EARLY DAYS
IN THE FOREST SERVICE

VOLUME 5

THE GOOD OLD DAYS – REVISITED

photo courtesy of Seeley Lake Ranger District

Jim Girard Grove
Seeley Lake R. D., Lolo National Forest, Missoula MT

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September 2005

To the people of the Forest Service and their friends,

The tradition of Forest Service people writing about their experiences during their Forest Service careers was started by then Regional Forester Evan W. Kelley in 1944. The response directed to Regional Forester Kelley personally resulted in the first of a series of volumes entitled "Early Days in the Forest Service". Prior to this time there have been four volumes of "Early Days" produced by the Forest Service as a way of preserving some of the human side of the history of the work of the Forest Service. Supplies of these first four volumes were exhausted a number of years ago.

It seemed a shame to let those fine, first person stories gradually fade into obscurity so as the Forest Service Centennial year approached, the Northern Rocky Mountain Retiree Association (NRMRA) decided to republish those first four volumes as a way to assure that the historical value of those true tales was not lost to the Forest Service or the public. So those first four volumes are available.

In addition the NRMRA felt that history did not necessarily stop with the publication of volume four. So the call went out. Send your stories and experiences for collection and publishing. The result is the following volume which we have called "Early Days in the Forest Service" Volume 5 "The Good Old Days-Revisited" We offer it as a contribution to the record of the history of the agency we served.

We have also referred to Volume 5 as a work-in-progress. We don't believe that the historical record of the Forest Service ends here. History is yesterdays activities, so in the back of this volume is a page that invites readers to submit their true, first person tales of work in the Forest Service to the address indicated on that invitation sheet.

These stories tell you how it really was. We hope you enjoy reading them and looking back at those "Good Old Days".

/s/ James H. Freeman
President

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ABOUT BOB - Bob Milo, that is.

excerpts taken from article written by Sherry Devlin of the *Missoulian*

Years had passed since Bob Milodragovich was the district ranger in Lima, but people were still talking about – and missing – him.

Bob Gibson was just 22 years old, maybe 23, and scared to death, even before folks started comparing him to his popular predecessor.

"You know," they'd say, "Bob Milo wouldn't have done that." "Those people in Lima just loved him, and that kind of bugged me," Gibson remember earlier this week. I just kept thinking, "Why are you comparing me with this bird? I don't know him."

Years later, when Gibson finally met Milodragovich, he knew right away what all the fuss was about. "Bob Milo was the friendliest, most considerate person I have ever known," said Gibson, retired now after 38 years in the U.S. Forest Service. "What a role model he was for us all. He was truly a people person, a great communicator."

Over and over since Milodragovich died March 1, (2004) friends, former co-workers and acquaintances have remembered his generosity and kindness.

The clerk in his favorite bookstore wrote a note to his daughter, Stana Milodragovich. "The world is a little less charming with the loss of your dad," she said. "Really, truly he was a gentleman," his daughter said. "He could connect with anyone. With a smile and a wink, he was able to make a connection with people on every level of the economic, spiritual and intellectual spectrum."

The trunk of Milodragovich's car was stacked with boxes of chocolate, gifts he bestowed upon "somebody special" at the doctor's office, bookstore or café. "He touched so many people in very simple ways," his daughter said. "He was always giving an extra dollar of tip to a wait person. He looked at something as large as man's inhumanity to man in terms of simple, individual solutions – as our responsibility to our fellow men and women."

Milodragovich treated everyone with respect; his fellow soldiers in World War II and after, his constituents during a 35-year career in the Forest Service, his family and friends in Missoula and Butte and Bozeman. Already, he is greatly and deeply missed.

"We were very, very close," said Stana Milodragovich. "We were connected like the moon and the earth. There was this gravitational pull that extended beyond our biological relationship and that extends now beyond this earth. We have each other still."

Milodragovich was 87 years old when he died, after several years of ill health, of congestive heart failure. Two years ago, he moved from Missoula to Bozeman, to be near his daughter. He was born in Butte on January 5, 1917, the son of Serbian immigrants. His father came to America via Ellis Island, worked in the meat processing

yards in Chicago for a while, then followed the mining rush west, eventually landing in Butte.

In 1912, though, he returned home to fight in the Balkan Wars and was injured in battle. His nurse was a beautiful young woman named Stana. When he was healthy enough, Risto Milodragovich trekked two days to the home of his nurse and asked for her hand in marriage. "You can marry my daughter and take her to America," his future father-in-law said. "But you have to take her brother also." Risto returned to Butte to earn the needed steerage for his intended, and for her brother. But the wait was too difficult and he soon borrowed the funds from a loan shark, and sent for Stana and her brother. "He married my grandmother and then told her about the debt," granddaughter Stana Milodragovich told. "She wasn't very happy about that, but she was very happy to be in America with my grandfather." The couple had five children, four of them boys. Robert was the first son.

The morning after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor; Bob was the first person in line – before daylight – at the enlistment office in Butte. He was being trained for the intelligence services, his daughter said, when he saw a bulletin-board notice saying combatants were needed in the European Theater. "That was so typical of my dad," Stana said. "He wasn't going to wait. He knew what was needed and was going to be there."

A cousin later remarked that there are times "when men of greatness are not promoted in the military because they are really needed on the battlefield." One of those men was Bob Milodragovich.

His public service continued with his choice of a career in the U. S. Forest Service, where he was a district ranger throughout Montana, supervisor of the San Juan National Forest in Colorado and assistant chief for fire control in the agency's national headquarters. "Bob was a forester's forester," said Gibson, himself the former supervisor of the Gallatin and Helena national forests. "He had such a strong land ethic. You just don't find that many people who have that strong an ethic. He was a believer in and lover of the land."

Milodragovich approached every issue – and there were plenty for foresters even 30 and 40 years ago – with common sense, his friend said. "Boy he had that, just plain common sense," Gibson said. "He'd look at problems and issues and just work things out with people."

Once, Milodragovich explained his approach to his daughter: "You have to dispense a little," he said. "What do you mean – dispense?" asked Stana. "You know," he said. "You've got to dispense a little bull … now and then. You've got to stop and BS with people. Pretty soon, you are friends and the problem has gone away." "My dad didn't have to tell people what to do," Stana said. "He engaged them by working with them."

Milodragovich retired from the Forest Service in the early 1970's, after a last stint in the regional office in Missoula, and spent all but the last of his years in Missoula. When his daughter graduated from the University of Montana in 1989, on the 50th anniversary of his own graduation from UM's forestry school, Milodragovich arranged to be on stage to hand her the diploma. It was one of Stana's favorite memories of her father. "Truthfully, he gave me that education," she said. "He paid for it and nurtured me through it. Handing me the diploma symbolized so much more than giving me a piece of paper."

In retirement, Milodragovich pursued his considerable interest in history. He was a voracious reader of all subjects. His presence at the involvement in Missoula's Orthodox Church of Annunciation was faithful. "If you don't believe in a higher being," Milodragovich counseled, "go try to plant a tree between two rocks and make it grow."

In the end, he could no longer speak, his daughter said. But he continued to communicate. "If you think about the power of a smile in the absence of speech, and the ability to communicate love simply through that gesture, he was really a master of it," she said. "And it was sincere." Even a newspaper story about his death would please him, Stana said. "Dad would think of this as one last opportunity to 'dispense a little,'" she said. "Even in death, he would want to offer a little kindness."

BEAR FACTS

By "Sunny" Allan

(This account was shared at the 1996 National F.S. Retirees Reunion)

In the days before public meetings, EIS', appeals and lawsuits, a forest ranger's day was much different. Following is a for real account of a day in the life of forest ranger "Sunny" Allan back in 1921 when he worked on the Targhee National Forest. This account was taken from Sunny's daily diary, which was a required official accounting of how time was spent on the job. These diaries were rich sources of humor and history up until they were no longer required in the early 1960's.

7 a.m. Left headquarters on horseback for a trip over east end of district.

9 a.m. Met bear hunter with pack of hounds. Fell in with hunter and carried on.

9:30 a.m. Came across large black bear track. Followed same to mouth of cave leading back into mountain side.

10 a.m. Entered cave on hands and knees, flashlight in mount, bowie knife in belt, pistol grasped firmly in right hand. Pulse normal, temperature normal, heart action good, followed by hunter and hounds in like manner.

10:02 a.m. Entered long, narrow, high chamber just wide enough to permit me and my brave followers to proceed in single file and in upright position and frame of mind. Followed passage about sixty feet, came to declivity in ceiling which required an all fours position of procedure again. We proceeded thus, equipped as before, but with pulse a little abnormal, temperature rising, heart action irregular but strong.

10:10 a.m. Entered second chamber about the size of the first but a little wider. Marked time here in single file. Flashlight and followers beginning to weaken in spite of concerted efforts to enfuse entire group with courage and a sense of duty. Sounds of deep breathing and restless sleep coming from regions to our left; dogs becoming unmanageable, showing signs of eagerness to proceed and pursue. Pulse flighty, temperature becoming abnormal, heart action disgraceful, strong impulse to about face and beat it, but pride overruled reason and we continued.

10:15 a.m. Sounds from sleeping chamber to left becoming more pronounced as if coming from a conscious and wakeful animal. Flashlight unable to stand the strain and expires, leaving its dead body in my hands. Total darkness, pulse racing and resting alternatively, temperature down to freezing, especially along the spine, extreme heart action and a strong inpulse on its part of look out of my mouth to see what is going on. Hair beginning to assume the perpendicular, vocal cords paralyzed, hunter is same condition only worse, sense of direction missing in action. Dogs squeeze by and rush in foolhardy

headlong manner into sleeping chamber. Great commotion, yelps, grunts, squeels and sounds of heavy blows striking soft bodies fill the air.

10:17 a.m. Hunter and I facing north in single file, total darkness punctuated by sounds of tumult coming rapidly from sleeping chamber. Suddenly struck in solar plexus by an all impelling, large, black, growling, grunting, clawing, rapidly moving force which cause me to assume a horizontal posture with my head to the south and facing up. Hunter meets like fate and the above described force passes over us followed by hounds in a hot and noisy pursuit. Pulse doing a shimmie, temperature way below par, ice cold perspiration issuing from all pores of body, hair standing at attention and heart banging to get out.

10:20 a.m. Regained reasoning faculties to some extent, and guided by instinct and compelled by force of gravity we followed course taken by bear and hounds, forgetting to assume the all-fours position necessary to reach outer chamber until coming face to face with declivity in ceiling with more force than good judgement. Proceeding in total darkness ran into bear stuck in outer chamber and we proceed to pass over him in the same manner he passed over us.

10:21 a.m. Reached mouth of cave and daylight, closely followed by bear thirsting for revenge. No improvement in status of pulse, temperature or heart action. Hair still standing on end but faded. Daylight and fresh air brought us back to normalicy and other Republican doctrines especially a high regard pertaining to protection and self preservation. A well aimed shot from my pistol sent the bruin to the mat for the count.

11:30 a.m. Finished skinning bear and started for home.

5 p.m. Arrived back at headquarters.

BOB MORGAN'S NOTES

As written by Bob Morgan on his early days with the F.S.

From Dave Colclough

"I encouraged Bob Morgan to write his memoirs. Shortly before he died he gave me the enclosed copy of his efforts and promised to continue. After he died his family and I searched through his papers to find more that he had written. Apparently he hadn't had the chance to continue. I recently found this copy and would like to see it available to those that worked with Bob over the years." (January 2001)

During the spring of '41, a classmate, Bob Stewart, and I about to graduate from high school became interested in a publicized program to be initiated by the Forest Service that summer. It was to involve 100 or so college students from all over the nation to be trained in woods work and particularly firefighting and be available to fire suppression throughout the West. We contacted Professor Jerry (Schirtys) Ramshell of the University of Montana School of Forestry in the hope that our intention to enroll in the Forestry School that fall would qualify us for enrollment. Somehow Professor Ramshell got us in and we started our first regular employment with the Forest Service at the old CCC camp on Ninemile about 5 miles above the Remount Depot, which was in full swing at that time. We spent the summer as residents of the old camp – vacated the year before by the CCC's who had built a new camp "Grand Menard" just above the Remount Depot. The pay was .30/hour and were deducted .90/day for board and room – leaving a net $1.50/day for training and project work – not too bad for a kid with a lot to learn. We also were paid a straight .50/hour while on fire, with no deductions. Locke Stewart, assistant supervisor of the Deer lodge, was camp superintendent. He and fire foremen – Bill Isbenthal, Jim Usher, Earl Weinrich, were very capable and dedicated people and they knew what constituted a day's work. George Weyerman, a junior forester at the time, was assistant camp superintendent.

Most of the members of the "Flying Squadron" as we were called were novices; a few had had some experience in the woods. There was no better place to learn basic woodsmanship, use and care of tools, and firefighting – and we did. In looking back, the training was extraordinary. No one left that camp without a thorough knowledge of how to use and care for an axe, crosscut saw, single jack, wedges, and especially a shovel and Pulaski. The main work projects for my crew were constructing a trail from the road right near camp to Squaw Peak, and putting up the Remount hay and transporting most of it to the winter range at Perma.

Project work soon took a back seat to fires, however. About July 6 crews were called to various fires – various places. My crew (Usher's) spent several days on a fire on the hill south of Highway 10 west of Paradise. We then went (by train) to a large fire on the Skykomish River, Snoqualmie N.F., in western Washington, where we spent virtually the rest of the summer (33 days on the fire – mostly mop-up in the rain). Access to the fire was strictly via logging railroad. The area was very interesting with circa pre-war logging camps, stream donkeys, cross cut saw, springboards used on virtually every tree. We spent several days before the fire was controlled felling snags and mopping up in

heavy timber. Most of the snags were 5'+dbh and required springboards. Two days work by a crew of three to fell a single snag was not uncommon. Regular felling crews from the camps were also hired to fell snags and they did it quiet a little more efficiently. This was just prior to U.S. entry into World War II and subserves activity suspicious and rumors were running high. On many of the stumps of felled snags there appeared swastikas blazed in the bark. The Ninemile camp cook, John, was an unnaturalized immigrant from an eastern European nation, and the authorities stopped the return train somewhere near Wenatchee and took John off. The final fire of the season was in September above Handkerchief Lake on the Flathead Forest. I think the entire Flying Squadron crew was there, and most of the Ninemile CCC camp, also.

During the heavy haying season that summer my job was to feed the baler. It was a stationary baler and we baled off the stack. The baler feeder stood on a small wooden platform 2'x3' or so directly over the baler opening and saw that the hay pitched to the platform (by 4 or 5 men pitching from the stack) got in the baler where it was compressed violently into bales by the "chinaman." Anything that happened in along with the hay also got baled and it was hazard to feet and legs, especially when the platform became hip-deep in hay and the exact location of the opening was in doubt. I remember baling 3 or 4 pitchforks (tines and pieces of handles all ended up in a 2" flake of bale). I also remember Ed McKay, Remount superintendent, telling me, "Son, that's the last pitchfork we can afford – one more and you're on the stack." I don't really remember if I baled any more pitchforks or not, but I do remember no one else wanted the job, so I kept it.

The breakup of camp on September 15 was rather poignant. It appeared rather imminent that the U.S. would soon be at war. Many of the enrollees went directly from camp to the military. All knew they would be in the service one way or another within a few months. And that's what took place.

In my case, I signed up with the Army Air Corps that winter and was placed in a deferral category to wait for opening for training – so I was free to work the following summer – 1942. I was offered a job as lookout fireman on the Priest Lake District, Kaniksu N.F., with headquarters at Priest Lake Ranger Station (at some point, don't remember if before that summer or after, the name was changed from Bismarck Ranger Station to Priest Lake Ranger Station because of the German intonation in the name Bismarck.) We are now at war with German, Japan, and Italy. After about a month of trail and telephone maintenance work with foreman Johnny Re, tent camps mostly with an occasional 2 or 3 days in a cabin, I was sent to "Plowboy" Lookout above upper Priest Lake. The year was wet and I was bored. After planting a new flagpole, digging a new garbage pit, and a few other maintenance chores around the lookout, I asked to be put back on the trail crew, and I really got a response. I spent the rest of the summer as a one-man trail crew on the east side of Priest Lake. Crewmen were hard to come by so I was mostly alone. For a week or 10 days I had two drifters who had been hired as they passed through Priest River. While it seemed serious to me at the time, those few days were a comedy. I was 19 years old, not too experienced, supervising two middle-aged characters – and they were characters. I don't believe they really anticipated much work on the job leave alone hard 10-17 hours on trail maintenance and camp living. Anyway, they put up with me for the

2 weeks or so, mainly they said because I did all the cooking. They were really after a grubstake to get them to the west coast "in style" as they put it, so they could "eat on the train" and spend a week in Spokane enroute. They were going for defense jobs. One was named Gabe and the other, whose name I don't recall, was the obvious leader of the two. When I would give directions for the day, if it did not suit the leader, he would say, "Pay him no bud, Gabe." Actually, they accomplished a lot of work. They were terribly afraid of bears and wore a tin can on a string around their necks filled with pebbles all the time. After they left I spent the rest of the summer as a one-man trail crew working out of either Goblin's Knob Lookout or Two-Mount cabin. On some of those trails, 3' trees across the trail were common, and 5' not too rare. I learned a lot about weight balance leverage and what a pry-pole can do in labor saving. During the entire summer we were plagued by rumors some official Forest Service message that Japanese agents were going to infiltrate the forest and set the woods on fire to slow down the U. S. war effort. They were also rumored to be sending incendiary devices over carried by balloons and the prevailing wind. A Priest Lake resort operator reported that one weekend six Orientals had rented a boat from him and told him they were going fishing – they had no gear. The message got to those of us in the backcountry "up the lake" and everyone was alerted – and we watched. They never showed up, neither did any fires, nor to my knowledge did anyone find an incendiary device.

Bears were plentiful that year. Very few days went by without some kind of incident. Nothing serious, or even close to it – mostly humorous. We had just moved our four-man trail crew into the Navigation cabin on Upper Priest and hung about a 30-pound chunk of beef hindquarter on the open porch. While 3 or us were standing on the porch, a big brown bear sauntered up, sniffed the beef, tore it out of the rope tie, and moved on out into the timber before any of us regained our senses – probably better that way. That same bear became a camp follower. He would show up at 6 o'clock whatever camp spot we moved to, no matter it if was miles from the last one. I don't recall that he ever bothered anything inside the tent, even during the day when we were gone, but he'd be waiting when we dumped the garbage, and you could hear him most nights – sometimes obviously driving other bears away. The same bear and a smaller one hung around Two-Mouth cabin later in the season when I was maintaining trails out of there alone. We became pretty well acquainted and respected each other's rights. The garbage pit was just off the trail about 200' from the cabin. They were both usually there morning and evening. When I would leave the cabin with my tools they would not move as I walked by the dump, but if I came out carrying the garbage bucket, they would retreat a hundred feet or so while I dumped it. Either one would remove the pit cover as easily as I could, and as soon as I was back in the cabin, they would be down digging it out. I actually think, though, I couldn't prove it, that one got in the pit and handed the garbage out to the other. It was well I was acquainted with them, because often one of the other would be peering in the windows after dark. That, under other circumstances, could make a person a little nervous. Another wildlife phenomenon occurred in Two-Mouth cabin that I have never seen before or since. I was awakened two mornings straight about daylight by what sounded like a horse galloping over a bridge. I could never see what made the noise. It would quit before I could look out. I planned to get up early the third morning and find out what the noise was. Lookouts and others I was in contact with by telephone

were all curious also. I never had to wait for the third morning. I heard the sound while doing dishes that evening before, and went out. By the time I got outside there was a mule-deer doe swimming along the dock, which stretched out into the lake 100' or so, toward shore. The mystery was quickly solved, as the deer merely waded to shore, moved up toward the timber where her fawn was standing, then turned and dashed full speed the length of the dock and jumped in the lake, swam around a few minutes and returned. She repeated the performance many times after that.

Of special interest that summer was becoming acquainted with "Frank the Finn". Don't remember his real name – don't know as I ever heard it. Frank lived in a little house built on a raft anchored on the east shore of Upper Priest Lake, roughly across from Navigation cabin. The floating cabin was generally a one-room affair, long and narrow, with a combination shore-room and "bath" room on the lake end. (I never inquired as to the plumbing facilities.) The unique thing about the houseboat was the interior design. The altitude of the floor was determined by the lake level – the shore end resting on rocks and the lake end lowered as the water went down. The furniture, table, bench, chair, bed, etc., were designed with 3 or 4 2-inch blocks on hinges on the shore side so the legs could be shortened as the water went down. The result was that the table, bench, chair, bed, etc., were level and the floor and stove were tilted with the slope of the lakebeds – maybe 10-15 degrees. Just to walk in made me dizzy and Frank didn't help much, as he walked around it looked like he was tilted at the ankles. Frank was a grizzled, spry little man, probably in his early 80's, a philosopher and prognosticator. In fact, he foresaw the shortage of sugar and coffee and his "storeroom" was filled with great quantities of both. He must have spent lots of time listening in on the telephone at Navigation, because he knew every move the Forest Service people made. At first it was a mystery to me as when one night I was sent from Plowboy Lookout down to join the trail crew up Caribou Creek and thought I was going to have to wade the river at the lake inlet, but Frank was waiting for me at Navigation in his rowboat and took me to the trail takeoff without my telling him where I was headed.

