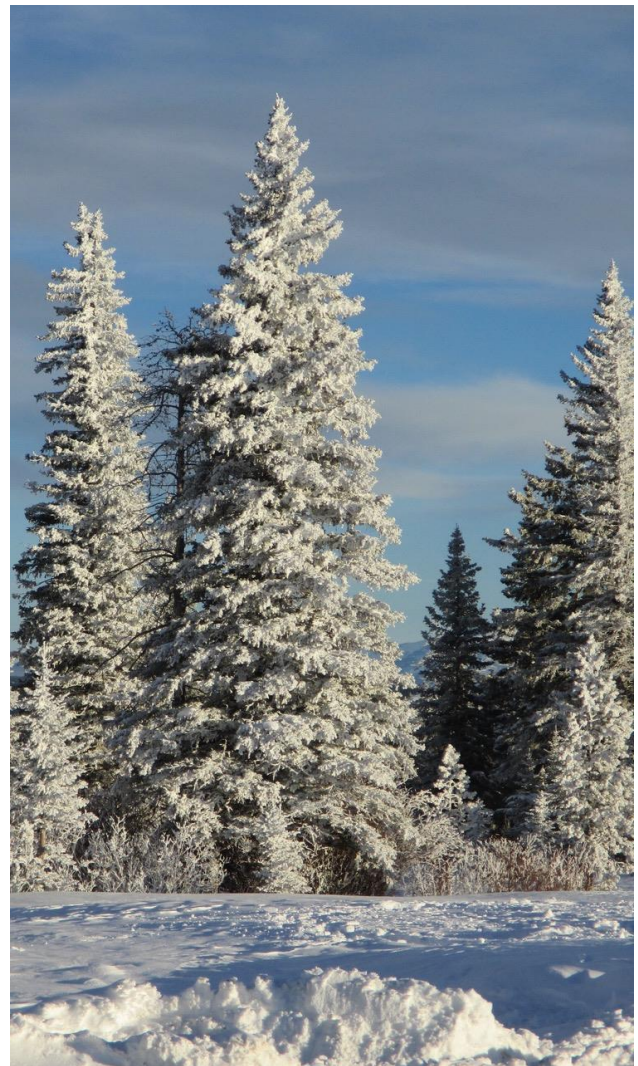
Squirrel Club members in receiving their card from the fire lookout, subscribe to the following, which in effect are the by-laws of this mythical organization: "The hardest nut the U. S. Forest Service and the State Conservation Departments have to crack is the problem of man-caused forest fires. As a member of the Squirrel Club I volunteer to help crack this nut by using the utmost Care With Fire In The Woods, As I Walk, As I Work, As I Ride, As I Camp."

The membership card certifies that its owner has climbed the indicated lookout station or tower and is signed by the lookout man. The card is good for life membership, but if lost, another may be obtained simply by visiting another lookout.

Many lookouts on Region Four national forests may now be reached by car over steeply climbing mountain roads, while trails are the only transportation routes to others. The total number of lookout stations normally occupied each fire season on national forests in Utah, western Wyoming and southern Idaho in Region Four is about 185...



Thanks to tom Kovalicky for sending this clipping from the June 1 Challis Messenger Old Timers column



MacDonald Pass in winter, Helena National Forest.

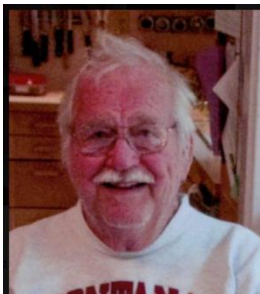
WE REMEMBER



David McNair Campbell age 66 died March 25, 2019. Dave was born in Denver Colorado, he grew up hiking, fishing and skiing. He worked seasonally for the Forest Service while a student at Colorado State University. He retired from the Bitterroot National Forest where he was the West Fork District Ranger.

Married to Sharon O'Hare in 1981 they had two remarkable children. After they divorced, he met and married Anita Poe whom he was married to for 17 years, during which time they enjoyed traveling all over the world as well as camping close to home in the Bitterroot Valley.

Dave enjoyed sharing his love for the out of doors with his children and grandchildren and became a beloved stepfather to 2 more. He enjoyed playing his cherished Martin guitar and corny old folk songs. He was passionate about wilderness and an advocate for public lands. Dave is survived by his wife Anita Poe, children Kate and Colin, step children Andrea and Dylan Brown, three grandchildren, brothers Jim and Charlie, sister Adele and several nieces and nephews. The family suggests donations to Trout Unlimited, the Selway-Bitterroot Foundation, the Bitterroot Water Forum or other conservation groups.



Billy L. Hicks – Bill passed away in Missoula on December 2, 2018. He was born December 1, 1929 in Colorado. After graduation he joined the Army, serving in the South Pacific. In 1954 he enrolled in the geology program at U of Montana. After graduation he worked for several mining companies in Idaho and Montana before joining the Regional Office in Missoula as a geologist. That same year he married Jean Monroe and adopted her son Scott. A year later they had their daughter Kim. Bill enjoyed singing with the local Barber Shop Quartets until 2011.