Some other interesting things observed that summer. Many of the trailheads were several miles by water (Priest Lake) from each other or from the Ranger Station. Mule strings were transported on an open raft towed by large powerboats – the "Kaniksu" and "Pend Orielle." There was always the problem of loading the mules on the barge, then the cargo, then getting the mules off, then unloading the cargo – sometimes wading ashore in 1-2' of water, then loading the cargo on the mules to hit the trail. The first time out when our trail crew was set up, the new packer decided it would be simpler to pack the mules before loading them on the raft. This would eliminate all the extra cargo handling. This we did. The launching at the station was constructed so the mules could walk from the dock onto the barge with no problem. Not so at the destination. It was step off or jump off and wade ashore, depending on how near the raft could be maneuvered to shore and how deep the water. Standing also spooked the mules on the moving barge. As the boatman explained, he had to steer for open water and approach the landings directly, staying away from shore till the last minute. If the mules ever figured they could make it to shore, they would jump off the raft and do so. This particular trip some movement of the raft spooked the mules while about 200' from shore and they jumped in to swim for

it, fully loaded. Luckily they only had to swim a few strokes before they could wade on in. All made it, but we paid for it that night when we unpacked and made camp. A lot of gear and food were soaked – much of the food not in cans was ruined.

The local draft board was always looking for available new blood to help meet their quota. The Nation was at war and we college students running around the woods must have looked to them like a ready supply. Even though we were all registered with the home board, and in my case had already been sworn in the Army Air Corps, it was a hassle over what boards had jurisdiction, etc. Anyway, I finally had to get a letter from the ROTC people at the University before they were convinced I was not one of their quotas for the month. I finished up that summer about Labor Day and returned to school, knowing that I wouldn't last the year there, and I didn't. I was "called up" about mid-term.

I survived the rigors of training and war in the Pacific (that's another story) and returned to college just about an even 3 years from the day I left. I had two long-time friends who had become ensconced as foremen in the Region 1 smokejumper operation – Al Cramer and Bill Wood. They insisted that the only future for me was to take up smokejumping. So in June of 1946 I reported to Camp Grand Menard (former CCC camp named after a Remount stallion) along with about 100 other prospective jumpers. Most of the jumpers were new recruits, but most were also combat veterans not long out of the service. Contrary to what the overhead had anticipated, the recruits were serious, generally hard working, and the training went very smoothly. After the parachute and fire training, I was again (as in 1941) assigned to the haying job at the Remount Depot. This time Clayton Ogle and I were more or less in charge of getting the hay baled and hauled. We had a pickup baler now so there was no stacking loose hay.

Some of the people working as jumpers and overhead that season went on to Forest Service careers, and the overhead were amazingly efficient and provided top leadership. Earl Cooley, one of the original jumpers (1940) was camp superintendent. Foreman and spotters were Art Cochran, Wag Dodge, Fred Brauer, Bill Wood, Jack Nash, Al Cramer, Andy Anderson. I think all but Andy retired eventually after Forest Service careers. Danny On, Hank Florin, Al Hammond, Roland Fisher, Bob Rehfeld, Len Krout, Bob Manchester, Bob and Lee Gorsuch, Harry Lee Cummings, Bill Dratz, Chuck McDonald, Ed Martinson.

Many of us who were jumping for the first time that year had roamed the hills together for years and kind of looked forward to working together on 2 or 4-man fires. Such was not the case. When time for fire jumps actually came, we were carefully paired off so that one unit's experience in the woods always had a partner from the east, or otherwise not woods-wise. And things didn't work all that smoothly, either. The first "bust" day in 1946 produced a lot of confusion. My partner and I were loaded in a Travelair and headed for a fire on the Powell District, which at the time was on the Lolo Forest. We were actually dropped on a fire in what turned out to be West Moose Creek on the Moose Creek District (then on the Bitterroot Forest). We had the fire controlled and pretty well mopped-up a couple days later and started to think about going out. The map and

instructions we had been given said to go straight downhill, hit the trail in the bottom and go 3 miles east to Fish Lake Airstrip. I had been down to the bottom the night before for water – and it was a v canyon full of windfall and no sign of a trail. We were actually over 15 miles from Fish Lake Airstrip, but we didn't know it at the time. What we did know is we were lost in the middle of what was later to become the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. My partner became quite concerned and really rebelled against not following instructions. I was concerned, also, but mainly because we might be accused of "goofing off" instead of hurrying to get back on the jump list in Missoula. I knew if we didn't show up somewhere someone would check on us. Anyway, I finally convinced my partner to pack our gear straight uphill and get on a ridge top where we could get a look at the country and stay on the ridges till we at least thought we knew where we were going. This we did. It was a long hard climb to the ridge – but a lot better than fighting the blow down in the bottom. We got to the ridge top and went a mile or so north when a lookout came into view to the northeast. We got to the lookout about dark after finding the trail. It turned out to be McConnel Mountain, Powell District, and it was manned. I wondered somewhat about the lookout, himself, because he hadn't seen the fire we were on – or seen us jump. It was probably 8 miles airline from the lookout to the fire and the fire was a healthy half-acre and really putting up a smoke when we got there 2 days before. Anyway, my partner was no longer scared or worried, but our next task was to convince Powell District Ranger Hank Vick that we were legitimate, that we had indeed jumped on and suppressed a fire, and to get directions for hiking out and being picked up. We got it settled and the next day we hiked the 12-14 miles to Tom Beall Park and Hank himself picked us up, and chewed on us all the way to Powell Ranger Station for being 30 minutes late getting to Tom Beall. I later hiked out several times to Tom Beall Park after fire jumps. I also later (much later) became very well acquainted with Hank Vick, a real stalwart.

I had several other fire jumps that season, mostly large crew fires. One 2-man fire, I believe my last of the season, is worth recalling. The fire was in Big Creek on the Bitterroot, the plane was the Travelair, the spotter was Earl Cooley, and the atmosphere was hot and turbulent. The jump probably should not have been made. I got into trouble before I left the airplane. I was on the step in the door ready to go out at a pat on the back. Cooley saw that the belt around my chute had come loose. He knew if he touched me at all, I'd leave the plane at the wrong time, so he just jumper on me and knocked me to the floor of the plane. I finally got out just below the South Fork Big Creek Reservoir. Two things happened quickly. My chute opened inside out, and the wind caught me immediately, and I sailed helplessly down the South Fork of Big Creek like the tail of a kite. Some things you notice at a time like that. The vegetative cover of the entire South Fork drainage is 98% solid granite. Some way or other I managed to stay in the canyon and away from the cliffs and finally landed down through a little bunch of spruce trees in the bottom – falling backward over a blow down stump-shot and knocking myself out. I don't know for how long, but long enough for Cooley to also have dropped my partner a lad by the name of Saffron, from Michigan, and also to drop our cargo. I wasn't hurt bad, except for a sore back for a few days. I got on my feet and started up the bottom. I finally heard Saffron yell to me and got up to where he was, hung up in a huge spruce snag with a banged-up leg and bridge knocked out. My first question to him was where

did the cargo go? That didn't go over so good, besides he only vaguely saw it drop. We got Saffron and his chute down out of the tree. By this time it was near dark. We hadn't made any move on the fire yet. Not having seen the cargo chutes come down, we had no idea where they landed, and we had no tools, no personal jackets or hats, and no food. We had gotten a look at the fire on the way in and luckily it was nothing to worry about – not much more than a bonfire high on a rock ledge. We the spent the night wrapped up in a parachute, after trying to catch, by hand, some of the many fish in the creek. We gave up and ate huckleberries.

The next morning, though both somewhat crippled, he more than I, we searched for the cargo chutes and gear and grub. We each took a side of the canyon, climbed up a ways and got a look around. We spotted an orange cargo chute and recovered about half our stuff, including a shovel and pack board. We took our shovel and climbed the south side of the canyon, which was about like scaling cliffs, only to find that we could get within about 100' of the fire, but it was across a granite crevice 50' deep with no handholds or footholds. Two sharp peaks high in the air, we were on one and the fire on the other. So we went back down, planning to move what stuff we had down the trail to Big Creek and try to climb the ridge and get to the fire.

On the way down the next morning we met Tom Ford, Stevensville District packer, coming to get our gear. He had a lariat, so after a short parlays he and I took our shovel and his lariat and started for the fire. Saffron by this time was feeling pretty well crippled. By using the lariat thrown around trees and "roping" up the hill, we got to the fire which was still not much more than a bonfire. We put it out and went home. Today we would never let people take risks trying to put out this type of fire, but in those days it would have meant the pink slip if we hadn't stuck with it.

The summer of 1947 I returned as a jumper-squad boss. No more 2-man fires, which I regretted. I jumped with crews on several fires that summer without any particular problems. A couple of interesting ones, though – one with an 8-man crew on a 1-acre or so fire near Steep Hill Lookout on the Nezperce Forest just above the Salmon River Breaks. The lookout had been on the peak for 14 or 15 years, his name was Van Arsdale, white-haired, and talkative. About the time we had the fire controlled, he showed up to say that he had spotted another fire and the dispatcher wanted to know if our crew could handle it. We weren't having any problem with what later became know as the "main" fire, and two jumpers volunteered, so he took them to where they could see it and went back to the lookout. The next afternoon we were well into mopping up the main fire and he showed up again with one more fire plus the one he had reported before was smoking up pretty good and maybe the first two jumpers were having trouble. So two jumpers went to his new fire and I took one more with me to go check on the second one. This left three men on the main fire (for now). We found the smoking up had been caused by the jumpers on the second fire felling a snag, which had spread fire around some. We helped get that one beat down again and about dark I started back to the main fire as my bedroll and gear were there. It took me awhile to locate the main fire, as there was no flame and no activity, and when I found it, it was deserted. Assuming (correctly) that our friendly lookout had found a 4th fire, I sacked out, hoping the old boy didn't find

any more fires. He told me the next day he quit looking after the fourth fire because the crew left, any more fires and it would be "me and you."

* *

Federal Pay Increase Washington Post, Sept. 2, 1980

Forest Service paychecks at the end of October will reflect the recent federal pay increase. Most employees get a 9.1 percent increase, although people earning less than $9,000 are getting a larger increase. The new salary scale took effect automatically when Congress did not veto President Carter's recommendations for the pay raise by September 30.

NEW SALARY SCHEDULE

GS Level	Steps 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	$ 7,960	$ 8,225	$ 8,490	$ 8,755	$ 9,020	$ 9,069	$ 9,189	$ 9,444	$ 9,699	$ 9,954
2	8,951	9,069	9,242	9,531	9,820	10,109	10,398	10,687	10,976	11,265
3	9,766	10,092	10,418	10,744	11,070	11,396	11,722	12,048	12,374	12,700
4	10,963	11,328	11,693	12,068	12,423	12,788	13,153	13,518	13,883	14,248
5	12,266	12,675	13,084	13,493	13,902	14,311	14,720	15,129	15,538	15,947
6	13,672	14,128	14,584	15,040	15,496	15,952	16,408	16,864	17,320	17,776
7	15,193	15,699	16,205	16,711	17,217	17,723	18,229	18,735	19,241	19,747
8	16,826	17,387	17,948	18,509	19,070	19,631	20,192	20,753	21,314	21,875
9	18,585	19,206	19,825	20,445	21,065	21,685	22,305	22,925	23,545	24,165
10	20,467	21,149	21,831	22,513	23,195	23,877	24,559	25,241	25,923	26,605
11	22,486	23,236	23,986	24,736	25,486	26,236	26,986	27,736	28,486	29,236
12	26,951	27,849	28,747	29,645	30,543	31,441	32,339	33,237	34,135	35,033
13	32,048	33,116	34,184	35,252	36,320	37,388	38,456	39,524	40,592	41,660
14	37,871	39,133	40,395	41,657	42,919	44,181	45,443	46,705	47,967	49,229
15	44,547	46,032	47,517	49,002	50,487*	51,972*	53,457*	54,942*	56,427*	57,912*
16	49,198	50,838*	52,478*	54,118*	55,758*	57,398*	58,500*	58,500*	58,500*	
17	53,849*	55,644*	57,439*	58,500*	58,500*					
18	58,500*									

* Basic pay is limited to $50,112.50, the rate for level V of the Executive Schedule.

Courtesy of F. S. Archives

BUNGALOW

By Tom Schenarts

Where is the Bungalow?

In the spring of 1963, I was the Assistant Ranger on the Clark Fork District of the Kaniksu N.F. in northern Idaho. In early April, John Beebe, Forest Supervisor called and asked if I would be interested in the Ranger's position on the Bungalow Ranger District of the Clearwater N. F. He told me the supervisor, Ralph Space, said the job was mine if I wanted it.

I didn't have a clue where the Bungalow was located, though I knew the Clearwater was headquartered in Orofino, Idaho. I was told that it was a move in-and-out district on the North Fork of the Clearwater River with a brand new Ranger's residence. I looked over the maps and discovered it truly was a remote area. I was already familiar with Orofino, from my travels with the Idaho National Guard. My impression of Orofino was not good. It appeared to be a small, run-down sawmill/logging town with plenty of bars, one old hotel, a couple of restaurants and an abbreviated business district. It definitely was not on my list of places I would have chosen to take my family to live.

My wife, Barbara, and I talked it over and decided to take the job. Besides how many people get their own Ranger District at age 29? Later we learned from more informed sources, that the Ranger's residence was not new, but was an old log cabin. The new dwelling was at the Kelly Creek District further up the North Fork. We also discovered that the whole station was made-up of old log buildings with some employees living in trailer houses across the river. This was certainly a let down because we were living in a new dwelling at Clark Fork. However, we rationalized that it was only for the summers and would have permanent housing in town.

On the last weekend in April we packed up and moved to Orofino where we spent the night in the Orofino Hotel. It had been a little over three weeks since I got the job offer and here we were in that little town I thought was the last place I ever wanted to live. Our Bungalow adventure had begun!

First Impressions

On Monday morning, Bob Graham, Assistant Ranger, picked us up, we stopped for provisions at the only grocery store and started for the Bungalow. It was a dark, dreary day as we headed to Greer, up the grade to the Weippe Prairie and on to Pierce. The road entered the forest and wound its way up to French Mountain saddle and then began the decent down Orogrande Creek. As we drove into the forest it just got more dismal. There was still a lot of snow and the long drive down the one-lane road with turnouts and the constant logging traffic coming out of the North Fork, did little to ease our apprehensions. Still we were excited to see the Bungalow and with much anticipation we arrived about 2 o'clock.

My first impression was that of a movie set right out of the old West. Nestled tightly between Orogrande Creek and the base of the mountain, the shake covered log buildings

were neatly aligned along the west side of the road, with only room on the east for a barn and corral. Viewed through the dreary spring rain and cold it was picturesque, a truly romantic sight with a feel of "Brigadoon", so unreal that I felt it might disappear into the fog and have been only a snip of my imagination. However, the Bungalow did not sit lightly along the creek. It gave the appearance of being firmly rooted to the earth, solid and enduring as it had been since 1920 and would likely be forever. It was a refuge in the midst of the forest with no connection to the present except by a long tortuous, thin road and a radio wave. It was to be home for the next five years.

We slopped down the soggy wet sidewalk to the cookhouse. When we opened the door a wall of warm air filled with wonderful cooking smells, and Doris the cook who ruled the food domain greeted us. Seated casually at one of the long table was a collection of men having coffee. Dressed in a mixture of uniforms and rough woods clothes, sturdy boots and opened coats they all looked at us and focused on me. I could read their faces, their raised eyebrows and questioning look as they thought to themselves, "this kid is our new Ranger?"

We stopped at the office to meet the clerk and other employees. This was a square log building roughly divided into several rooms. The eclectic office furniture and files had just arrived from Orofino and things were in disarray. There was a propane heater that attempted to provide warmth and a few bare light bulbs hanging on long cords from the ceiling. It was a chilly, dark uninvited place to work. There was no telephone to the outside world, only a hand crank phone to talk to the lookout on Clark Mountain and to the residences at the station. All other communications depended on an undependable two-way radio that was more influenced by the terrain and the weather than by our needs. I had stepped back thirty years in time.

photo by Tom Schenarts

Bungalow Ranger Station 1963

We drove across the creek to the Ranger's dwelling, which was positioned in the middle of a good-sized grass covered flat. Behind the dwelling was an old icehouse and a garage built to house a Model T. A little further to the west was a small frame dwelling of the Fire Control Officer. A large garden plot occupied the area immediately south of the Ranger's house.

The Ranger's dwelling was a handsome structure made of squared logs covered with dark shingles and built in the "Bungalow" architecture popular in the 1920's and '30's. It had a steep pitched shake roof that extended over a generous front porch. The windows and door trim, the porch railings and the support structure over the porch were painted white. At the rear was a small wooden porch with a roof and several steps into the yard.

The building commanded a prominent position at the junction of the north Fork of the Clearwater River and Orogrande Creek, once the site of an Indian camp and a major ford on the river. It was also the location of the original cabin that was burned in the 1919 fire. The cabin was built in 1905 by E. Na Brown, a local timber operator.

Coming through the back door, we felt like we were entering a tomb. It was cold, that bone chilling damp cold that penetrates every layer of clothing. It smelled of a long winter of neglect, no heat, mice and musty cupboards. Nothing had been done to prepare the house for our arrival and the dreary wet day outside would not let us escape. Home seemed like an unreachable place.

Bob Graham and I got the propane heater working and while it stressed to force winter out of the place, Barbara and I surveyed the quarters. The kitchen made up the west end and it contained a propane range and propane refrigerator. The counters were very low and were built during the early 1940's when Frank "Shorty" Meneely was the Ranger. I had worked for "Shorty" at Bonners Ferry and both he and he wife were very short. East of the kitchen was a dining area with a table and chairs, separated from the living room by a low three-foot high divider, with cupboards below. There was a bath and two bedrooms, a hand crank telephone and a propane space heater. Each room was lighted with a single light bulb at the ceiling. We grew to consider this our summer cabin.

It was getting late and Bob and Maggie Graham invited us up to their trailer across the river for supper. It was a memorable evening, being warmed by their hospitality, good food and conversation. By the time we got back to our cabin the place was warm, it didn't smell quite so bad and we made up the beds and ended our first day at the Bungalow. It had been quite a day!

The Bungalow disappears and reappears.

My impression of the Bungalow as a "Brigadoon" specter on my first day, proved to be more fortuitous than I had imagined. In 1971 the Bungalow Station was closed, a victim of modern communication, transportation improvements and efficiency. All the buildings except the Ranger's dwelling were torn down and hauled off. The Ranger's "Bungalow" was used as a work center of sorts for a few years and then boarded up. Eventually, it too was taken down, the logs and parts marked and put into storage at the

Powell Ranger Station where it resided for years. When the idea for a National Museum of Forest Service History evolved into an organization, they acquired the old Bungalow Ranger's dwelling and rebuilt it at the Museum site where it now is the focal point of the Museum's activities. Eventually, a grand museum will be built on the grounds and the Bungalow cabin will be a living historical link to the past.

Forty years have gone by since I left the Bungalow. I had only returned once and it was very sad. They say you should never go back, and I wish that I hadn't. All the buildings were gone except for the boarded up Ranger's dwelling. There were no people, no food smells from the cookhouse, no flag fluttering in the breeze, no helicopter on the pad, no children playing on the beach, no ringing of radio phones, no activity, no life. There was no longer any sense of place.

The station is gone, now only a memory. It was a place that was and now only exists in the stories that some of us still recall and in the wonderful old Ranger's cabin now residing in Missoula. Remembering has been a happy journey into the past. Unlike my last visit, this one is filled with faces, voices, sounds and smells that will last as long as I do. The adventures and experiences that I had at the Bungalow are part of who I became and who I am. They are part of my being. When you visit Missoula, stop at the old cabin and connect for a moment to the earlier days of the Forest Service. The spirit of the Bungalow lives on. Long may it live!

BURNOUT (?) TOILETS

By Edward G. Heilman

Before they fade entirely into a well-deserved and unlamented past, let us document a feature of the 1940s -1950s (and later?) R-5 public campgrounds -- the so-called burnout toilet.

Your author had the misfortune to encounter these up close and personal, beginning in 1945 on the Big Bend District of the Tahoe, and continuing intermittently until my 1961 transfer from the Descanso District of the Cleveland into the more sanitary fire staff job on the Shasta-Trinity. For those not already acquainted with burnout toilets, they were built probably during the CCC era in bigger campgrounds, at least on the Tahoe and Cleveland, and perhaps on the other R-5 forests as well.

Those burnout toilets consisted of an underground concrete vault whose top surface was approximately at ground level. This top surface had four through holes into the vault below, two each for men and women, into which a removable Angeles metal stool fit. A nice looking wooden building was built on top of this surface concrete slab, providing a good-looking unit. A large masonry chimney was on one side, and a sort of access pit outside the main vault provided a combustion air inlet into the belowground vault and access into the vault through hinged metal doors.

The intent here was that before use, a loosely stacked pile of wood would be placed within the vault; below each of the Angeles stool holes. After use, whenever required, the Angeles stools would be temporarily removed, the holes covered with a sheet of metal, and the wood in the vault below would be burned, reducing all the waste to ashes which then could be easily removed. Combustion gases would vent nicely through the large chimney. After restocking with more wood, this use/disposal cycle could go on indefinitely. No troublesome water supply or septic systems to mess with! This must have sounded like a good idea to the designer and to approving officials, probably in the Regional Office.

In real life, the problem here was the great difficulty in getting the wood to ignite and then to keep burning long enough to reduce the waste. Solution: dump some more diesel oil down through the stool holes, right? Sometimes yes, but all too often there was abundant moisture, sometimes a foot or more deep, already down there in the vault. This moisture apparently mostly seeped into the pit from adjacent ground water – there was way much more than users may have contributed. It just wouldn't burn. And one can imagine what this meant to those who had to remove the mess and restock it for the next cycle. At times this was yours truly. After one or two seasons of this at Big Bend, probably in 1946 or 1947 we thought we had the final solution to our burning problem. Someone at the forest or regional level had acquired numerous 55-gallon drums of a heavy grey puttylike substance that had been used to make incendiary bombs during WWII. This stuff <u>really</u> did burn, and we thought that surely this would solve our toilet burning problems. So, we tried it, very cautiously at first, and then with enthusiasm. And yes, it did burn the wood down there inside the pit – and also the wooden siding of

the building, and the flames shot way out of the chimney, much to our dismay. So, after a few trials and several errors we became extremely judicious with this "goop". We also tried putting old tires underneath the wood burn pile, but this made so much smoke we eventually abandoned this practice. Only rarely did we achieve successful and complete burning, in spite of all our efforts.

During the time I was at Descanso on the Cleveland 1956-61 there was a prolonged drought, and surface water mostly disappeared. With all this dryness I could never understand how ground water would still fill these miserable burnout vaults when wells and spring all around had long since gone dry, but it did.

One can only hope these misguided recreational conveniences have disappeared into a well-deserved and unlamented past. Let us not become too sentimental about the good old days.

Postscript: In early summer 2004, while volunteering on an excellent F.S. Passport In Time archeological project on the Descanso District of the Cleveland, I revisited the campgrounds where the burnout toilets had been. Thank heavens they are long gone, replaced by flush toilets, which of course bring their own set of problems. But at least no one will now have to climb down into the vault and deal with an unburned, wet, smelly, repulsive mess. We should count out blessings.

CANYON CREEK FIRE - 1988

By Byron Bonney

This fire was the one fire that probably impacted my life more than any fire in my career. It started by lightning on about June 24, 1988. On June 27th, Jerry Williams, FMO on the Seeley Lake Ranger District of the Lolo Forest, called me. He said they were considering this fire for prescribed natural fire status and wanted me to be the Fire Behavior Analyst when they developed their plan.

Jerry wanted to fly the fire on the 27th and take a look at it from the air. He brought a small aircraft from Missoula and picked me up in Lincoln at the airport. We flew up to Dry Fork in the Scapegoat Wilderness. This drainage flows into the North Fork Blackfoot River. We circled the area where the fire was reported but didn't see any smoke on several passes around the area. We thought on one pass that one small puff of smoke could be seen but we weren't real sure. We left the area and Jerry flew me back to Lincoln and told me that a plan would be completed later and he would need my assistance at the time, there wasn't any sense in doing a plan yet until the fire was confirmed.

On July 9th, I received another phone call from Jerry. He said it was time to build the plan for the fire because it was now being reported as a sustained smoke. He asked if I would be willing to ride into the fire and take a look at it on the ground. I got with Nevin Guderian, Lincoln Ranger District Resource Assistant to the Ranger and we planned to take the horses into the fire the next day.

We left early in the a.m. and got to the North Fork trailhead right after daylight. It was about a 10 mile ride into the fire. When we got up the Dry Fork about 1/4th mile from the fire we could see a little smoke coming up across the creek. We tied the horses up and forded the creek and walked up the fire. It was about 3/4ths of an acre in size and was smoking from some hot spots in the middle of it. I cold trailed (felt with bare hand) most of the fire edge and only found a few smoldering spots along the perimeter. There was one real hot spot in the middle of the fire.

We didn't see any actual open flame on the fire, just duff and litter that was smoking. I headed upslope for a while, getting an idea of the habitat types and fuels above the fire and in the surrounding area. This information would be useful when I did the fire behavior predictions. We left the fire after while and started riding back down the trail. We got to a viewpoint and glanced back to see that the fire had started smoking back up fairly visible. Given the fire weather forecast I looked at yesterday afternoon, I now believe this fire would survive because it said we were in for a period of continued hot and dry.

An interesting side note is about 3-4 days ago, an outfitter who had a camp near the fire, saw it puff up one day and hiked up to it, dumped several buckets of water on it to try to put it out. When he didn't see any more smoke, he left thinking that he had squelched this fire and it would burn no more. That's why we do things like cold trailing. We find

hot spots with our bare hands on a fire we are normally suppressing in order to get every single hotspot located and put out. I am sure the outfitter didn't do this so consequently, he missed one or more hotspots so they survived.

I went to Seeley Lake the next day and sat down with the district staff. I gave them information about the fire and worked up a fire behavior projection for the next thirty days. I had the fire growing to around 5,000 acres over that period of time.

On or about July 15th, the Canyon Creek fire came to life in a big way. It torched some trees in the area where we saw it and spotted across the Dry Fork. It grew to 100 acres in 24 hours. The next day some wind hit the fire area funneling it up towards Evans Peak. It traveled about six miles and covered about 10,000 acres in 48 hours. This was to be the beginning of a long summer of lessons.

I assisted the Lolo, Lewis & Clark, and Helena Forests in building a contingency plan. This plan addressed what actions needed to be taken and where. A part of this plan was to also do fire behavior predictions. The fire had now reached new dimensions and was going to take constant attention by fire managers in order to effectively deal with this fire.

Our team built a plan and the main emphasis was to keep the fire on the Lolo National Forest. This was going to be a tough goal because there were several escape points along he Continental Divide that had solid timber running from the West side over the top onto the east side. There were not many real good defensible areas until we got down on the Dearborn River. Even this area was not the best but it would have to do because that's all we had.

As the summer progressed, the fire continued to grow on all fronts. It moved over onto the Lewis & Clark so we put several crews in the Dearborn River drainage to construct some fire line, do fire line improvement along trails, and burnout. It seemed as though we'd get one point established, the fire would bulge out on another side. This time it was active on the SW side and jumped across the North Fork Blackfoot River and started burning up toward Lake Mountain.

There were days when the fire would not show much activity then there were other days when it would raise it's ugly head and race to some ridge top to position itself for another run in the future. It was an ever-growing ameba, changing shape and size at a moments notice.

I remember driving to the Copper Lakes road and walking up to the Wilderness boundary around August 29-30 and watching the fire take off up Mineral Creek and Windy Pass. It was quite a spectacle to watch. The wind was blowing from the E-NE pushing the fire back to the W-SW, a direction the fire had not taken all summer.

We had several meetings between the three forests to try to figure out what to do with this fire. It was a very troublesome event and the main problem was that this was going on the same time as the Yellowstone fires, which were sucking up all the firefighting

resources across the nation. At the same time, there were other large fires in Idaho and further to the West that were also causing a resource drain that was being felt on our fire.

In about mid-August, I had to take my wife and kids to Orofino, Idaho, to hunt for a house to move into when we moved at the end of September. We did find a house and decided to buy it. I put money down on the house and found temporary housing for Mary and the kids to stay in while I was back in Lincoln dealing with this fire. Mary and the kids had to move over into this temporary housing because the kids had to start school at the end of August. They had to drive past two fires on the way to Orofino. One in Lolo Creek on the Lolo Forest and one in the Lochsa River drainage called Opus 7 on the Clearwater Forest.

I continued to monitor the fire situation on my home unit and assisting where I could. I remember that I had worked I don't know now many days in a row and during the afternoon of September 5th, I was told to go home and get some rest. I got a good nights sleep and got up the next morning fairly early. I decided I was going to put log oil on my garage that day and use my sprayer. I went outside and the wind was blowing about 15-20 mph. Not a good day to shoot log oil on a garage with a sprayer. I looked up on the horizon above the mountains to the North of my house and saw a beautiful mushroom cloud that indicated the Canyon Creek fire was having a good burn day. I stopped and took a picture of it and stood in awe of the immensity of it all. It really humbles you to have to deal with something like this, knowing that you are at the mercy of this monster.

I couldn't stand it so I went into work about 9 a.m. and was sitting at my desk. Jerry Burns came in and asked if I thought the trail crew might be in danger. I asked him where they were located. We went up to the map and he pointed at the Middle Fork. I knew where the fire was positioning itself so I told him we needed to get them out of there because this looked like a big burn day. We tried getting a hold of the two trail crew members on the radio but couldn't raise them. Jerry told me that he was riding in to warn them and get them out of the area. He ran out the door, jumped in his pickup and headed for the Indian Meadows trailhead. He took a radio with him.

He took a horse with him in the trailer all saddled up and ready to go. When he hit the trailhead, he got on and rode his horse at a gallop all the way up the Middle Fork. It only took him two hours to reach the area where the crew was located. He talked to us on the radio occasionally and said that when he rounded the corner to head up Middle Fork Creek, all he could see was an orange glow off to the West. He knew something big was going to happen but didn't realize what until later that afternoon.

He got to the mouth of Crow Creek and found the two trail crew members riding up the trail toward Blacktail Pass. Jerry used basic fire behavior knowledge and told them this was not a good deal. If the fire came roaring up the main drainage which ran SW to NE, it would over run them because the creek was oriented the same direction as the wind and spread of fire. He told them they needed to go up toward the head of Middle Fork Creek, which would be 90 degrees from the direction of fire spread. They started riding up that

direction and decided to climb up towards Crow Peak because Jerry knew that the ridges up in that area were fairly devoid of vegetation.

As they climbed up the main ridge, they could see the fire roaring up the main drainage. Jerry later described it as burning gas balls rolling up the drainage consuming everything in its path. They turned the horses loose to fend for themselves and they kept climbing the steep slopes to the top of the ridge. The fire passed on up the main drainage they were originally riding up. When they reached the ridge, Jerry called Lincoln and told us that they would be spending the night on Crow Peak. I told him that I would arrange a helicopter in the morning to come and get them. We could hardly hear Jerry because of the ferocious wind that was howling across the radio microphone.

The next morning a Bell 212 twin turbine helicopter was at the airport. I went over and we took off for Crow Peak. As we flew for the wilderness, the pilot commented that the wind was definitely going to be a challenge. Visibility was not good. As we approached the wilderness I started searching my landmarks. The pilot had no idea where we were so he was just going by what I told him. As we got closer to the area, I picked out Crow Peak. We flew around the saddle and spotted the people on the ground. The pilot banked the helicopter around and brought it into the saddle.

The trees were being blown around in the wind and the pilot mentioned that he would have to hold power in order to keep the helicopter from flopping over on it's side. He said, "Look at the wind speed indicator!" I glanced down at it and it showed a steady 50- knot wind. We were setting still on the saddle. I saw Jerry and the two others running up on the left side of the helicopter so I snapped a photo then got out and helped them into the helicopter.

Once seat-belted in, I motioned to the pilot and he lifted the helicopter off the saddle and we headed back to Lincoln. The view was phenomenal from Crow Peak. There was smoke in every direction. There was burned area in every direction. I was in awe of the power of wind and fire together. The Canyon Creek fire had burned about 170,000 acres in one night. It went from about 50,000 acres yesterday morning to about 220,000 acres by the next morning. It had burned across the wilderness out onto the plains East of the wilderness towards Augusta, Montana.

Ron Curtis's Type 1 Incident Management Team had taken the fire over several days earlier so they had been dealing with it. They had a camp on the East side that they had to make a stand on in order to save it from the fire that night. There was quite an outcry from the public because of this fire. The prescribed natural fire program was in jeopardy because of what had happened here and down in Yellowstone. The public wanted answers as to why things went wrong. There was to be a review later in the year and new guidelines were going to be developed to allow natural fire to play its role in wilderness. In the meantime, all prescribed natural fire, nation-wide, was going to be put on hold for one year until these new guidelines were developed.

The outfitter community had mixed emotions about the fire. Many were upset that their areas were burned over and wondered where they would be allowed to hunt to replace their area for this year. Others knew that fire was good for rejuvenating big-game habitat and fire was needed in the area. Most didn't like the idea of loosing short-term revenue but realized that the long-term benefits far outweighed the short-term economic losses. Many of the environmental groups continued to support the original decision of allowing the natural fire but kind of sat back in the corner and didn't come out afterwards to show much support. It was felt that it was too much of a political football and nobody wanted to stand up to take the ball and run with it.

I do know that most of the outfitters in the area over the next three years had better hunting success than they had ever experienced in the area. It was mostly due to the improvement of the habitat.

There would be huge debates waged over the next several years on what is the right way to manage these fires and what isn't. The bottom line in most cases is that fire was, is and always will be a part of these ecosystems. As much as we try to eliminate it, it'll come back and usually with a vengeance. I always compare it to the levees on the Mississippi Rivers. As we try to constrict the natural flow of the river, at some point in time, the river says, "No, I think I'll return to my former banks just to show you who is really in control." Fire is the same way! As much fire as we put out from year to year, the fuels continue to build up slowly but surely. At some point in time, when the conditions all come into line (fuels, weather, topography), the fire occurs and decides it's time to cleanse an area. It's time to start over and rejuvenate the decadent forest. It's time to take care of what has been put off for so long.

So, the story is "pay me now or pay me later." It will happen again in the future. It will cause more reviews and a meeting of the minds to figure out what to do about it. It will cause some economic difficulties for the short-term. It will cause change to not only the forest ecosystem but change to the bureaucratic system.

A couple days after we plucked Jerry and the two trail crewmembers off of Crow Peak, we decided to fly back into Middle Fork Creek to see if we could find the horses. We landed at the mouth of the creek and started looking around the area. One outfitter camp was completely burned up. We searched the area and found where the outfitter cached his equipment over the winter. They aren't supposed to do this and we had never been able to find this outfitters cache. Well, it didn't matter any more because it was all black.

The horses were doing fine down in the bottom of Middle Fork Creek. They had it made. They were busy grazing in a nice lush meadow that was missed by the fire. We stayed the afternoon looking the area over then took a recon of the fire area.

Another assignment we took on during the fire was the protection of Webb Lake cabin. This cabin was built in 1906 and was still used for administrative purposes. It was a beautiful cabin surrounded by lodgepole pine forests and a lake. It was a valuable structure, not only for administrative purposes but probably more for it's historical value.

We flew into the cabin during the fire and took several boxes of old fire shelters. Our plan was to wrap the cabin with these fire shelters, set up a sprinkler system from the lake to the roof of the cabin and leave it to the mercy of the on-coming fire. The fires was still several miles to the West but the way it had been moving over the course of the summer, if it decided to get up and run it wouldn't take long to get there.

The fire never reached he cabin but burned a couple hundred yards to the North of it, up on Webb Lake Hill. There was an outfitter camp in the Lander's Fork that we also went in and took out with a helicopter one afternoon. The outfitter had all his equipment set up, getting ready for the early hunting season and I believe he may have had some fishing trips planned. We flew in, took his camp down, put everything in several sling loads and flew them to Indian Meadows. The outfitter had to haul all his equipment back later in the year to go hunting.

I was busy with this fire from about June 27th through the middle September. There was always something happening and there was never a day that didn't go by where we had to do something in relation to this fire. As far as I'm concerned, it's much better to visit another place and assist someone else than to be on the receiving end. But, when you are on the receiving end, it is always comforting to know there are people out there that will drop anything to come and assist in time of need. This was definitely one of those years.

ED CLIFF STORY

As told by Dale Robertson

I would like to start by telling you a story about one of my heroes in the Forest Service – Chief Ed Cliff. One day during my second summer of working for the F.S., I came home from marking timber and picked up the *Oregonian* and there was a big headline: "Ed Cliff is the new Chief of the Forest Service." I remember being impressed that Chief Cliff was appointed by Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman, the ex-governor of Minnesota.

Due to a long story that I won't go into, I ended up in the Washington Office in 1962 as a GS-9 Management Analyst trainee. Here I was in Washington, D.C., at the bottom of the "totem pole" working as a "trainee" not knowing much about what I was doing. Well, as it turned out Chief Cliff lived in old town Alexandria and rode the bus to work. And, I lived in the "low rent" district just beyond Alexandria. As luck would have it, Ed and I rode the same bus to work and we occasionally sat together. One reason I have such a soft spot in my heart for Ed is that when we sat together on the bus, he never failed to put his brief case down and talk with me. He told me a lot about the history of the F.S. and gave me his perspective on many of the issues that the F. S. was dealing with in those days.

After two years in Washington, D.C., I transferred to the national forests in Texas as an assistant ranger. On my last day, Chief Cliff came down to my office and spent about 30 minutes telling me everything he knew about the NF's in Texas. I am probably the only assistant ranger to ever have gotten direct, personal guidance from the Chief!

Well, 25 years later, I was trying to fill Ed's big shoes as Chief. And, one day I got a call from Orville Freeman, the Secretary who appointed Ed as Chief, and he wanted to take me to lunch. I later found out that what he really wanted was a Smokey Bear doll for his granddaughter. Over lunch, Orville talked a lot about Ed Cliff, and told me how he went about selecting Ed as Chief over the other contenders for the job. As a final step, he interviewed each of the candidates for the Chief's job and asked them to write a 2-page essay on their vision of the future of the F. S. He said that he was so impressed with Ed's interview and write-up because Ed came across as a "Man of the Land" and just fit his image of what he thought the F.S, should be all about. Secretary Freeman said those impressions were the deciding factors in appointing Ed Cliff as Chief of the Forest Service.

I tell you this story because Ed Cliff, as I knew him and as many of you knew him as well, really did represent the "Heart, Soul and Conscience" of the Forest Service. Unlike today's diversified F.S., there was a great deal of convergence in the thinking and values held by the field people and their leaders.

Many of my fond memories of the F. S., go back to those days that Ed was Chief. There was a general political consensus over how the National Forest should be managed and the F. S. was well-respected, trusted, and looked to for conservation leadership.

Supervisors and Rangers had more flexibility to work things out with local communities and make decisions based on their experience and professional judgment without a lot of detail planning documents and paperwork. To me, those were "the good old days" in the Forest Service!

BUT TIMES HAVE CHANGED!
As always, the F.S. changes with the times, as it should, to reflect the changing needs and new priorities. To illustrate how thinking in the F. S. has changed over time, I would like to just briefly tell about the roadless area issue – a hot topic today which had its roots in the Ed Cliff era!

The "First Roadless Area Review" was initiated by Chief Cliff in about 1971. I know that he and Deputy Chief Ed Schultz. Were concerned over the controversies that kept popping up in various locations throughout the National Forest over timber sales infringing on large roadless areas. The idea at that time was that the F. S. would deal with this issue by inventorying all roadless areas over 5,000 acres and decided which ones should be protected until Congress could get around to considering Wilderness. *AND THE REST OF THE ROADLESS COUNTRY WOULD BE FREED UP FOR MULTIPLE USE MANAGEMENT WITHOUT BEING COMPLICATED BY FUTURE CONSIDERATION FOR WILDERNESS.* Well, that was probably one of the biggest "miscalculations" of all time in the F. S. I think both Ed Cliff and Ed Schultz would probably turn over in their graves, if they knew that *(1)* those temporary roadless area boundary lines are still on the map 30 years later and *(2)* the current Administration and Chief are seriously considering designating all of them roadless in one "big decision" in Washington, D.C. This proposal and how it is being handled goes against the grain of our Heritage of the Forest Service!