Bill is survived by his son Scott Hicks, daughter Kim and granddaughter Maggie Gipe.



Betty Ann Holm passed away July 6, 2019 in Mesa Arizona. She was born February 25, 1934 to Glen and Thelma Rush on her grandparents' farm in South Dakota. In 1952 at the age of 18 she married her high school sweetheart, Dean Holm. Betty worked at the Forestry Sciences lab then in personnel in Missoula. She retired in 1989 after 22 years of service. During her 30-year retirement she enjoyed numerous hobbies and activities including gardening and canning, knitting, round dancing, traveling and genealogy.

Betty is survived by her husband, Dean, children Vicky Harris, Randy Holm, Deanna Stoneking, Steve Holm, Jeff Holm, and Laurie Johnson. 13 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren. 4 sisters also survive her.

Walter Gene Imlay – age 83 of Missoula passed away April 23, 2019 after a short illness. He was born in Reed Point Montana, May 28, 1935, the youngest of 6 sons of Carl and Pearl Imlay. After a couple of years in the oil fields and

railroad he was drafted into the Army. After his Army service he attended Montana State followed by time with the IRS in California. After 4 years he moved back to Montana where he started working for the Forest Service. Gene enjoyed golfing, bowling and the morning Sudoku puzzle.

Gene is survived by his wife Betty of Missoula, daughter Shanda Imlay, a brother Wesley and numerous nieces and nephews.



Dr. Ralph Alex Klawitter passed away in May 2019. He was born in Chicago in 1927 to Alex John and Veronica Irene Klawitter. After a brief stint in the Navy during WWII and the steel mills of Chicago he enrolled in forestry school at the University of Michigan State in 1947. In 1953 he started his Forest Service career on the Klamath Forest in timber. A few years later he moved to South Carolina as a research forester with the Southeastern Forest Experiment Station.

After earning a master's degree and a PhD from Duke University his research continued at the Northeastern Forest Experiment Station and the Intermountain Forest Experiment Station as assistant director. His responsibilities included research laboratories at MSU, University of Idaho and the Missoula fire laboratory. He retired in 1980.

Ralph enjoyed a variety of outdoor activities and was involved as a volunteer with the U of Montana outdoor program. He was also involved with the Montana Civil Air Patrol as a pilot and flight instructor. Ralph is survived by Lillian, his wife of 67 years, four children, 12 grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

William Harold McCrum died August 10, 2019 at age 85. He was born in Billings Montana October 4, 1933. Bill served in the military in Korea where he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal. After college Bill joined the Forest Service. He was dedicated to the preservation and conservation of natural resources and was an advocate of equal and civil rights before it was fashionable.

Considered the patriarch of the McCrum clan he is thought highly of by his nieces and nephews and friends in the Bitterroot Valley. Bill was an avid fisherman, cyclist and cross-country skier. He is survived by his son Alan and six grandchildren. The family suggests memorials to the Bitterroot Cross Country Ski Club, P.O. Box 431, Corvallis MT 59828



Rose Irma Morrissey of Missoula, age 87, died July 2, 2019. She was born in Missoula November 1931 to Joseph and Erma Bugli. She attended school in Missoula and later at the University of Montana where she earned a degree in education and a master's degree in business.

In 1960 she married Donald Morrissey. She taught school in Darby and Hamilton then worked for the Forest Service in the personnel department for 29 years. Rose enjoyed bowling, skiing, outdoor activities and spending time with her grandchildren.

Rose is survived by her husband Donald, daughter Joanne Steemers, and several grandchildren

David R. Pierce age 75 died from pancreatic cancer on June 1, 2019. Dave was a smokejumper in Oregon in 1965-1966 and in Missoula from 1967-1968. He later worked as a sky diving instructor, jump pilot, and master parachute

rigger for Parachute Inc in Orange Massachusetts. He then jumped for the BLM in Alaska then returned to Missoula to work at the Montana Technology and Development Center developing an array of smoke jumping equipment and procedures. Dave retired from the Forest Service in 1998 and enjoyed biking, hiking and wildlife photography.



Allen Marvin Patton age 90 died July 7, 2019. He was born June 12, 1929 to Doris and Arthur Patton on his grandparents' farm near Victor Montana. Allen was raised in the 3 Mile area in a family logging camp near Wallace Idaho. He grew up enjoying outdoor activities including camping, fishing, and bird hunting.

During WWII he was a telegraph delivery boy and a Forest Service fire fighter. After graduation from the University of Montana, Allen spent 35 years working for the Forest Service in Coeur d'Alene, Great Falls, Grangeville and Missoula. In 1960 he met and married Mary Jo Harrington of Butte. They had four children.

Allen is survived by Mary Jo, his wife of 59 years, sons Mark and Gary, daughter Ann, and three grandchildren. He was predeceased by his grandparents and infant son Eric.