THE PATH TOWARD A MORE REGIMENTED AND FORMALIZED F. S.
Another event that I think is important in the history of the F. S. is the passage of NEPA by Congress in 1969. NEPA required land management decisions to be formalized in environmental documents prepared by interdisciplinary teams and subjected to formalized public involvement processes. As much good as NEPA has done, and I don't want to underrate that, I believe it did start the F. S. down the path toward formality and regimentation in terms of the procedures by which the F. S. gets its work done.

At this point, I would like to add another Ed Cliff story. Sometime in the late 1960's, I had the opportunity to do some staff work for the Chief on how the F. S. would implement the recommendations of the Public Land Law Review Commission Report. I vividly remember when I finished my presentation; Chief Cliff gave my boss, Russ Cloninger, and me a little lecture. He said, "This involves way too much regimentation of the F. S. and would limit the flexibility of the field to work with local people in managing the NF's." So I went back and completely rewrote the paper to reflect Chief Cliff's philosophy. And, that lecture always stuck in my mind. Well, let me tell you something, what we were talking about in those days is nothing compared to the situation today!

And, NEPA was just the start down this path. It has been re-enforced by many other environmental laws and planning laws like the RPA and the NF Management Act – and further complicated by interpretations by the Judges of the land. All of these laws have required more formality and the consideration of issues in ever-widening circles and at an ever-higher context. So, it should be no surprise to us that the F. S. is losing some of its heritage of being an informal, friendly personable agency responsive to the needs of the local people More issues than ever before are being highlighted and decided at higher levels with all kinds of people outside the F. S. getting involved and influencing the outcome. For example, today, the habitat requirements for endangered species are a DOMINANT USE of the NF's and the local Ranger may have little to say about how that affects the management of their District.

Due to the breakdown in the POLITICAL CONSENSUS over how the NF's are to be managed along with the overly complicated planning and decision-making process, I think the "PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE" today in the F. S. is toward non-management of the NF's. It takes extra-ordinary commitment, time, and energy to see any kind of development-type project through to completion. As a result, I think the F.S. has become much more of a "PLANNING AGENCY" and less of the "CAN DO, ACTION ORIENTED AGENCY" that is an important part of our heritage. Until the current planning deadlock is broken, I believe natural resource management will be strangled and the F. S. will continue to have serious budget problems. I think the F. S. is in a deep hole budget wise, and I don't see them getting out of it until they can produce more tangible benefits beyond just planning documents and paperwork.

THE FUTURE OF THE FOREST SERVICE

However, over the long-term, I'm more optimistic about the future of the F. S. I say this because the NF's are simply too big and important to ignore. Even though the NF's represent only about 9% of the land area, their importance are far greater than that in terms of the Nation's natural resources. How well these lands are managed over the long term has a lot to do with the overall environmental and economic well being of the American people.

The F.S. heritage has been to use the concept of "SUSTAINABLE MULTIPLE USE MANAGEMNT", which has now been updated to more clearly recognize ecological values, as the best way to balance the management of the NF's and maximize their benefits to the American people. Putting aside all of today's high-sounding rhetoric, I really don't see any reasonable, viable alternative to this general concept over the long term. Sooner or later, Canada will no longer be able or willing to bail us out on wood products. Sooner or later, OPEC will not be able to bail us out on oil while we IGNORE THE POTENTIAL of oil and gas on Federal lands. Sooner or later, we will not be able to tolerate letting the NF's become an economic burden to small, rural dependent communities. And finally, Mother Nature is now re-teaching us a valuable lesson in the West, and especially in Montana, that there is a huge price to pay in letting Nature manage the forest without the help of professional resource management. Doug Leisz's recent letter to the President did a great job of describing this problem in rather blunt, but

realistic terms! I hope the political appointees in Washington and the F. S. is listening and receptive to Doug's message.

To paraphrase Gifford Pinchot, the success of the F. S. depends upon the understanding and support of the people, which is ultimately reflected through the political system. Or, to put it in another way, the "STATE OF THE F.S." to a large extent reflects the "STATE OF MIND" of the American people toward natural resources. The environmentalists and their high sounding, and often dishonest, rhetoric is way off the mark. And, to some extent, so are the timber industry and related economic interests. The F. S., as a professional organization, is in a very unique position and carries a heavy responsibility to paint a more balanced picture to the American people about the importance of natural resource management.

With the current situation, I don't see any quick fix. It has to be a long-term, turn-around story. The more immediate question is what kind of picture is the F.S. now painting for the American people? Is it balanced, realistic, and building upon the rich heritage of the F.S.? Starting down the right path is what is important today!

ELK SUMMIT STORY

By Bob Rehfeld

It was 1954 and I had gotten my JF appointment that spring. With that I transferred from Lolo-Engineering to the Powell District and spent most of the early season cruising potential bark beetle sales with Andy Arvish. One day Bud Moore called me into his office and said, "Bob, I'd like to have you take on the Elk Summit job this summer; it'd be good experience for you at this stage of your development." I tried as best I could to be nonchalant about the whole thing, while at the same time ready to bust wide open with unrestrainedly excitement.

Elk Summit had been an early day Ranger District later consolidated with Powell when the road was completed to it. Succeeding Rangers had seen fit to run it more or less as a district appendage. In 1954 there were three primary lookouts, an all-summer trail crew, part-time road crew, and early year station crew, all to be supervised by the Elk Summit Guy. And – get this – the ESG had his own assigned horse and mule and pickup. That pretty well identifies the heavy burden of importance placed on Bob the mini-ranger. While I've never told anyone, I felt the occupant of this position should have been paying for the privilege. Looking back, it was the finest job of my career.

There was a down side. Horses and I had never ever developed any kind of close relationship. Raised a city boy, I was a bit intimidated, especially by their south end, so never spend much time around that part. I reluctantly mentioned to Bud that a little training might be in order. He agreed and also said they'd give me proven gentle animals, Thorby the horse and Homer-Moses the mule. Only mule I ever knew with two names. Seems nobody knew for sure which was right, and besides he'd come to almost anything, especially his nosebag.

Well, things got busy and I never ever received any special training. Most of my activity required only Thorby, and I could saddle-up okay. I molded quickly to the role with a cowboy straw hat, and my White boots satisfied that need adequately. Got to thinking one day that any cowboy worth his salt should have a pair of chaps. I found an old torn manta in the wanigan, a part of a halter for belt, and good old binder twine for leg ties. Hey, with my cowboy outfit, my bronc saddled, the me ridin' tall in the saddle out through Horse Heaven, the picture was complete, except for the song. Why not – nobody around to critique, so "My home's in Montana, I wear a bandanna, my stirrups are silver …" Man, I really looked and sounded the part. Thorby seemed to enjoy it; he'd walk a lot faster, almost like he was trying to get away from the lilting melody, but I knew better than that.

One day I got a call from Frank Bustard, the trail foreman down on Duck Creek. He needed Homer to skid some log stringers for a bridge and some corduroy. And bring half a bag of oats, a bale of hay, a large wooden dish box and miscellaneous grub and cooking utensils. You bet, Frank, but suddenly a new unexpected challenge: mule packing. Let's see, does this go under his tail or under his chin – why in hell don't they label these things. Actually, Homer didn't seem to mind one way or another. Oh yah, that's right, ya

gotta manta this stuff up and somehow secure it to the damned mule with what was it – a triangle hitch? Naw, just tie it on, Bob. This did take a while. Old Thorby dropped off to sleep once and almost fell under the hitch rack, but we were finally ready to go. Put on my chaps, lead the horse over to the guardrail, where I stood to mount, and we were on our way. Cowboy Bob, movin' down the trail with his full one-mule string.

With careful logic I had mentally balanced the packs by putting the oats and the hay together, and countered that with the big dish box filled with the odds and ends. An occasional nervous glance, purposely masked as casual, over the shoulder, indicated things were going okay and that I was soon to qualify as a cowboy/packer. Morning dew glistened on the tops of the tall meadow grass as we moved into Horse Heaven, the sun was moving warm into a bright blue sky, a cow elk with her new calf moved cautiously toward lodgepole cover that edged the tall grass. Oh man, God is good and life is grand! "My home's in Montana, I wear a bandanna, my …" I knew the stock enjoyed that cause they laid their ears back flat against their heads when I sang and I interpreted that as a sign of approval.

Now and then Homer would give a little pull back on the lead rope. Crazy old mule, just trying to get a little attention. Then he'd rattle the stuff in the dish box occasionally or make funny little grunting sounds, almost like burps, these laced with sporadic methane flutter busters. "Homer, I'm not paying any attention to you, it's only a four-mile trip, you haven't done a damn thing all spring, so get with the program." Quiet for a while and then more of the same. "Okay, what's the problem, Homer-Moses?" He was waddling along with all four feet spread as far as he could get them with the entire load under slung beneath his belly. He was doing as best he could under the circumstances, and his complaints had been minimal.

It's hard to get all the riggin' off a mule with a 180-degree twist. His poor old tail stuck out sideways for a month after. I redivided the load, put things back in order and we proceeded with no further incident. However, the anxiety Homer used to show when Thorby and I took off for parts unknown disappeared. Even when I put some berries in the nosebag and rattled it, he'd just turn and walk away and sometimes give a flutter buster salute.

(I've never told this to anyone, planned to keep quiet for at least 50 years. But I'm getting forgetful and fearful some of the meaningful details will be lost to antiquity. Besides, Bud can't put it in my performance rating now.)

MORE OF THE ELK SUMMIT STORY

By Cowboy Bob Rehfeld

I had taken old Homer-Moses, the mule, down to Duck Creek for the trail crew to do some timber skidding. About the time his bale of hay and oats ran out, they called the

Summit and asked me to come and get him. Right then I could'a said "Turn him loose, he knows the way home," but there was a good chance that Homer might decided to cut on down White Sand Creek and head for Powell Station. They, of course, would ask him what he had done with the guy that feeds him, and Homer would just stand there with his head held low wearing an "abused mule" look. After what had happened on the earlier trip to Duck Creek, I didn't need a sad-eyed mule telling the world what that amateur packer up at the Summit had done to him. I had once suggested to him that just because he might have a high IQ, nobody likes a smartass.

So the next morning I saddled Thorby and we headed for Duck Creek. It was another beautiful day. The sky was always so blue up there if no fires were burning, and it was still too early in the summer for that. The grass was getting deep and lush, narrowing the trail and brushing the stirrups as we meandered through the meadow. Thorby liked to grab big bites of the grass as we poked through Horse Heaven and since I had no spurs, he'd sometimes just stop and munch. If we were in no big hurry I wouldn't make an issue of it, but if we were, he'd take several punches from the heels of my old Whites before paying heed to the instructions. This was to cause us both much embarrassment the next year when he was promoted to string horse. I had perhaps spoken too often and too loudly about my cowboy expertise, and of our many cliffhanging adventures. A horse that good should be pulling a string, or so the thinking went. Thorby was never meant to be a string horse. He seemed to lack ambition and drive; he had a slow gait and seemed indifferent. Old Thorby really wasn't very bright.

Anyway, we got to Duck Creek and the crew came back to camp and put Homer's riggin' on and we had coffee and some of Frank Bustard's doughnuts. Those old trail foremen could work wonders on a Kimmel stove. I marveled at their talents and so often failed in trying to duplicate them. You recognized failure when the crew you were feeding would ask, "What is this stuff?" "Them there are biscuits, you dam dummies." There has always been an unwritten law that the first person to complain about the cookin' becomes the cook. Thus evolved the coded comments that preserved freedom of speech but eluded donning the apron, like, "Boy the coffee is sure salty this morning but that's just the way I like it."

Brunch over, we stood, wiped the coffee from our chins with the back of our sleeves, wiped greasy doughnut fingers on the front of our pants; we called it "water-proofin'." This was proper trail etiquette, along with high praise to the cook for the fine doughnuts. "Attaboys" were hard to come by out there, and that paved the way to another invite when you next hit camp.

Thorby was leaning against a tree, sound asleep, and Homer stood at the ready with his ears cocked forward and a kind of "get-me-outta-this-hard-work-place" look on his face. Leaving camp presented an immediate hard climb out of Duck Creek, and this gentled out after a bit before leading into the meadowlands, which are almost flat. Because of the more intense pasturing by both the Forest Service and Charlie Snooks, the area outfitter, the trail as you neared the Summit widened and then forked into many paths. Homer had been on a strict hay diet for several days and the tall grass in the meadow became too

great a temptation. The constant jerking on the lead rope as he nibbled and fed became distracting, so I stopped and tied the lead rope to the packsaddle and told him he could come home when he dang well pleased. I felt this might be just recompense for the travail I caused him earlier on the way out of Duck Creek.

Thorby was not pleased to learn this was a mule privilege only, and would give a little bucking jump each time I put the Whites to his flanks. But Homer, while munching, kept one eye on the horse and me, and whenever we advanced a hundred yards or so, would hightail full tilt to catch up. This continued up to the time we reached the area where the trail fanned from one to many. With several trails to choose from, Homer edged over and thundered past us with pounding hooves and flying dust.

Horses, used to leading the pack, generally don't approve of looking at the backside of a mule. Perhaps it was the nap he'd had at Duck Creek that gave old Thorby that burst of energy, the likes of which I'd not seen before nor after. Nearly leaving me suspended in mid-air, he was at max speed in two strides. Homer, sensing a competition brewing and with mule pride at stake, was likewise at full tilt in two hops, and he was without a 200-pound handicap. I whoa'd and swore as loud as I could, and pulled on the reins till that horse was looking backward over my left shoulder. He wasn't missing a stride, but had not the slightest idea where he was going.

I finally capitulated and gave him his head and said, "Okay, Thorby, let's see you catch that smartass," who by now was well ahead and periodically kicking his heels high in the air. Our trip was nearing termination as we were rapidly approaching the Summit.

Homer's lead rope had come untied along with one of the pack ties. These were beginning to compensate for the horse's handicap, and we were gaining. By now my adrenaline was flowing and the excitement captured my full attention. As we topped a small rise short of the Summit, we were neck and neck, and now we were on a downhill pull to Hoodoo Creek. HOODOO CREEK – Lordy, there was a six-foot drop into the creek and this was crossed by a one-horse bridge, and we were a two-horse configuration. Either Thorby couldn't hear or didn't understand "Whoa, you son of a mare" (loose interpretation), and Homer seemed in no mind to defer to horse and rider. Prayer would help but there was so little time. How could I ever call Powell and report a busted-up horse and mule? You can't, you idiot, you'll be bent like a pretzel. At the very last second Homer peeled to the right and slid to a stop in a great cloud of dust. The staccato beat of Thorby's hooves rattling across that little bridge was the sweetest sound I'd ever heard. We shot up the little rise on the other side, and slid to a stop beside the wannigan.

My straw cowboy hat was gone along with my pencils and pocket notebook and my can of Prince Albert rolling tobacco. I vaguely recalled that hitting me on the chin somewhere back along the trail. Thorby was puffing and I could hardly stand when I slid to the ground. "Mule!" "Get over here, you stupid mule!" He was standing where he had skidded to a stop, ropes trailing, sweat around the pack saddle, sides heaving, head lowered, unmoving. He would not come and my shaky knees made walking difficult. By the time I got to where he stood my thoughts had cleared a bit. I reached over and patted

his neck. "You did okay, mule, that dumb horse would'a killed us all." No movement. "Okay, okay, if I'd kept the damn lead rope none of this would'a happened."
This seemed to be the admission he'd been waiting for, and with that, he followed me to the wannagin.

EPILOGUE: The following year, Thorby became Packer Muggins Gilman's lead horse. Muggins never liked him. Would say, "That horse's none too bright, fact is he's dumber'n hell." Muggins was complaining to me one time about how he'd frequently get the horse moving after considerable effort, and the mules all strung out with tight lead ropes, and old Thorby would suddenly take a notion to stop and nibble at a tuft of grass. The lead mule would wind up with his wet nose stuck up agin Muggins' neck, and the other eight would all be compressed into a tight little space meant for no more than four. "Never had a horse do that to me before when pullin' a string. Wonder where he learned that," he said, fixin' me with a squinty-eyed glare. "Danged if I know, Muggins, danged if I know."

FIGHTING FIRST FIRE

By Mike Hardy

The fire season of 1994 brought back memories of my first forest fire encountered over sixty years ago. In 1934, many of my future colleagues battled fires up to a quarter of a million acres in size. I was lucky to do battle on only one, and it was less than a quarter of one acre.

My first view of Missoula, Montana, was a disappointing one. Coming down the Bitterroot Valley, I expected to meander among, around and between huge, old mature trees. What I saw was the open valley.

A newly graduated high school (Fullerton, California) boy, I arrived about July 10, 1934, planning to find a job on a National Forest post haste. Not so! I would up an enrollee in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). But the CCC was not too bad; it paid $21 per day, once a month, with clothing (surplus World War I Army clothes), food of sorts and shelter.

After a couple of weeks at Fort Missoula, I was assigned to a new Camp, #1961. It was so new that a couple dozen of us were shipped via an ooold railway car to Forsyth, Montana, where we loaded several trucks and headed down a dusty road. In the afternoon we wound up at Twenty Mile Ranger Station, on Otter Creek, 20 miles south of Ashland, Montana, just in time to set up some Army pyramidal tents. But we didn't have enough time to secure and ditch the tents. Then came a midnight thunderstorm downpour that floated us right out of our tents and down the slope. It was the most summertime rain the area had seen in several years.

Early the next morning, the camp superintendent, Howard (Red) Halpin, roused us with the cheery news that a fire had been reported in Poker Jim Flats. Into the truck went most of us on our new adventure of saving the forests. We were greeted at the fire by about a dozen men who already had the fire well under control. It was a single, old yellow pine surrounded by a bit of blackened soil. These men were local ranchers (most of them "per dieum guards") who sorely needed the cash to buy food and "cigreets." They often turned out voluntarily to squelch such fires.

One reason the fire did not burn much was due to precious little fuel. Drought conditions had not allowed much to grow. Huge, old yellow pines were dying from lack of moisture. The ranchers were shipping their cattle off – those who could afford the shipping costs – to mid-American cattle feedlots. (Nothing new there. My dad, in Southern California, had just lost his drug store to the wholesaler and my meager savings were locked up in the bank holidays.) Our foreman sent all but two of us back to reinitiate our camp. Another fellow (from Missoula; his last name was Mertz) and I were left to mop up the fire, whatever that meant. We were told to use our shovels and Pulaski's – a shovel and a what? – to stir things around sort of like preparing a garden.

But, now the good part. The fire was actually on the ranger district just south of Twenty Mile. So, about noon, up came District Forest Ranger Chet Jackson, the first real live ranger I had ever met. He brought lunches, encouragement, a bit of instruction and TWO BEERS. Hey, I told myself, this is a pretty good outfit after all. Thirty-nine years later I retired from that pretty good outfit.

It wasn't until I returned to Missoula that fall to enter the university forestry school that I learned the real fire season was a whole lot different story. In the Selway country of Idaho, the Pete King-McLendon Butte fire alone covered 253,000 of the 327,000 acres burned in the four-state Northern Region in the 1934 fire season, expending around 200,000 CCC enrollee days as well as tens of thousands of other firefighter days in the Northern Region.

FORD TRI–MOTOR INCIDENT
Over Elk City, Idaho
By John R. Milodragovich

The Ford Tri-motor airplane: Work horse of the Forest Service' early-day air operations, with sturdy construction, three reliable engines, large payload, and ability to perform safely at low altitudes in rugged mountainous terrain. "I'd feel safe flying in this plane anytime anywhere." So I said one summer afternoon as I drove the president of Washington Water Power Company and two of his staff. We had spent the day viewing a possible right-of-way for a proposed extension of the power line from Elk City, Idaho, to the Red River Ranger Station. The sight of the Johnson Flying Service Tri-motor Ford prompted my comments. This plane was under Forest Service contract and assigned to the NezPerce Forest Smokejumper Base at Grangeville, Idaho.

photo courtesy of F.S. Archives

Ford Tri-Motor

Shortly after I made my comments, I realized that the plane was losing altitude quite rapidly and appeared to be making a landing approach in the vicinity of Elk City. This gave me concern, as the two small airfields in that area were not approved for Forest Service use.

As we approached Elk City, the plane disappeared from sight in the vicinity of the Berklund Sawmill. I floor-boarded the throttle and we arrived at the sawmill shortly after the plane came to a stop. The dust hadn't settled yet, and I breathed a sigh of relief when I saw pilot Frank Borgeson and spotter Ted Nyquist standing at some distance from the old Tri-motor Ford. It was a "Two-motor Ford" now. The right engine had torn loose from the motor mount. As it fell, the spinning propeller cut a gash in the right front tire.

We couldn't help notice the deep semi-circular furrow the plane had dug in the small landing strip. This resulted when the damaged tire blew out as the plane touched down, and the pilot's efforts to bring the plane to a stop in a very short distance. We were amazed that Frank was able to control the plane, bring it down and keep it from cartwheeling when the tire blew.

"Frank, Ted, what happened?" I asked. Frank explained they were on their way to the eight-jumper fire near Trilby Lakes on the Red River District. As they approached the Elk City checkpoint, a sudden startling explosion rocked the aircraft, followed by violent vibrations. Frank, fighting to retain control of the plane, hollered to Ted, "Send the jumpers!" Ted had already started to turn around to give the jump order, and hollered back, "Hell, Frank, they're gone!"

The explosive noise occurred when a large portion of the broken propeller knifed through the fuselage, entering the right side behind jump-spotter Nyquist's head, and then exiting through the left side behind pilot Borgeson's seat. A few inches could have resulted in a major tragedy.

The broken propeller caused the strong vibrations that tore the engine completely loose from its motor mounts. While we were talking, a mill employee who had been operating a log transportation machine arrived and told of seeing the plane's engine fall into a mud and gravel bank of the nearby creek, creating an impressive crater near his machine.

The jumpers all landed safely, scattered over a fairly large area. On our way back to Grangeville, we picked up two jumpers who had made their way to the road. They were still a bit hyperactive and were quite talkative. One of them said, "Man, when I heard that explosion, I got out of there head first! I remember all I could see was green." His buddy piped up, "Hell, man, that was me!"

This incident occurred September 9, 1963. As I reflect back today, Pilot Frank Borgeson, Spotter Ted Nyquist and Smokejumpers Schroeder, Lancaster, Scott, Robinson, McElroy, Hess, Bennett and Locklear are truly unsung heroes who did their job and added another page to the glorious tradition of the Forest Service.

FOREST SERVICE RECOLLECTIONS

By Charles "Dick" Joy

A rememberance as a little Forest Service brat goes back to the 1930's when Dad was Forest Supervisor, Deerlodge N. F. in Butte, Montana. The summer always started off (before fire season) with a tri-forest outing. The Beaverhead, Deerlodge and Gallatin National Forests used to take turns hosting a day-long picnic and activities. There were games for the kids, adult sack races, and other events, as well as great pot-luck food. The one I particularly remember was when Dad entered the log-burling contest when the Deerlodge N. F. hosted the picnic hear Georgetown Lake. Dad got spilled and I cried and cried in Mother's arms that he was going to drown! He came out of the lake drenched and gave me a wet hug to let me know all was okay!

Also during the late 1930 era, I well remember Dad taking me on day trips and visiting the CCC camps at Race Track, (near Deer Lodge) and Flint Creek (near Philipsburg) where Army personnel gave me chocolate bars and souvenirs made at the camps. We also visited the new log station being built in Philpsburg where Elliott Redman was District Ranger.

Another story involves myself when working on the Madison Ranger District, Beaverhead National Forest in 1954. I was assigned a temporary job as Grazing Guard riding the same sheep allotments that Dad tended 1924-1931. Fresh out of University of Montana Forestry School at Missoula, I had just finished counting a band of sheep through the Crockett Lake corrals on the Gravellies. Looking across the way, I see Carl Simpson, Range/Wildlife staff, coming over my way. The conversation went like this: "Hi, Dick. How many?" "Hello Carl! Just under 1100." "How did you count them?" "Hit the tally whack for every 5th ewe and multiplied by 5, Carl." "Is that the way Ronnie (Ron Schultz, DR) taught you?" "Yup. Anything wrong, Carl?" "Hell, man, you are supposed to count the legs and divide by 4!" Carl had really pulled my leg and tilted back his hat and laughed, ***with*** me!

Another item that maybe noteworthy involves my Forest Supervisor, George Duvendack, when I was a District Ranger at Gardiner on the Gallatin National Forest. The 1961 fire season took off in western R-1 about 1 August. I was called away for fire duty on the Nezperce National Forest in Idaho. My wife was expecting our first child about 15 August. On 13 August George found out that I was not home yet and the event was due. He had me located at a fire camp in Idaho and at 11:00 p.m. got me out of the sack with a phone call. He stated that the wife was fine but he wanted me to get back home as soon as possible; all had been cleared for my release. The next morning I hitched a ride into Missoula and a plane flew me back to Bozeman. George called again that night to be sure I was home to be with my wife when the time came to take her to the hospital in Bozeman, 85 miles from Gardiner. My wife and I will always remember George Duvendack's actions as one of compassion and caring for his employees and families. (P.S. The daughter finally arrived on 28 August, two weeks late!)

FRANK AND THE TOWER

By George Cameron

1959, the year of the Yellowstone earthquake. My oldest daughter was born on the 19th of September 1959. I remember the year well. It was hot and dry that fall and fire season hung on after the summer crews had all gone back to school. When the lookout left a fellow by the name of Frank Briggs went up to man the tower. Now Frank and I had worked together for a couple of years and Frank was a bit different. Frank had some habits that would tend to irritate a feller. Frank never combed his hair which by its' self is not all that bad but combined with some of his other habits it could get to one. He talked a lot; I mean he talked a lot. He also talked all the time he was eating. Sitting at the supper table with Frank was a bit of a strain. Picture the guy with a head of hair all snarled and tangled, a mouth full of mashed spuds and gravy, expounding on some subject with full voice while he chews. I liked Frank and he was a hard worker. He never backed away from a job no matter how tough or demanding. Now on the 12th of September 1959 it was 89 degrees here at Martinsdale, but if one looks a bit further you find that on the 16th there was an inch of snow on the ground. Not the earliest snowfall on record for Martinsdale, but close. There was a total of six inches on Williams Mountain that day. At that time the F.S. operated a bit different and we didn't pay that much attention to the clock but concentrated on the job to be done. The Ranger, Walt Sundell, told me to go ahead and call Frank and tell him I would be up to get him sometime that afternoon. This I did and then went about what ever it was I was doing. Can't remember for sure what it was but do remember that it was close to 3:30 p.m. before I set out for Williams Mountain. There was also a lack of rules concerning certain activities. One being the use of firearms. Come hunting season we all carried a rifle with us and if we saw something we took annual leave for however long it took to bag the critter then went on working. Grouse season was open; anyway I took my rifle along. I had a Jeep pickup, which was no ball of fire, and the road to Williams at the time was pure hell. It was a good three-hour drive to get there on good roads. With the snow and mud it was a bit tougher. This was also long before daylight savings time so it was dusk by the time I got started up the final half mile to the road. Not far from the top I spotted a couple of grouse. I took the time to pick them off and dress them out. When I got to the tower it was nearly dark. I gather up the grouse and set out to the top. There was no light in the cabin no were there any tracks in the snow on the steps. Knowing Frank as I did I was not too concerned until I got inside the cabin. It was dark and cold and there was no sign of Frank. The window shutters were still propped open and there had not been a fire in the stove. I knew for certain that he had fallen off the catwalk. About then I heard a noise on the roof. Then I saw his feet dangling over the corner of the building. With the shutters open that left only the corner of the cabin roof accessible. He dropped down unto the catwalk and casually strolled around and in the door.

"Dam stovepipe keeps blowing off." He remarked as he came in the door. He had climbed up on the roof in the dark, in that fresh snow, to put the stovepipe back up. It was bad enough for me just to negotiate the stairs with that snow but here he was climbing up on the roof while dangling out over a 55-foot drop. He had not had a fire that day because he didn't want to have to pack more wood up the steps. So he spent the

entire day curled up in his sleeping bag. Hearing me coming up the hill and then the shots as I got the grouse caused him to decide to fix the stovepipe From some of our past experiences, which I may relate some time, Frank had it figured that I had grouse to cook. We built up a fire, cooked the birds, had a good supper, cleaned everything up, closed the shutters and winterized the tower. It was close to 9 or 10 o'clock before we headed home. Last time I saw Frank was in December 1959. He was getting on a bus in White Sulphur Springs headed for California.

Georgetown Lake Was My Problem

Dick Venable

We, (Norma, four daughters and I) came to Philipsburg Ranger District on January 27, 1967, more than 13 years ago. Within a day or two after I got there, I attended a Ranger-Staff meeting at the Supervisor's Office in Butte. At that meeting, Ray Karr, who was Forest Supervisor at that time, briefed me on some of the problems on the District. Karr told me that the biggest problem on the entire Deerlodge National Forest was Georgetown Lake. Since Georgetown Lake is on the Philipsburg Ranger District, it didn't take long for me to figure out that Georgetown Lake was my problem. One of the first things that were needed was a plan for management of the National Forest lands around Georgetown Lake. That was the long-range goal. The long range, in this case, we agreed, was about a year. The large problem of Georgetown Lake was made of many small problems. There was occupancy trespass at Comer's Point, occupancy trespass at Eccleston's, the recreation residence hadn't had the attention they needed, and there was a campground to be built at Philipsburg Bay, and on and on. I spent the rest of the winter getting acquainted with the folks on the District; and about the time spring broke I was on Georgetown Lake.

One of the most significant problem areas on the Lake is Comer's Point. It is only a small area of land, about one-half acre. In the spring, about the time the roads around the Lake were passable, three families from Butte (the Muffitch's, the Petriz's and Kazun's) would move onto Comer's Point. On one day toward the end of May in 1967, I counted over 30 units on that small area of land. This included pickups with campers on them, travel trailers, tents and most anything else that people could camp or sleep in or under. Those folks occupied the area to the point of exclusion of all others. That first summer, I got acquainted with the folks on Comer's Point and the other people around the Lake, worked on the long range management plan, and some of the other problems.

By the end of 1968, I had a plan for taking care of the most obvious problems on Georgetown Lake. I started on the solution in the spring of 1969 with the help of Bernie Alt from the Supervisor's Office. We determined that Mr. Petriz (the elder Petriz) and a blind judge (Judge Selon) from Butte were the key figures on Comer's Point, so we started working with the Judge. Despite the fact he was blind, the Judge thoroughly enjoyed fishing. He baited his own hooks, cast into the Lake and then would sit back, wait for the bell on the end of his pole to signal a strike and then reel in and have someone take the fish off for him. He and the elder Petriz were the two I spent most of my time with. After a month or two Judge Selon agreed to move over to Echo Lake. The The elder Petriz and I worked out a plan where by his family and the others would be off of Comer's Point early that fall. The day they moved, an Anaconda Job Corps Center crew moved in and started building a double toilet, benches, and other facilities to make the area available to the general public. The development plan for the Point had been approved that summer, materials were on hand and all arrangements were made to develop the Point weeks before the families who had camped there so many years and moved out. It made the Forest Service more visible in a positive fashion than they had been on Georgetown Lake for a long time. During this time, as I mentioned earlier, I was

also getting acquainted with the summer homeowners, the Georgetown Lake Homeowners Association, the business people, and others interested and concerned in the management of the Lake. One aside about the Georgetown Homeowners Association; this organization was formed in response to a threat by the Forest Service to close out all the summer homes on the Lake. About 3 years before I transferred to the Deerlodge, the people who had Forest Service summer home permits on the Lake each received a letter (the famous "Let's face it folks" letter) from the Deerlodge Forest Supervisor explaining that they should get ready to move because the land was needed for higher and better public use. They decided, "To hell with that." They formed the Georgetown Homeowner Association (GHA) and took after the decision to terminate their permits. It wasn't long before the Forest Supervisor wrote another letter apologizing for his poor judgment and his hasty, ill-informed decision and which summarily repealed that decision. The GHA has been a very significant force in the management of Georgetown Lake since that time. They seem to not do a great deal for a number of years, but about the time they perceive their interest threatened, they come back together as a tightly knit organization to resist whoever or whatever they see the threat to be. The Homeowners Association is a good organization and I've thoroughly enjoyed working with them. They represent their interest very effectively.

In the fall of 1969, I finished the interim management plan for Georgetown Lake, submitted it to the Forest Supervisor for his review, and it was subsequently reviewed by the people in the Recreation and Lands in the Regional Office. At that time, it was the only plan for the management of a lake in Region 1. The plan is still in effect. It was brought up to date a year ago, and is still being used as a management plan. It has really helped us in our decision making process involving summer home, commercial enterprises, campground management, and all the other facets of management on National Forest Lands around Georgetown Lake.

I'm going back to Comer's Point to relate a couple of things that happened when I was working with those folks to get them moved off the Point. I didn't get to know many of the Muffitch's, Petriz's and Kazun's by their first names. Most of them went by their nicknames: one of them was Big Arm, and he deserved that name – he had biceps that must have went 22 inches. Another was Big Eye, etc., I don't remember any but those two. They came from the flats in Butte, the McQueen District.

They were known as, and I think they deserved to be known as, pretty dam tough people. On my first visit to see Mr. Petriz, in his trailer house on Comer's Point, I was met by Big Arm and two or three of the other men of the group. Big Arm didn't need any weapons other than what he had attached to his shoulders, but some of the others were carrying axes and clubs. They escorted me to Mr. Petriz's trailer, and I went in. He looked out and told them to get the hell away and shut the door, and he and I sat down to talk. Each time I went over, I was met with essentially the same kind of reception committee. I always left one man back in the pickup to act as a witness and to call for help if we needed it. I've learned, over the years that this may be a good safe measure in these types of situations, but it generally isn't needed if you deal with people, as people. The Muffitch's, Petriz's and Kazun's were tough and were used to getting physical with

people who got in their way. But in this situation, we developed some mutual respect. I knew and they knew that they could stomp me into a small damp spot in the sand anytime they wanted. They also knew, at least the elder Petriz (the clan leader) knew, that if they did they would be dealing with more "Smokey Bears" and they wouldn't probably be as easy to get along with as I was. At least that is what I told them. So, we developed a working relationship. It reminded me of a couple of dogs circling each other. Neither of us wanted to fight, but we would if one or the other made the wrong move. A part of the negotiations required that I sit down and drink with them before, during, and after our talks. They always served up a clear liquid, just as clear as water; it was highly distilled brandy called grappa, probably about 180 proof. It was meant for sipping and as we talked, we sipped. About the time the glass would get down, the glass would be filled up again. They weren't small, dainty aperitif glasses; they were water glasses, and our negotiations went on and on. There was more than once that if I had needed to drive I wouldn't have been able to. In addition to acting as witness, that was the other reason I always took someone with me. It was quite an experience. It was a hell of an introduction to the Deerlodge National Forest! I have never dealt with a situation as difficult or with potential for problems as that one.

Georgetown Lake has been a focus of much of my efforts every year for the 13 years I have been here. It is the most valuable fishery in the State of Montana, according to the Fish and Game Department. In other words, more people catch more fish out of Georgetown Lake than they do from any other body of water in the State of Montana. Georgetown Lake, for many generations, has provided welcome relief for the people from Anaconda and Butte. It is close to both communities. They've always been used to driving up there in the evening to picnic, and then go back home in the evening. More frequently, it has been the practice to put a travel trailer or camper or some other unit some place up there and keep it there during the summer. One of the things we had to do was to get people to respect the 10-day occupancy limit. They have learned that after 10 days, they have to move. Generally, they will move to another campground. There are many, many people from the Butte-Anaconda area who will stay up there all summer, moving their units every 10 days.

A number of years ago, just after the Philipsburg Bay Campground was built, I realized that we were having problems with some of the people using the campground. They would occupy a unit or units and do everything they could to keep other people from using the units nearby. They were principally some of the folks from the Anaconda area. After talking to the law enforcement people in Anaconda, I found out that they were happy that these people were at Georgetown Lake instead of around town. One of the families that was doing this (it wasn't a family, it was some of the males from one of the families) was in the business of being busy at night. They rested during the day and were active at night. They allegedly stole parts from boats and anything else they could get away with and were relatively successful at this. One night, however, one of them got caught taking the motor off of a boat that had been pulled up on the beach by the Philipsburg Bay Campground. The owner of the boat heard some noise at the boat launch ramp and went out to investigate. When he saw what was happening, he went back to his unit and got a 22-rifle, and pulled off a few rounds at the people who were

working on his boat. They jumped in their rig and took for town. He was right behind them and got off a couple of shots at them when they were leaving the campground. He put a couple of rounds through the back of their pickup; both rounds went through the back of the seat. One of the people in the pickup got some small pieces of shrapnel in him, apparently was bloodied up and they got picked up on their way into town. This wasn't' the only incident where there was some physical violence in the area, but it was probably the most significant. There were fights, threats of physical violence, all night drinking parties, etc. It didn't take me long to realize that unless we, the Forest Service, did something we were going to totally loose control of that campground. We were to the point that the alternatives were to either close the campground or ignore what was going on and let the public use it anyway they could or else we gain and maintain control of the use of the public improvements on public land we were responsible for.

The toughest time of the year was the Fourth of July. There would be 15 to 20 people per unit full of beer with kegs of beer buried in the ground, cases of beer laying all over hell, plus all the other booze, and quite a lot of drugs being used. At times, the air would be thick enough with marijuana smoke that on a still evening you could get a high just by walking through the drift and inhaling what was left over from what they were smoking. I contacted the Forest Service law enforcement people in Missoula 5 years ago, determined a plan of action, and put it into effect. What it amounted to was that the people on the District would use what knowledge we had, what authority we had, and try to get control. It didn't work. We were outnumbered, probably 300 to 1, and we didn't have the skills. The next year I reorganized, brought Phase III law enforcement graduates and went on 24-hour monitoring programs on the campgrounds – principally, Philipsburg Bay Campground, secondarily Piney Bay. We had somewhat better success that year and we did make our intentions known. We let the people know that we were trying to protect the legitimate camper, and that we were trying to protect the improvements the taxpayer had paid for. The next year, we went at it in a more professional manner and had relatively good success. It has become what is know as the "Fourth of July Campaign"; two or three shifts of Phase III law enforcement people brought in on detail, supplemented by District people. Most often it has come down to about two, 12-hour shifts with me working most of the day and night. Days are relatively calm! The people we deal with party until 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning, sleep until about 3 o'clock in the afternoon and then they start all over again. To be candid, I was not looking forward to the Fourth of July Campaign this year. I'm glad it is going to be someone else's problem. After a few years you don't look forward to dealing with drunk, doped-up juveniles and juvenile adults for days and nights on end. But, it has been another one of the things that we've been able to do on Georgetown Lake that needed to be done. It took effort, guts, and nerve. We aren't the only District in the Region that has the problem, but we were the first to try to do something about it.

HOME FOR A BOAT CHILD

By Dave Filius

The year 1978 was a time when thousands of Viet Namese in leaky boats were trying to escape communism. The American pullout in 1974 had left that country in turmoil. Our newspapers and TV had nightly pictures of skinny, little people on densely packed boats on their way to someplace – anyplace – where there was a chance of freedom. A lot of them died in the attempt, either drowning in storms or dying from lack of food or water. In American there was a national sense of compassion and guilt about this, and as a result many families and boat children were brought to America sponsored through relief organizations. In Montana it was the ad in the *Missoulian* from Lutheran Social Services that caught our attention. They were looking for foster homes for individual boat children and since we had room, we felt it might be a good thing for both a boat child and our children if we were a host family. We applied and were shortly approved.

In the fall of 1978 we were called to Missoula to pick up a 16-year old boy from Viet Nam of Chinese extraction named Tuong Quoc Huynh. In our van, the six of us drove to Missoula to meet the skinny, shy, probably scared but brave young man. In the dark drive back to Superior I'm sure he was overwhelmed by the size of our family and his lack of ability to decipher our chatter or communicate with us. Fortunately, he did speak a little English and he read even better with the help of a dictionary. Tuong's family was still alive back in the Chinese section of Saigon and consisted of a mother and father, two older sisters, a grandmother, and a twin brother. The grandmother had fled China in the days of Mao's great march in 1949 and she had paid in gold to get Tuong out of the country. Tuong's mission was to eventually get them out as well. Now here's a little 16-year-old who left a twin and a large family to set sail on a little boat. Here he was in the United States.

Despite his language barrier, Tuong started school right away in the ninth grade. He worked very hard and with total emersion he learned enough to get by. Most of the time at home he was most comfortable in thongs, shorts, and a tee shirt despite the colder weather. He did like our food, but his digestive system seemed to need large doses of rice in order for him to function well. His parents wrote to him with the cautions and encouragement of any good parent. Before long he was comfortable enough with his routine in school and study that he wanted to start earning money. Well, son Scott came to the rescue. He signed him up to help deliver papers in the morning. He and we all had many adjustments trying to understand each other, but he was accepted as one of us and stayed with us for several years. Eventually, he graduated from high school in Billings, bought his own new car, graduated from electronics school in California, got a job, traveled back to China to his grandmother's village, and came back to the U.S. with a new wife. They now have three children.