Bo (Sidney A.) Stuart, age 67, passed away in Helena on May 15, 2019. Bo was born to Arthur Leslie and Lois Marchetta Stuart in Bozeman MT, January 10, 1952. He grew up there, attending Bozeman High in 1970 and graduating from MSU with a BS and MS in microbiology. He started his FS career as a hydrology technician on the Bridger -Teton in Jackson WY in 1977. In 1982 he was promoted to the Hydrologist position there. In 1986 he took the hydrologist position on the Arapaho-Roosevelt in Fort Collins CO then moved onto the Helena in 1990 where he worked as the forest Hydrologist until he retired in 2007.

Bo and his wife Maggie were married in 1977 in Helena where they raised their two daughters Ruth and Bethel. Bo loved the outdoors, skiing and mountaineering and involvement with the Boy Scouts.

In 2014 Bo started having fatigue issues and was diagnosed with Langerhans Cell Histiocytosis in 2017. Bo is survived by his wife, daughters, 12 grandchildren and brother Gary.



Wesley B Simpson - Wes passed away September 17, 2019. He was born in Bozeman on August 24, 1952 and spent most of his life on the family ranch in the Helena Valley. After graduating from Helena High Wes spent time working in construction and as manager of the Belmont (Great Divide) Ski Hill. He was an active person, on the high school wrestling team, a rugby player and skier.

As a non-traditional student approaching 40, Wes attended MSU and earned a degree in Range Science. It was in a livestock management class where he sat next to another FS employee he was practically hired on the spot as a seasonal range tech. Wes eventually became a permanent employee at the Helena District where he ran the weed crew and could do anything needed on the grazing allotments. Wes enjoyed hunting, skiing, horseback riding, and his motorcycles.

Wes is survived by his wife Mary, mother Lola Simpson, step mother Judy Simpson, brothers Charlie and Stuart Simpson, step children Christina and Trinidad, 4 granddaughters as well as 3 nephews, a niece and numerous cousins.



Roland (Ron) M. Stoleson – Ron passed away in North Ogden Utah, September 9, 2019 at age 83. He was born in Wisconsin March 16, 1936. Since he was very young, he wanted to be a Forest Ranger and so headed west to attend the University of Montana forestry school and start work for the Forest Service. His career spanned more than 40 years and included time as a lookout, smoke jumper, hotshot crew foreman, district ranger, forest supervisor and various staff positions. After retirement in 2000 he continued his time with the FS as a volunteer in the Region 4 office and with the National Smoke Jumpers Association. His hobbies included fishing, skiing, camping, hiking, backpacking and traveling.

Ron was predeceased by his Maureen, his wife of 55 years, his parents and an older brother. He is survived by his sister Sharon, sons Kevin and Kyle, 4 grandchildren and extended family.



Stanley Underwood – Stan passed away May 2, 2019 at age 74. He was born in May 26, 1944 in Evansville, Indiana. He attended the University of Montana forestry school and started his FS career as a seasonal smoke jumper while still a student. His permanent career started in 1968 and lasted until 2006. Stan worked in silviculture and forest management on the Nez Perce, Lolo and Bitterroot forests as well as Salt Lake City and Washington DC. He was active in fire for 45 years including time after his retirement as a contractor and on a Type II team.

Stan enjoyed a variety of activities including fishing, rafting boating, skiing, water skiing, reading and time at his cabin and time with family.

Stan is survived by his wife Cindy, brother Don Eyre, son Stanley Underwood and daughters Bre Gum, Carmen Underwood and Deanna Carlson as well as 5 grandchildren.

Apologies for cutting these obituaries short, but space demanded it. Full obituaries for most can be found in local newspapers by googling the person by name.



Elk City road in winter, 1930s. Photo courtesy of Betsy Brandborg, granddaughter of Nez Perce Forest Supervisor Guy Brandborg.

Northern Rocky Mountain Retirees Association Information Form

To help us keep our mailing list current, please send us a completed information form when you pay your annual dues. Those with life memberships (no longer available) should submit a form annually so we don't lose track of you. We operate on a calendar year membership so if you get back to us late, we will send you whatever newsletter you have missed for that year. Members we don't hear from annually will be removed from our mailing list. If you have newly retired friends or friends who are not members, please encourage them to join us. Newsletters are sent out approximately in April and October.

2020 Membership

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Make checks payable to:

Northern Rocky Mountain Retiree Association (or NRMRA)

P.O. Box 3215

Missoula, MT 59806

Dues are \$15 per calendar year (spouses free). Donations to the NRMRA or the National Museum of Forest Service History (NMFSH) are always welcome. The latter will be passed on.

I am a life member or spouse of a life member (no dues payment required): Yes ____

My check for \$_____ is enclosed. Please distribute it as follows:

Annual dues: _____

Donation to NRMRA: _____

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Newsletters will be sent by email to reduce printing and mailing costs.

Check here if you would prefer a hard copy: ____



Northern Rocky Mountain Retiree Association

P.O. Box 3215
Missoula, Montana 59806



Hoodoo Lake at Elk Summit, Nez Perce National Forest