HONEYMOON DIARY
August 23, 1915 – September 22, 1915
As written by Louise Conner

Brief introduction – Daniel Conner worked for the U. S. Forest Service from sometime in 1915 through the spring of 1917. He was in charge of fire suppression, and as a supervisor checked the status of fire camps and reported their condition back to the main office. Dan had graduated with a degree in electrical engineering from the University of Montana. It is quite possible he worked for the Forest Service part time or during summer while he was going to school. Louise (Nickel) Conner was born in Butte and met Dan while on a family vacation in Darby. She went to a music college in Chicago, and they had a long distance romance. Dan went to Chicago to marry Louise and bring her back to Montana. On August 23, 1915, Dan and Louise set out on horseback for a month long, paid, working honeymoon planned by the Forest Service.

August 23, 1915
Monday at 4:30 we started for *Lolo Springs*.

The final preparation had kept both Dan and I jumping. The last moment Dan thought of having his hair cut. We are taking Glovers and Mange cure and dog soap along. We are determined to save those last few hairs on my poor Danny's head. He is so sensitive, poor fellow.

If we were carrying a banner with us you would notice in glaring letters the word "Conservation." I am afraid though that this season has been harder on Danny's hair than on these wonderful forests because they are wonderful even to a person who has difficulty in distinguishing lodgepole from white pine.

The road to *Lolo Springs* was a good "prelude" to what has been the following.

The little car ran beautifully. On the way we met a man who told us that they had taken down one of the bridges. We managed to ford the creek although our engine did die a number of times and Dan proved to be quite an acrobat trying to crank it without getting wet. About two miles further on we found a "Ford." (I am beginning to think Ford is slang or worse.) Worse, this time a Congregational Minister had driven a number of his friends up to the Spring, $2.50 apiece. Coming back the poor old car, it was one of Henry's first, had just stopped that's all. They tried to help but it was useless. It was getting cold as night was coming on and they had a sick woman with them also, no blankets, but they tried to be cheerful. We took the woman who was ill with us and she began to recover from that moment. When we got to the *Springs*, the young folks were dancing and supper was over but Mrs. Gerber got us something and even Maxie the cook assisted, a thing he is not fond of doing after the regular meal hour. All were very gracious as Hotel people usually are.

Dan and I took a walk up a little trail to the *Hot Springs* and watched the moon disappearing slowly over the brow of the hill.

August 24

We slept in, got up early. Dan fed the horses. There was some dispute about it. Anyway, the horses got oats (grain) twice.

It took Dan all forenoon to arrange our packs. In the meantime I became acquainted with a number of people. Judge Bickford drove up that morning. Jean and I met him. We heard that the resort people had gone back to the stranded "Fordists." They had sent a wagon but they must have gotten tired and cold and found their way to some cabin.

One of the ladies we met is in musical circles in *Missoula* and insists that I join. Ditto Dan. Of course I won't have time.

We left the *Springs* at one. A crowd saw us off. We wended our way thru the Lolo Forest and over a most picturesque trail, the *Old Lolo Trail*. At 5:15 we reached *Packers Meadow*, the top of the *Bitterroot Range* and the *Idaho* state line.

The clouds were heavy and it was thundering and lightning. We had encountered a few light showers. We managed to make our camp and cook supper but we didn't do the dishes. We went to bed, snuggled closely even if there was a pole in the center of the cot.

August 25

It was dreadfully cold when we awakened. Dan had awakened during the night all cramped and twisted. It took me a little time to get used to the bright light. Dan started a nice fire. After breakfast we broke camp and Dan was rearranging things a bit. Our horses were packed very heavily. When we would stop the first day the poor Rone would lift his front leg and beg you to take off the heavy cumbersome pack. We got the horses but Dan had some difficulty packing the sorrel horse. She is very nervous. The night before we cut off her bangs which seemed to annoy her. When Dan started to pack her she suddenly jumped away from him, hiked away to some bushes bucking one of our packs off, the one with the medicine by the way, but nothing was broken. Dan had to blindfold her before he finally got her packed.

We left the meadows at 1:30 and the trail was beautiful. We left the Lolo Trail and followed the Locksa Trail until we came to *Powell Station*. The trail was exceedingly rough in places and very dangerous. (The Rone nearly lost her balance once.) We passed some wonderful cedar trees in one place and took a picture. The forests are like I imagined but had never actually seen. I was in a trance, much to Danny's disgust. He had been trying to teach me something about the woods and I am taking my time about learning. But I do love it all even if I can't understand it all. Just like I love Danny. I don't pretend to understand him. I know he is true steel all the same.

We were all tired when we finally reached the ranger's station. The horses could hardly wait to be unpacked and rolled in the warm sand when they were turned loose.

There are four men at this station. One about forty-seven or more, the other three young men. They have been very nice to us. We surely did enjoy our supper. After supper Dan and Mr. Yeoman from Michigan U., I believe, pitched the tent. I talked with one of the men, Mr. Edwards. He told me of different experiences he had on the trail and many hunting stories.

It was the first evening for over a week that the four had been together, he having been at a lookout point. We brought some of their mail from the *Spring*s

I went to bed while Dan talked about the fire organization etc., etc., etc.?

Yes, almost froze to death before Dan returned. Oh yes, we have eliminated the pole – we were mighty cozy after Dan came to bed. We talked until quite late.

August 26

We will stay over today. I am glad for the horse's sake. Dan has to write up a great many things and I have started a diary. A thing I have always hated. We had a good breakfast. The men persisted on waiting for me before starting to eat. Then we looked over the place. They had a nice tool shed and spring house that they just finished building. Also two dear little Airdales, Fuzzy and Tangi. The man who owns Tangi looks like a roustabout or bowery tough but he has nice manners and isn't bad. Mr. Edwards has nice curly hair that hangs over his eye. He is very thoughtful and kind. The older Edwards is rather talkative but he has seen a lot of these mountains and is quite interesting. Mr. Yeoman is one of the best natured young fellows we could meet. He is always laughing. He is the Ranger!

This afternoon we went fishing and caught nine lovely trout. One large one got away while Danny was waiting for me to snap his picture. We saw two lobsters. They get fine salmon in this river. We saw a large one yesterday.

August 27

After supper the other night, which was certainly great, the men talked of the big 1910 fire in Idaho. The two Mr. Edwards – father and son by the way – were both in it. We left *Powell Station* at 10 a.m. The younger Mr. Edwards left with a pack train for the *Springs* after provisions. The elder Mr. Edwards accompanied us to the top of Parachute Hill. A dreadful climb for the poor horses.

On the way Dan killed two pheasants. The dogs went along. We fell in love with Fuzzy. Dan wanted to take him along. The view we got along the way was very, very wonderful. Mountains, mountains! A sea of them in each direction. It takes my breath away. We climbed and climbed. Also passed thru some beautiful forests. The under growth in these forests together with the timber stirs one's imagination.

At sundown after an eight hour "ride" on the trail we arrived at Lost Lakes. A beautiful camping place with splendid feed for the horses. He had at first decided to ride further on but seeing no good place we turned back.

We enjoyed the pheasants, potatoes, and peaches. That night we bathed by the fire and slept. The sleep of the Just!

August 28

We got a rather late start – 11:30. Dan went some distance for the horses, took a picture of the camp and then we "doped" our hair with that infallible Glover's Mange Cure. How it does smell. I soaked Dan's head with it. We were both drowsy when we started. Stopped at a place called "Rangers Cabin" and took a look at the cabin. There were a great many names written on the cupboard. Also the dates when one of the inmates had killed various animals. A crude fireplace with a very crude armchair before it. Its mate and a bed was all the furniture the cabin contained. The bed with filled with sticks; an ambitious fellow had his nest in the cupboard. The sorrels pack had to be adjusted, a thing Dan and Mr. E. had to do a number of times on the climb up *Parachute Hill*. After we had ridden about a mile Dan noticed that he left the ax at the cabin so back

he went. He killed a Fool hen (shot his head off) but could not locate it when he came back. About two o'clock we came to the dearest little lake, "*Crystal Lake*." The spot was surely romantic nestling there in the mountain, always looking its best with but few to admire. There in its calm surface was a duck. Not a thing stirred. The report of a nasty little 22 rang out and the duck turned his feet to the sky. No, we couldn't get it. The bottom of the lake was slippery. I wonder if that little lake wouldn't rather be without admirers. We continued our climbing and went for miles over many kinds of trails. Gorgeous mountains everywhere. The later part of the day we went through miles of burnt timber. We took a picture. Also one of the Divides between Locksa drainage and Clearwater drainage dividing Selway forests from Clearwater forests.

We had been heading for *Howards Camp* but when we came to the *Indian Post Office* we were beginning to feel that it was a difficult task as the horses were very tired and we still had seven hard miles before us. The only place we had passed that was fit to camp that had water and feed for the horses was *Spring Mountain* but the hillside was too steep to hobble them.

Well, we debated a few moments at Indian P. O. and then headed for *Howards Camp*. Dan was going to lead. (My horse usually leads.) We lost the trail, started across the divide. Dan consulted his map and made a beeline down a steep hill which is heavily "under brushed." Away we went, I was real angry as I thought Dan was making a short cut and had purposely left the trail. Well, he hadn't been on the trail. It was getting dark and finally we just had to camp on the side of the hill as we were on a tiny stream. It was dark when we finished unpacking, 8:30 and we had to cook and eat by candlelight. We just put the tent over the bed and with worried minds tried to sleep. I forgot to mention that we had seen two large bear tracks on the trail that went some distance, also a coyote track. The poor horses didn't have any feed last night. Dan felt sure he knew where to strike the trail again.

August 29

This morning after a hot night in our tent (Dan got up at 2:30 and we each had a drink) Dan went to see about the horses. Rabbit (my horse) had chewed the rope and gotten loose. He did this twice. We got up at 6. I had a headache. We ate our breakfast that we cooked in a most inconvenient way, everything being so crowded and the sparks flew in a dangerous manner After breakfast Dan went about two hundred feet down the hill and here was the trail. We surely felt provoked. We got any early start and made for *Howards Camp* at 11:30. Just before we got to camp Dan shot a grouse. It stood right in the middle of the road. We camped at the meadow a little west of *Howards*. We ate lunch after hobbling the horses and turned them out. Their backs are a little sore and so are their legs where the hobble set. I washed clothes and Dan chopped poles for the tent and fire. The sun was so hot it made me sick. Dan was provoked. He washed some things – took a bath in one of the holes. There are a number of dandy bath holes. The water doesn't taste so very good. After Dan's bath, I took a warm bath, we lay in the sun and then I wrote in the diary while Dan got supper. He said he really enjoyed it and I am the last one to take that pleasure away from him. The grouse tasted fine and so did the mashed potatoes. Dan also cooked rice and raisins and soaked prunes.

Dan read a few articles after supper, cleaned his gun and looked over the maps. He says we have thirty-one days of travel before us. We had a fine big fire, retired and slept pretty good. It got hot during the night.

August 30

Heard a catbird around our camp this morning. Started in good time. Had a long tiresome trip, up and down over miles of burnt area. *Windy Ridge* is rightly named. We ate a sandwich but kept riding. Met a patrolman on his way to *Chidian Post Office*. He looked like a half-breed but talked plainly. We passed *Devils Chair* and *Chidian Grave* on the way. Arrived at *Cook Mountain* about 6 after a hard climb. It purely looks like the tip of the world. They have a one- room cabin, windows on three sides and a number of tents. The lookout is built up in a tree. The map, etc. is covered with an oilcloth. They have two lookout points, as one won't cover all the territory. They have some difficulty with their telephone to *Rocky Ridge*, etc. as half of the way they used emergency wire and it has already cost them one hundred dollars repairing it as the country is so full of animals and this wire has been laid on the ground.

We noticed that the trail was full of deer tracks for miles.

Mr. Englehorn, an old trapper, (we passed a "lean-to" which belonged to him and saw a number of his traps along the way) is here as a smoke chaser in fire season. He had killed a fox just before we arrived. He had been watching the coyote that had been annoying horses. I was sorry. He has been trapping for sixteen years. Has 3 cabins and goes from one to another. Bears have been robbing him of his provisions. He brings provisions in the fall. Says he never gets lonely. Says he gets lonely if he is over a week in town. Last winter he had a snow step down to his cabin. The snow gets over 20 feet deep. We saw blazes way up in the trees, also traps.

The water is delicious. When the Ranger introduced the men to us they stood in a row and each one bowed differently. One man (a foreigner) was most graceful. The rest very awkward. One man has about 19 pounds of red hair on his head and a full red beard. Just a young man. They gave us supper and helped Dan put up the tent. It's windy way up here. The ranger has the manner of an affected girl. Tall and dark. We will not go back over *Windy Ridge* as we planned Take a new trail.

August 31

Tuesday! Looked at tool cache and tent and made note of provisions etc. Have been having headaches each morning. The mornings are cool and fall-like. We started at 11 a.m. Mr. Devin, the Ranger accompanied. We arrived at the fire camp at one and the cook gave us dinner, although we were late. They have been having a few small fires and have had twenty men fighting them. The camp was situated in an old burn (so much of the country is burnt around *Cooks Mountain*) and was dreadfully dusty. We had a good dinner however. Saw the pack-train come thru with mules loaded with wire. The packer didn't stop for dinner, as he didn't want the mules to stand. Mr. Devin had a toothache and Dan gave him some of our tooth filling. While the young foreman put it into his tooth Dan took their picture.

We left that camp and on our way to the *North Fork of the Clearwater* we passed a temporary portable camp. Up on the hill in a large hollow lay a sick boy. An old man was baking bread. Before we came to this camp we stopped at one of the fires that had

just put out. We saw how they had made a trench around it. The ashes and ground were still very hot and some live coals. While the men watch the place where the fire has just been subdued they repair trails.

We had an interesting day. The foreigner is from the University of Christiana. He asked Dan if there were any openings for a Ranger. About six we reached the *North Fork of the Clearwater* where the *Fourth of July Creek* empties. We had a dandy camp and long talks after supper. Slept fine, thought we heard rain during the night.

September 1

Took a picture with the two of us in it by pulling a long string. Dan is now packing. It takes a long time to get ready. One surely has to be clever. Dan surely is. We are now bound for *Oxford*.

We left our camp about 11 o'clock. Dan went back to look for his light and when he got up to me again he said the pack train was just crossing the river. The Roney's pack had to be adjusted and we hustled some because we wanted to keep ahead of them. We had been told the previous day that we would pass a hornets nest on our way and that the hornets would make the horses buck etc., etc. We went a couple miles keeping ahead of the train and passed the hornets safely but the poor mules got theirs. We had a wonderful ride. The trail runs about 200 feet above the river (perhaps more). The *Clearwater River* is perfectly wonderful. The water is very deep in places. Dan was lamenting the whole way that he was not on a pleasure trip, (there were wonderful holes in that river).

The Bungalow was a twelve- mile ride. The bridge over the *Clearwater* is a dandy. It is a suspension bridge and swings from side to side when horses cross it. My horse was so frightened I could hardly make him cross. He hates bridges anyway. At the *Bungalow*, a little cabin with a porch – we met Mrs. Willey, the wife of the supervisor of the Clearwater. They had come down that day and she had brought her baby along over the trail. We stopped only a moment and then hiked for *Oxford* twelve more miles. The trail to Oxford is one of the most wonderful that we could ever hope to travel. Of course, the world continues to stand on end. The forests along the way are fine. White pine mostly and stately cedar poles.

The trail ran up in the air along the creek. There are a number of creeks running into the Clearwater, a beautiful sight. The mile signs passed very slowly. We jogged along admiring the scenery and dreading the rain, which seemed so evident. It was cold.

We met a man on the trail with a packhorse. He had a Forest Service bag and also a U.S. emblem but was not in the service.

Still the mile signs had a long distance between them. One can only go a certain pace it seems on a trail.

All along the way were beautiful ferns and exquisite plants of all descriptions. In places it had the effect of a conservatory. How I wish that everyone could see it. It would make them better I know.

And it started to get dark. Darkness envelops these forests at an early hour. The night is inky black. We had to get little switches for the horses. There was absolutely no place that we could camp. The hills were grand! The forests are like a fairyland. Soft luxuriant hills. We wondered where Oxford could be. As we continued to turn with the trail one- way and then another, winding up a long steep hillside. Four more miles – an eternity until the third was reached and then two, we could read the last sign and that was

all. The last mile seemed short. How good the first light looked. A dog barked – but we were happy. They were expecting us but had given up. They got us a good supper. I sat in the office toasting my feet at the stove until things were ready. We did not have to pitch our tent. Shout heavens! We slept in the cook's tent. He took off his blankets, shook up the hay, put our blankets on the bed and how we did sleep. A wonderful bed it did seem.

photo courtesy of F.S. Archives

Oxford Ranger Station, on Elk Creek, a branch of Orogrande Creek (1921 or 1922)

September 2

Had breakfast at six. The cook told me that a rat gets in that wonderful bed once in awhile. Dan says he is kidding. We are now in the office five minutes to nine. The supervisor Mr. Willey will get here some time today. This is a tent town. The office, the summer headquarters, is as convenient as it could possibly be. There is a nice young man there as stenographer. They all look mighty healthy.

Mrs. Willey and her party returned about 11 o'clock from the *Bungalow*. We called on her and I had a very pleasant visit with her. She is very sweet and has a darling baby. Her husband returned about 3 o'clock and Dan and he were together until 5 and then until 9:45. I stayed with Mrs. Willey. It was cold early in the day.

September 3

The morning was very foggy. We slept in Mr. Long's cabin. They all tell us that we will be caught in the snow. I looked out of the window and thought it had snowed but was only the tops of a tent. I spent the morning with Mrs. Willey. We had an early lunch and left *Oxford*. They all helped pack. We went back over the picturesque trail. Winding over the many hairpin turns. Miles of ferns were growing on both sides of the trail and soft mountains covered with valuable timber rising on either side while a couple

hundred feet below us danced a little creek on its way to the North Fork. We sometimes ride for miles without saying a word. There is nothing to say in the presence of such a wonderland. Took a number of pictures. The horses crossed the bridge much better than the last time. It did not sway nearly as much. When we reached the mouth of the *Weitus* it was quite dark. We forded the river and the horses were slipping over those dreadful slippery hard stones. Found no good place to camp so we forded it, Rone nearly falling over. Dan made a camp. We cooked and ate a good supper and went to bed.

September 4

Dan caught some fish for breakfast. I walked down to the river with him after breakfast but did not stay long, came back and washed out some clothes. Dan returned with some nice fish. He insisted on catching some real large ones but first disrobed. I took his picture. Then we had a dandy bath. Supper and to bed.

September 5

This was Sunday but we had our Sunday yesterday. Got up at 5 but did not get started until 10. I had a number of delays on the way. The sorrels pack slipped and we stopped at a tool cache to inspect some poorly kept tools. Dan stood some in front of the cabin and took a picture of them. The trail was pretty along the river but it purely changed when we started climbing for *Pot Mountain*. We climbed and zigzagged all the way up. A hard climb from 3 to 7. At *Elk Camp* we killed a fool hen and the poor mother tried to fight Dan. Two miles farther we came to the foot of *Pot Mountain* where we were met by Mr. Darrow, the lookout man, and another young fellow. Mr. Darrow is a fine young fellow. He has been attending the Montana U. but will work in the mine this winter. He is a carpenter and wants to go to the University of Chicago to study Geology next. He has worked in a beer factory in Chicago. He looks like Ralph, is 6 ft.2. I liked him very much.

It was a hard climb to the top. One couldn't imagine how a horse could get up. Beautiful on top. We made our camp and had a delicious supper. We had killed a grouse on the North Fork trail. Mrs. Willey gave us a jar of huckleberries. We ate at the river.

September 6

Took a walk to the lookout this morning after a chicken breakfast Climbed down some rocks to see two beautiful little lakes nestling in the hills.

Mr. "Slim" Snyder came back to help Dan pack and while Dan went with Mr. Darrow to look over some things, he told me about different experiences. Last year at their camp a deer followed him and stayed at the camp. They gave him salt and he brought two more deer. They stayed there as long as the men were at camp They wouldn't let anyone shoot them. He saw an elk the other day that came right up to him. He also told me how they fight fires by digging trenches to keep fire back and then keep it patrolled. The crown fires must be dreadful. "War is hell" and so is a forest fire.

The lookout where they are at present, the building is on a pinnacle and has windows on all sides. They saw the boards by hand. They say the lightning storms are dreadful up there. The lightning splinters rocks and flashes continually. The thunder roars like a repeating rifle. The lightning even dances around their feet. It frightens even the bravest.

I feel quite brave; as some of the men have told me they wouldn't ride a horse over the Clearwater drainage.

We just arrived at Cold Springs. It sprinkled on our tent during the night.

September 7

It was very cold but the rain had ceased. Dan had to go quite a ways for our horses. He had a hard time catching my horse, Rabbit. While Dan was saddling the horses, a stocky, red bearded man came down the hill and asked where the spring was. He got a drink, said there was no water between here and *Fly Camp* and said he was fixing the telephone wire. The elk break these wires every day. They have them hung very low. I put on three pairs of stockings, my overalls, divided skirt, a sweater and slicker and felt comfortable for awhile but on the high divides we surely did freeze. The country was wonderful. The dwarfed alpine timber is very beautiful. The grass, leaves and old vegetation growing on the hillsides is the most beautiful I have ever seen. We took a few pictures. Saw a large black bear. How Dan does wish for his rifle. We talked quite a bit. Got to *Fly Camp* at two o'clock. Dan talked a few moments with Mr. Durant, looked at things and then we resumed our journey. *Fly Camp* has only a couple tents. One little sleeping tent and a covering for the eating tent.

We did not take long to get to *Chamberlain Meadows*, all down hill. The cook said supper was ready so we unpacked and had the best supper, cake and pie also. I sat by the stove in a folding armchair while they put up the tent. Then Dan interviews Mr. Wilfong. Mr. Duran, the ranger is over at the Isabella fire. I couldn't begin to tell all the times the different fellows tell about. I manage to get all the life histories and some interesting stories. Mr. Wilfong brought the lookout man from *Mallard Lake* down as he had been left without grub. He is an odd looking chap with bushy red hair. We surely have seen some wonderful crops of hair in these woods. Students take advantage of the summer work they get with the Forest Service. The cook here is very clean. He is more like a woman. The openings in the cabin for windows are covered with flour sacks and the cabin is dark. While they were talking the cook put on his bedroom slippers and lay on the bed. Didn't mind me in the least. They address me as Lady and Mrs.

September 8

Slept fine and had a nice breakfast. Seems great to have someone prepare if for you. Dan put up our little folding stove and our tent is as cozy as it can be. Our poor Sorrel has a very sore back. It rained last night and has been raining off and on all morning. There are very heavy clouds overhead. Dan said today that we would not go to the St. Hoe if this weather keeps up, as the men will leave their stations as soon as the fall storms begin. We will probably stay here a few days and them leave for home. I am glad. This packing each day and making new camp (getting there in the dark, etc., etc.) gets tiresome. I like to be on the trail however. I get very little time to write in my diary. I am afraid it is a rather hum drum account. It is easier to talk than to write.

September 9

Snowing! With the assistance of my imagination I am fast realizing what life in the woods means. We will stay here until things clear up sufficiently so we can travel. Yesterday we read all afternoon. Dan has a mustache and is almost handsome. Our tent

gets hot when we put a few pieces of wood in the stove but cooks just as fast. It rained hard all night – it is turning into snow.

The two young men, Mr. Wilfong and Mr. Stuart left this morning with the pack train to bring the fire fighters out. Mr. W. made some delicious fudge last night. We had chickens, which he killed after dinner yesterday. Mr. Swinn from *Missoula* who has had charge of one of the fires was here yesterday but left almost immediately. He had a chance to go with a packer.

One of the men in his crew is lost. They tell many wonderful experiences. Last year there were over a thousand men fighting fire in the Clearwater. Men of all description and from all walks of life. One man had his clothes burned and left in a pair of trousers that came to his knees and a gunnysack around his shoulders.

There was a doctor out with his Yale suit on and four bottles of castor oil. He was given proper clothing but kept his derby and low shoes. They said he was an odd sight.

September 10

The morning was nice and clear. We have a private chef and are people of leisure.

Mr. Durant from *Fly Camp* was here for dinner. After dinner we took a walk to the lookout. It was very windy and cold up on the point. We saw five pretty little lakes on our way up. We spotted a fire and got real excited. Dan tried to locate it. As we came back to the *Meadows*, the cook (Mr. Beck), who is acting as a lookout man, came running down the hill and said he had noticed the fire. He immediately took the bag of grub, which by the way is always ready, and started for the fire. He is an eccentric fellow. Says he never wears a coat or hat summer or winter.

I could not help but worry and felt comforted when he returned a few moments ago. Said he saw the flames leaping as he approached the fire, but decided to turn back and have men sent to it as it seemed serious. The fire is apparently near *Pole Mountain.* Dan is quite certain it is the Camp. This man should have gone into the Camp (a short distance) and sent the men there to it. Instead he came way back and wants to call on men and it will take a couple days to send them.

I washed today. I hope we can leave in the morning. Dan has been sprinkling healing powders on the Sorrels back. The hills in the distance have a thin mantle of snow. We got our own supper in the cabin. I am pretty sleepy tonight. Dan is taking notes. "Good Night!"

September 11

The weather was disagreeable as we stayed in the tent most of the time and read magazines. Dan went after the horses in the afternoon, but they came back on their own accord.

Mr. Beck baked Dan a spice cake and copied a couple recipes for me. We talked about football after supper. Came back to the tent and finished a story.

September 12

Got up a little later this A.M. Had a big breakfast and will not have dinner until three. It is snowing to beat the band. We kill time by reading but it surely does drag. Dan sawed some wood today (also yesterday) so we are comfortable. This little tent is as crowded as it possibly could be. Saddles, all our packs, a double cot, a folding arm chair,

our grate, which is doing nicely as a wash stand and a stove. Mr. Beck just phoned to *Fly Camp* and they say they heard 15 shots. They think some men are lost. It is foggy and snowing. Some of the men from *Pole Mou*ntain returned. Mr. Stuart walked thru all the rain. He had a dog with him who had a million porcupine needles in him. One is still in his foot. Mr. Durant and another man also returned. He said they came thru a blizzard. I wonder when we will be able to leave. We had a lunch this evening of beans and pineapple and tea. I have been reading some good articles in the Saturday Evening Post.

September 13

This morning we had hardly finished dressing when Mr. Durant came to our tent with a pan of lovely biscuits. We had told them that we would eat breakfast in our own tent.

I soaked some clothes, things get so dirty out there. Dan and I took quite a walk after the horses but did not find them. It was nearly 12 when we returned so we did not take time to change our wet clothes. Someone shouted, "Come and get it" and then in a milder tone in our direction "Dinner."

There were 6 men in the cabin last night. They have two bunks in the end of the room. Three slept in a bed. Mr. Wilfong cooked the dinner and is going to make a batch of fudge tonight. Hurrah! They were all disgusted with Mr. Swinn for leaving when a man of his crew was lost.

They found the man and he was almost crazy. The man who found him is here and said when he found him he had heard someone shout. He gave him a biscuit and a piece of cheese. The man took a bite of each and sat gazing into space. Men get lost very easily in the hills. Last year a farmer went in search of his cattle. It started to snow and rain. He got lost and when found was sitting against a log with his feet in the creek. He had been chilled to death. They say it is worse than freezing to death. This poor fellow was only 6 miles from his ranch.

Another wonderful crop of hair at the table today. Queer looking fellow.

They made a big fire and are drying blankets. It snowed all night. No matter how fast we travel when we leave here it will take six days to get to the *Springs*.

I took a nap in the afternoon. Dan went after wood. Then he read an article and supper was called. He had finished supper and was talking when Mr. Darrow, Mr. Beck and Mr. Olson (lookout man at Elk Mountain and student at Michigan) arrived. We went out to the bonfire in front of the cabin and talked with Mr. Durant. After everything was cleared we went over to the cabin from our tent and spent the evening there. Mr. Wilfong made fudge. There was only one candle burning in the center of the table. The men sat on the bunks. It was interesting enough but I wish we could leave for home.

September 14

A number of men including Darrow, Stuart and Olson left this morning to walk to *Superior* and then take the train to *Missoula*.

We did not get up until late. Dan was just starting breakfast when Mr. Durant came to the tent and asked if Dan wanted to go cougar hunting. A fresh track was seen one-half mile this side of *Fly Camp.* Dan had expressed a desire to go hunting after Mountain Lions the night before. He hesitated leaving me but I encouraged him so here I am alone. I have been reading. Mr. Beck brought me a piece of pie, a large piece of cake and some biscuits. Just put some dried apples in to boil. Washed Dan's socks. The Sorrels back is

not healing as quickly as he had hoped. Took a walk down the trail, read a number of stories.

I started cooking supper when Dan returned. He had slain a lynx and seemed very proud. We ate at the cabin. Started a story before supper and finished it after. It was quite late when we got to bed and Dan was very, very tired. He had walked 12 miles.

September 15

We were sleepyheads this morning. We wakened at 6 but turned over and it was nearly nine when we started to dress. We will surely be fat if we have to stay here much longer. I am not feeling so very spry today. It is warmer but still very cloudy. Dan and Mr. Durant (the Mr. D. from *Fly Camp*, moved over yesterday) skinned the lynx this morning. I did not eat dinner but they sent me some dessert. They surely have been very thoughtful. All morning they felled trees and are now sawing. It sounds nice. They admire the white wood and the pleasant odor of it, more than a person from the city. I do believe the cook here is always talking "I and the Mrs.", the principle subject. Since the other men arrived he is quieter.

I took a good nap. Dan scraped the lynx's skull, looked after the Sorrels back which is getting better. We had a good supper. The men finished a cellar to store provisions, which are left over. The day before they filled the cracks of the cabin with mud. That cabin was surely a breezy place. The stove is just a tiny cooking stove.

Dan traded one of the packsaddles. When we left *Missoula* they gave us two sample saddles that did not fit the horses, hence the sore backs. The men were finishing up their reports for the year. I helped Henry dry dishes. Mr. Wilfong burned his arm before dinner. Dan told him to put raw potato on it. Henry got the supper. He was telling the men how a friend of his had burned her foot and it left a scar about a half-yard long. They teased him all evening.

They insisted on us spending the evening over there as they were all going to leave in the morning. We talked and I gave a couple sour dough stories, which pleased them. Mr. Durant said he would have Hard Luck Henry's luck, but he thinks he will buy a case of eggs all the same.

The evening was glorious. The first clear evening. Stars so bright and as we left for our little tent the moon was just rising. Our Palooser is broken – the little globe burned out.

September 16

A beautiful day! When we awoke we heard the hello of the packhorses and the men rounding them up. We had breakfast and Mr. Beck came to the tent to say goodbye and cordially invited us to stay at his home should we ever visit Orofino. We waved at them as they started up the trial. We went over and talked to Mr. Durant who was keeping the rest of the horses from following.

Dan then finished a story he had started at bedtime and went over to Mr. Durant's to take notes on the fire, etc. I washed. It is sun shiny and all the flies are up and about.

Dan and I helped Mr. Durant make dinner. We had a guest. Just as we were about to sit down, a prospector, a friend of Mr. D's made his appearance. He was accompanied by a tiny fox terrier. He is a very uncouth looking fellow with a long juicy red mustache and unkept hair.

We took a walk (after the horses). I came home and left Dan to go over the hills where he finally found them. The sky has been the bluest blue imaginable. We read stories, had a lunch and went to bed.

September 17

We left *Chamberlain Meadows* this A.M. Our packs were lighter as we had left our folding stove and some provisions behind. It seemed great to be on the trail again. The day was ideal! We had some very poor trail to cover, a great deal of climbing and descending rough mountain slopes. It was about 6 when we reached the river and camped in a burnt, desolate forest or what had once been a forest. A great many trees had been blown down at the time of the fire. Dan had shot a grouse on the way. We put it on to boil and after we had finished a hearty supper, I felt tired.

September 18

The morning was very chilly as all the mornings have been lately. There was ice in the basin. Dan found an old stove at the old camp and built a fire in it. We had a nice breakfast. The sun came up and warmed us. The sky is a deep blue. Saw a number of elk, bear and deer tracks yesterday.

Dan felt inspired yesterday. He said he wished he was going to college again. I guess he feels like a rah rah out here. I feel like his Mother plus??

Dan had quite a time packing the Sorrel. She acts foolish sometimes. I was holding her and had to make some quick jumps or she would have run over me.

We went straight down to the river over a dreadfully steep trail. The trail crew had a nice camp at the river. The trail from there to *Hoiser Ridge* was simply fierce. Dan says the worse he has even seen. The mountain is very steep and the trail went straight up for two miles. We thought we had reached the top a number of times.

Near the top we met Black the Ranger at *Fish Lake*. He had charge of the new trail at the river and was on his way to meet Mr. Fay Clark, the inspector. He said he would try and be back the next day so we decided to stay over at *Fish Lake*. We made pretty good time, got to *Fish Lake* at 6 o'clock. We spoke little on the way but enjoyed the scenery. Dan shot a pheasant. *Fish Lake* is perfectly beautiful. They have a few small cabins and a number of tents. They are building a dandy cabin. A man by the name of Hanson has done some beautiful work on the logs, all with an axe. They fit into one another at the ends. The packers came later with shingles which they had made and carried from a cedar bottom.

We ate supper with them and how good it did taste. Then we pitched our tent. We were dead tired. The moon was great! We slept as soon as we struck our pillows.

September 19

We had a delicious breakfast – Cream of Wheat, hot cakes and pheasant.

Dan shaved his dear little mustache. His face looks nice and clean now. Took a walk to the pretty lake and incidentally looked for the horses. They were on the hillside. They asked us for dinner – 2 o'clock, told us it was Sunday, much to our surprise.

They all worked on the cabin. They say one can expect snow in another week or two. They are anxious to pull out. It is hard getting out in the snow.

We will have to go along the *Potter 'n Coot divide* so we want to hike off as soon as possible. Mr. Blake just got back. Did not meet Mr. Clark. After a bit we went over to Mr. Blake and after he finished putting his horses back we went in the office (a tent with a home made desk) and Dan and he talked. Supper was soon called. After supper we went back into the office and did not finish until after nine o'clock. Mr. Blake is a very nice young man. Reminds me a lot of Reuben. Looks and ways.

He has the best organized district – has everything systemized in good shape. It was very cold and a large white ring around the moon. We hurried to bed wondering if we could go on the Divide or if it would be safe on account of the weather.

September 20

Dan's horses were away as usual but one of the men got them for him. We left *Fish Lake* at 10:30. Got a lunch biscuit and cheese from them Sunday at the lake.

Went up hill and took some pictures. Got off trail but cut down the mountain and found it again only to lose it again. (Not much of a trail.) Dreadful steep climb for horses. Found the trail again for a ways but lost it at a bunch of rocks. Our pictures will show the country. I simply cannot do it justice. Very rugged with innumerable lakes. All country is burned and almost inaccessible. Few men travel this way and I guess no women. We passed a number of lakes close together. Country solid rock in places. Got to our little lake – halfway – at about 6 o'clock. Dan had a headache. Got a big supper and went to bed. Night was chilly but the beautiful moon was exquisite.

September 21

Morning was mild, air wonderful. Dan had to go over this rocky hill for the horses. We hobbled Rabbit and Bill. Our last day. Made sandwiches of hot cakes and bacon.

The day was glorious! The scenery superb! Saw the whole *Bitterroot Range* from the top of the *Divide*.

We enjoyed every minute and felt sorry that it was our last day. The country was all burned. Saw a bear up the trail on the *Montana* side. He ran downhill, if Dan only had his rifle. It was only a few yards ahead. We got a fine look at him.

When we were about six miles from the *Springs* Dan suggested going home in the car after reaching the *Springs*. I was so excited that the time seemed endless. We arrived at the *Springs* a little after six and were tired and hungry. So many things to look after. It got dark and we decided to stay. Surely slept fine. Heard a coyote at midnight and dogs barking

September 22

Leaving *Lolo Springs* at 11:30 homeward bound. Hurrah!!

I KNEW HARVEY O. ROBE

By Ken Guy

Under the heading of "Death Notices" in the Missoulian Newspaper there appeared on April 3, 1999, a notice that, "Harvey O. Robe, 92, of Missoula died Friday, April 2, 1999, at the Community Medical Center of natural causes, --- " The family told me there would be a cremation and the ashes spread in one of Harve's favorite places in the hills nearby.

All of you who have ever met, talked to, or known Harve will remember him as a man like few others. He was the type of man little boys want to grow up to be like; and a man that a lot of us older men wish that we had been like. As Chief of Operations of Region One of the Forest Service in the late '50's and early '60's, he was an inspiration to us in the Forest Service. If you had to go in and talk to "the boss' in the Regional Office you might have had a little fear creeping up in you. After turning up your courage, you would take off your hat and go in to see him. Then when you came out, you found you had talked to a man that had truly inspired you. Inspired you to perform, to do the job and with his confidence in you, you wanted to do the job and do it well. Few leaders have this ability. He is a legend to us. He will be remembered by us that knew him as a true leader, a friend, and a great man. "--- he ran the Region in those days, you know ---"

Harve (pronounced without the "y") was born in 1906 in the Yukon. He was named Harvey Ord Robe. The Ord part was from his Uncle, General Ord, whom Fort Ord was named after. When Harve was about half grown the family moved to the San Diego area where he completed high school. He had a long time interest in forestry so he attended Oregon State and took a degree in Forestry. As I recall, his first job was with the outfit in 1924 at the Big Bear Ranger Station on the San Bernardino National Forest in California. He met and married his wife Elizabeth (Betty) in 1933. "She was promoted to district clerk, driver, fire fighter, camp cook, and so on" the next day. At no pay, of course. They loved the District, but good work paid off and they were soon promoted and transferred.

Betty had grown up in San Bernardino next to a family named Oldfield. Barney Oldfield taught her how to drive. You old timers will remember Barney was a two-time winner of the Indianapolis 500 Race and was a well-known personality in the teens and twenties. Since Harve had always had bad eyesight, he never drove, so Betty did all the driving. This included cars, trucks and teams.

In their long history of what I recall to be forty-one years service, there were so many duty stations that I won't try to mention them. You should fill in the gaps here in your own private remembrances of Harve. Suffice to say, he did a little bit of everything from Region to Region. He held all the chairs, so to speak, eventually to find himself in Washington, D.C. in the Division of Operations. He "car pooled with the Chief and a couple of division chiefs ---" he told me once.

But I don't want to forget the Second World War from 1941 to 1945. We were short of rubber as the Japanese had occupied the islands with the rubber trees. Harve was assigned the Government job of planting and harvesting a rubber plant in the Salinas Valley of California for the duration of the war. This was a "strategic job" and meant that he needed to stay home, and not go into the military service, but provide rubber for defense. A "can do" attitude was on the land in those days. Men like Harve, our greatest generation, rose up and made this country the strongest and best country on the face of the earth.

He and Betty came to Region One, their last duty station, in the late '50's where he remained as Chief of Operations until retirement in 1965. On his last day, Betty hitched the Pontiac up to a new thirty-foot Airstream trailer, picked him up at the Office, and they drove off in the sunset.

Over the next twenty-five years they traveled all over from Canada to Mexico and even Hawaii. They were a team, working and traveling. They took part time jobs on ranches, summers on a lookout with the CDF, even a stint as a forester running a lumber mill in Hawaii. Betty had odd jobs like hauling cattle, cowgirl with Harve, driving a Hawaiian Red Cross nurse all over Hawaii to immunize the kids, and what ever else was interesting. While with the CDF on Rocky Butte Lookout near the Hearst Castle, they worked a number of summers as lookouts for my brother Jack, the local CDF foreman in that area. Betty called in a big smoke one day, but it turned out to be a ship, an oil tanker starting up out in Morro Bay. She took a lot of kidding from the fire crew that couldn't get out to the "big smoke." There is a book full of stories to be written of those old days but we don't have the space here for them.

They continued burning the candle at both ends until returning here to Missoula, tired out and needing a rest, in 1997. I hope I have reminded you of a story or two of your own for all those old friends of Harve and Betty, for those fires fought, jobs done, and fish caught over the years. Lean back, and take a moment of silence for Harve and Betty Robe, they are friends of mine.

JAMES W. GIRARD
By Jud Moore

Patriarch of National Forest Timber Cruising
Went to Work at 15 in Tennessee Barrel Stave Camp;
Montana Grove of Tamaracks in Girard Memorial

James Girard was born in the Tennessee mountains northwest of Nashville. He worked on a small family farm, up a forested hollow, raising corn, wheat, oats, tobacco, and hogs. His formal education ended at the sixth grade, but today – more than 90 years after he started to work making white oak stave for bourbon whiskey barrels – Girard is considered the patriarch of timber cruising.

His timber tables and writings are standard parts of timber management courses at schools of forestry. Girard earned an international reputation in forestry. Undergraduate foresters recognize the Tennesseeian as a patron saint of timber measurement. Some associates characterized Girard as a self-made professional forester.

When he died in 1952, at the age of 75, the Forest Service established a 60-acre memorial of giant tamaracks in Western Montana in his name on the shores of the Clearwater River, where it flows into Seeley Lake. The stately grove of tamaracks (western larch) is 50 miles northwest of Missoula, on the Seeley Lake Ranger District in the Lolo National Forest. The memorial plaque, attached to a large boulder in the quiet grove, reads:

Jim Girard Tamaracks

In memory of
James Walter Girard,
Widely know, well-known forester.

1877 Pleasant View, Tennessee
1952 Portland, Oregon

Here at Seeley Lake in 1908
He began His Work for the
United States Forest Service

Born to a family of 10 children (five brothers and four sisters). This slender, redheaded, 15-year old first hired out in the Tennessee mountains cutting white oak logs into bolts for barrel staves. The Horatio Algiers Story started in the stave camps and sawmills of the Sycamore River Valley, in Cheatham County, north of Nashville. Girard became interested in timber cruising when he found it paid $150 a month, compared to his started wage of $0.75 a day for cutting staves.

He got a job working with a timber cruiser, but the older man refused to teach him anything about the trade. So, young Jim quit working with the cruiser and went back to cutting oak bolts.

Girard and his partner then started keeping accurate records on every tree they cut, for the next 6 months, from April to September of 1897. He recorded the size of each tree, as well as the number of stave bolts cut and staves produced. With these statistics he was able to determine the number of bolts of different sizes required to produce a cord or one thousand barrel staves. For each diameter and height, Girard developed a volume table showing the number of bolts, cords, and fractions of cords.

In September of 1897, he made a volume table from these measurements. It was probably the second volume table made in the United States. Henry S. Graves, Dean of the Yale University of Forestry School, complied the first. As a self-taught cruiser, at the age of 20, he cruised timber for sawmills for six years and then, for two years, ran his own sawmill.

Higher industrial wages lured him northward to Indiana. After working a short time in a foundry in Indianapolis, the 28-year old decided he would rather work in the woods. In the summer of 1905, he took a job near Sheridan, Wyoming, in the Big Horn Mountains, piling brush left from cutting ties for the Burlington railroad. The pay was three dollars a day. In the fall, he worked as a stacker and thresher in the North Dakota wheat harvest. That winter, he signed on with a lumber company in Coeur d'Alene, falling and bucking logs at Mica Bay on Lake Coeur d'Alene. In the spring of 1907, he worked for the Anaconda Copper Mining Co. (ACM), falling and bucking timber at Bonner, Montana. He later wrote that he came to western Montana to become familiar with cull and defect rates in ponderosa pine, Douglas fir and western larch. Until then, all of his cruising experience had been in Tennessee hardwoods.

That fall, while helping a friend put up hay on a ranch along the Clearwater River, near Seeley Lake, Girard was approached by the ACM's Seeley Lake logging camp boss about riding the carriage and doing the ratchet settings in the ACM sawmill. Logs were being cut to construct winter camps and build a dam at the foot of Seeley Lake for log driving.

There he met and became a close friend of the Forest Service man in charge of a large National Forest timber sale to ACM. The Forest Service borrowed Girard from ACM to help catch up on the scaling for the sale. After scaling logs for the Forest Service for three months, he accepted an appointment, February 1, 1908, as a "forest guard." Thus began a distinguished career in the Forest Service.

Girard realized that he would never advance in the organization unless he could write clear, understandable reports. To overcome his lack of formal education, Girard took correspondence courses in English, engineering, business administration, and cost accounting. He studied the best books he could get on technical forestry. His evenings and Sundays were spent in the scaler's cabin studying algebra, English, and trigonometry.

Dr. Randall, a prominent Missoula physician-surgeon, had a summer cabin on Seeley Lake; he loaned Girard college textbooks and spent many evenings and Sundays helping the young scaler with his studies.

As a "forest guard" he scaled logs and marked timber. Girard worked on the large, 50-million-board-foot (enough timber for about 4,500 average-size houses) ACM Blackfoot timber sale from 1908 to 1910. It was the largest timber sale made by the new Forest Service up to that time. Many technical foresters from Yale, Michigan and other forestry schools were sent to the sale to gain experience in National Forest timber sale work.

Girard was assigned the job of training these young college graduates in marking timber and scaling logs. But he had no experience in marking timber. This could have been a handicap; the area was to be selectively cut. When he found the Forest Service marking instructions difficult to follow, he decided to use common sense in marking the trees. Girard marked mature and over mature trees, leaving a good distribution of vigorous, immature trees. Forty years later, forests and District Rangers cited it as an example of good selective harvest marking.

After taking the ranger's examination in the spring of 1908, he was appointed assistant to the District Ranger at a salary of $60 a month. Since he had to have a saddle horse and packhorse, there was little left from his wages after he paid his room and board and fed his horses. In the fall and winter his work was limited to scaling logs and general administration of the ACM timber sale. In the summer he marked trees for the next season's timber harvest.

Friction developed over the way the timber was scaled. Girard was instructed to double scale the entire defective larch butt logs. In response to complaints from the ACM general superintendent, Forest Service Chief Gifford Pinchot sent an inspector from Washington D. C. to check Girard's scaling. As the friction worsened, ACM sent one of its top executives to see Pinchot. In the fall of 1909, Pinchot dispatched his right-hand man, Donald Bruce, to Seeley Lake to check all the scalers who had worked on the ACM timber sale. Girard's supervisor alleged that Girard was consistently low in his scaling. But when Bruce completed his check Girard was the only scaler within gunshot of Bruce's results. As he returned to Washington, Bruce stopped in Missoula and recommended to the Northern Regional Forester that Girard be placed in complete charge of the Seeley Lake timber sale.

Shortly after Girard was placed in charge of the Seeley Lake sale, Kenneth Ross, ACM general superintendent, came to Seeley Lake to review the scaling procedure with Girard. The two men walked into the sale area and discussed the contract, which did not specify any particular percentage of sound material a log had to contain to be considered merchantable. Girard explained to Ross that utilization would be required of pine and spruce logs if they were of reasonable quality and were one-third or more sound. He told Ross that larch and Douglas fir logs had to be removed and utilized if they were 50 percent or more sound.

"That will be perfectly satisfactory to me," Ross said, "Because that is the way we are utilizing our own timber. But the Regional headquarters will never permit this in the contract. How are you going to work it out?"

"It will be a definite understanding between you and me," Girard assured Ross. "The Regional Office will never know anything about it until the sale is complete." The arrangement proved satisfactory for both ACM and the Forest Service.

Girard's scaling work led logically to an interest in logging costs. He felt that the Forest Service would need more accurate appraisals of the timber being offered for sale. From 1909 to 1910, Girard had the bookkeeper on the ACM timber sale provide a daily report of the number of men working on each logging activity, such as road building, falling, bucking, swamping and skidding. From this information Girard prepared a cost report for Regional Forester F. S. Silcox in Missoula.

In November of 1911, Silcox called Girard to his office in the Northern Region headquarters in Missoula. "Jim, we need a logging engineer in the Forest Service. There has never been one. What is needed is someone who can appraise timber quality, estimate logging costs and provide other information that will enable our timber management people to arrive at a reasonable, basic stumpage price. Young man, I am going to make a logging engineer out of you. Write the job description along the lines I have indicated, and I'll make you the first logging engineer in the Forest Service."

Actually, Dorr Skeels was the first Forest Service logging engineer, 1911-1914. Girard was promoted to lumberman on December 7, 1914, and assigned to Skeels' job when Skeels joined the faculty of the University of Montana's School of Forestry. The following year, Girard took the logging engineer's examination and was appointed logging engineer for the Coeur d'Alene area. For the next seven years he did logging engineering work in the Northern Region and worked on special appraisal assignments out of Portland, Oregon, and Ogden, Utah.

Girard was married (1914) to Harriet Hammond, Ovando, Montana, for 38 years. They had met in 1908, when he first came to Western Montana. Mrs. Girard was the niece of the noted Missoula lumberman, A.B. Hammond.

The Girard's two children, Florence (1920) and James Jr. (1918), were born in Missoula. Young Girard worked for the Forest Service in Florida before he graduated from the University of Idaho (1941) with a degree in forestry. The young Girard worked for U.S. Plywood, Atlanta, Georgia. He was killed in an auto accident in 1968.

Florence J. Girard made he home in Cornelius, Oregon. She remembered her father as "modest, independent and unassuming." Her father was away from the home a great deal but she recalled he was cordial, fun and loving. "He was a great father." But she said she didn't appreciate the significance of his work until she was in college.

"I was quite impressed when someone explained how my father cruised timber from an airplane in Alaska. Apparently he would test cruise a plot and then, using a stop watch and calculating the speed of the plane, would develop reliable volume estimates." She said her father was quite impressed when she took some college math courses. "He was so darn modest, he never boasted of the pioneering work he had done in timber cruising and designing cruise tables."

While making a cruise and appraisal of a block of white pine in the Priest River watershed, in the Kaniksu National Forest in 1912 at Newport, Washington, Girard took the scaler's examination and was appointed a Forest Service scaler. The next year he was stationed in the Coeur d'Alene National Forest, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, cruising and appraising timber. After working one year for a private lumber company in Coeur d'Alene, Girard took the lumberman's examination in the spring of 1914 and accepted an appointment as lumberman for the Coeur d'Alene area, cruising, check-cruising, preparing timber appraisals, check-scaling and working in fire protection in the summer.

Forest Service Chief W. B. Greeley called Girard to Washington in 1920 to rewrite the National Forest Stumpage Appraisal Manual. While in Washington, he took the examination for forest valuation engineer with the Bureau of Internal Revenue. He qualified for the post, but Greeley refused to let the Bureau of Internal Revenue take him.

After that, he returned to the Forest Service's Northern Region headquarters in Missoula to work as a logging engineer for three years.

Girard resigned from the Forest Service in 1923 to accept a job as vice-president and general manager for the Fred Herrick Lumber Co., in Burns, Oregon, for six years. In the post, he supervised the construction of 100 miles of common carrier railroad and a three-band sawmill in Burns. He was named to a three-man arbitration board in 1926 to help establish the volume and value of redwood timber stand owned by the Pacific Lumber Co. of Scotia, California.

The State of California, the company, the Save the Redwood League, and the National Park Service could not agree on the volume and value of the stand. Girard's estimates closely paralleled those of another member of the arbitration team. The volume-value estimates served as the basis for securing the stand from the lumber company for a park. This outstanding redwood stand contains one of the tallest trees in the world. David T. Mason, Jim Girard's friend from their Seeley Lake Days, discovered the historic tree.

Girard returned to the Forest Service in 1929 to work in forest administration in Washington, D.C. The following year he was assigned to the Forest Research branch to work on a nationwide forest survey:

* To determine forest acreages and volumes of timber.

* To determine rate of forest depletion resulting from timber cutting for commercial purposes, fire losses, insect losses, etc.

* To determine the rate at which depletion was being replaced by forest growth.

* To determine timber requirements for all purposes, including lumber, timbers, pulpwood, ties, poles, special products and fuel wood.

* To prepare an analysis and comprehensive report for each region and for the entire nation.

The 480-million-acre survey progressed at a rate of approximately 50 million acres a year. Girard worked with Forest Service experiment stations in writing instructions and training the field personnel in survey methods. He prepared the species tables and checked the fieldwork.

When the survey started, it was apparent to Girard that so many volume tables would be required that – if the old, slow, conventional Forest Service methods were used – the survey would not have been completed before the "second coming." He developed a quicker method for preparing volume tables. It was called the "Girard Form Class Taper." Form class means the percentage ratio between the diameter (breast high, outside the bark) and diameter at the top of the first 16-foot log (inside the bark). In the Douglas-fir region he used 32-foot logs. The tree taper above the first log was estimated. Twenty-two years earlier, when he was working on the ACM timber sale at Seeley Lake, Girard felt there must be a relationship for each species between the top diameter of the first log and the diameter (breast high). Detailed measurements of various species confirmed his assumption.

When the national survey started in the South, the first units were in southern Georgia (12 million acres). Under favorable conditions, he measured 1,000 to 1,200 trees a day in quarter-acre test plots at 10-mile intervals. At times he did not confine himself to these quarter-acre plots in obtaining estimates. But Girard took any trees that met his need in the vicinity of his stops along the road. Accompanied by a fast recorder and driver, Girard selected east-west and north-south roads at 10-mile intervals and stopping at each 10-mile point to measure the trees in quarter-acre plots.

For 30 years Girard had trained his eye in estimating tree diameters at breast height and at various distances up the stem. After years of measuring felled trees for merchantable height and bark thickness for various diameters, Girard was confident he could measure the diameter at breast height of any standing tree and estimate its diameter inside the bark at the top of each log. By applying these measurements to a good log scale (that gave the recoverable lumber content of logs of varying length and top diameter) Girard could accurately estimate the volume of trees. From the averaging of the volume of trees in the various diameter and merchantable height classes, he prepared tables of volumes of trees of any diameter and merchantable height for any tree species.

Eugene V. Roberts was in charge of the survey in the eastern United States. "I worked with Jim on volume tables for North Carolina and Virginia. I'd assign one of my three-man inventory crews to work with Jim in collecting data for the volume tables. The other

two men were needed to keep records and check Jim's estimates of d.b.h. (diameter at breast height) and top diameters, by measuring occasional trees with tapes."

Roberts said, "Jim did not always use sample plots. He took random strips in the various timber types and called out the diameters of trees as he passed. He called diameters so rapidly that two men were needed to record them. Many of these volume tables are still in use. I enjoyed working with Girard and have great respect for his ability as a forester and golfer. It is well that his contributions are recognized."

"The volume tables Jim prepared for the first survey in the South, 1932-1940, were tables by species or species groups (separated for old-growth and second-growth pine where virgin timber still was found) and two-inch diameter classes," reported forest resource economist Philip R. Wheeler. "Separate sets were prepared for the pine-hardwood regions East and West of the Mississippi River and the Naval Stores Region. He did, I believe, use form class and taper to determine the volumes of the trees he sampled to build the average species-diameter class tables. These data were probably used later in preparation of the Mesavage-Girard Form Class tables."

The description of the use of the species-diameter class volume tables in compilation is, Wheeler says, covered "in my chapter in Practical Applications of the Punched Card Method in Colleges and Universities, edited by G.W. Baehne, Columbus University Press, 1935, Part VIII, Applications in Agricultural Research Chapter IV, Forestry." Wheeler wrote the forestry chapter (pages 369-376).

Officials in Washington were skeptical of Girard's methods of developing volume tables. Many felt he could not cover the country that fast. The head of Forest Measurements was sent to the South to check on Girard's work. Using a Liljenstrom dendrometer, his crew measured 200 sample slash pine trees. It took them five, long working days. Under favorable conditions, using Girard's method, based on a combination of measurements and estimates, the work could have been done in a small fraction of the time. After returning to Washington and spending considerable time compiling volume tables, the official called Girard to Washington and told him that their statistics did not agree with his tables.

"This difference represents the error made by the instrument," Girard explained. He pointed out that the dendrometer could measure the diameter outside the bark at various points along the bole of the tree, but it did not take into consideration the thickness of the bark. Girard knew the thickness of the bark from experience – experience based on many careful measurements.

Chris Granger, director of the nationwide survey, supervised a second test scale. Using tree climbers and bark punchers, 50 trees were measure by the Girard method and then with the dendrometer. Accurate measurements of the diameter of each log inside the bark proved to be closer to Girard's estimates. Girard developed a quick, efficient method of making volume tables. The "Girard Form Class Taper" technique was approved for making volume tables for the Southern survey. But is was not approved for

the entire country until tree climbers had followed behind him to measure more than 4,000 trees in different parts of the country.

"Girard also questioned the accuracy of timber growth estimates made on the Forest Survey in the Pacific Northwest and the Northern Rocky Mountain Regions," recalls Philip A. Briegleb. "He then worked with the Forest Experiment Stations concerned and made additional field studies that lead to improved methods and more accurate growth estimates." Briegleb worked with Girard in Oregon and Washington and boarded in the Girard home in Washington D.C., in 1936.

Girard worked on the nationwide survey for 12 years, until the outbreak of World War II, when the War Production Board asked him to go to Alaska to find Sitka spruce trees suitable for making high-grade aircraft lumber. In January, February and March of 1942, his crews cruised approximately 200 million board feet of Sitka spruce. They took 12 million board feet in sample trees to determine their quality.

Girard evaluated the texture of the wood, the direction of the grain and the number of rings per inch of growth. From this he prepared aircraft log grade specifications; later mill scale studies confirmed the accuracy of Girard's log grades. Timber used in constructing aircraft timber had to have eight or more rings per inch, a specific gravity of at least 0.36 and a toughness test of 75-inch-pounds per standard specimen and could not have a spiral grain to exceed 1-inch-to-15 for certain aircraft parts.

Many foresters told Girard the study of spruce in Alaska was a waste of time. They thought Alaskan spruce was not satisfactory for building aircraft. However, he found that Alaskan spruce was of unusually good quality, producing twice as high a percentage of aircraft lumber as the species on some other parts of the Pacific Coast. By the end of the war, the Forest Service had logged 8.5 million board feet of spruce in Alaska for aircraft. Aircraft spruce was in strong demand for building fighter planes. West Coast and Alaska mills were pressured to maximize their production. For more than 30 years the only known way to determine if a piece of spruce lumber had the necessary toughness for aircraft construction was to jab a chisel-like instrument into its tangential surface (the surface that roughly parallels their annual rings, perpendicular to the radius of the tree from which the board or timber had been cut) and pry upward. If the surface could be lifted a certain distance before it fractured, the piece was tough enough to be used in aircraft construction. Wartime demands called for a way to identify aircraft quality spruce in the standing tree. Girard developed such a technique.

Using a 10-inch increment borer, he extracted a 4-inch core along the radius. With the core remaining on the extractor, the two ends were pushed together. Girard determined that if the core could be bowed upward a distance of "x" inches, the wood was of aircraft quality. He used the toughness testing to speed the production of aircraft quality spruce.

After his assignment in Alaska, the War Production Board asked that he determine the volume of sweet gum suitable for aircraft veneer. The board asked if he could do the study in one month. Since the area had been covered in the nationwide forest survey, the

basic information was on computer punch cards. Within 4 days he had the information on sweet gum timber in trees (larger than 22 inches in diameter) in 9 states: Carolinas, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas and Texas. He completed the study in 3 weeks.

He determined that 20 to 45 percent of the southern sweet gum would provide wood of aircraft veneer quality. The Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin, established that sweet gum was as good as mahogany for aircraft veneer. Girard prepared the log grade specifications and the Forest Service Laboratory at Madison determined the percentage of yield in aircraft quality veneer by log grades.

He was 65 years old in 1942 when he was asked to sample yellow poplar in the Carolinas, Tennessee, West Virginia and Kentucky for possible use in aircraft as lumber and veneer. He accepted the new assignment without hesitation and wrote the aircraft lumber grade specifications. Following that, he sampled the sugar maple and yellow birch in the Northeast and in the Lake States. Yellow birch was used in making aircraft propellers.

Until 1945, he continued to work on a variety of war assignments, such as aircraft quality logs, aircraft lumber, aircraft veneer, propeller stock, walnut gun stocks, handles for Army and Navy use, shunt poles for Great Britain, shuttle blocks, tent pins and boat quality cypress.

Girard was sent to Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti in 1944 to survey their forest resources for possible use in the war effort. He completed the fieldwork for the survey in 3 days. After that he served on a three-man board of arbitration to settle disputes at sawmills and aircraft factories on questions about lumber suitability for aircraft. His role was to stimulate production of critical aircraft materials.

Girard's life work in the forest continued after his formal retirement. When he retired after more then 35 years with the Forest Service, he went to work in 1945 for Mason & Bruce, consulting forests, Portland, Oregon. In 1948, at the age of 71, the Chilean Government asked Girard to survey that South American country's forest resources.

To many, he was an "institution" in forestry, a one-man organization of common sense. To timber scalers, he was "check cruiser of the universe." Girard came a long way from that 160-acre farm in Tennessee. He was a legend on the Kootenai National Forest in Montana in the mid-1920's, wrote I.V. Anderson while telling of young forest rangers "hearing fireside talks about how Jim Girard outwitted the 1919 fire and how he demonstrated the importance of a buck ranger's diet by once ordering a breakfast of a dozen eggs, a plate of peas and a quart of ice cream." Anderson said, "He is part of the folklore of the Region."

C.N. Whitney recalled Girard's dramatic escape from the 1919 Clearwater fire in Idaho. Girard took refuge in the river, behind a barricade of rocks until the roaring inferno swept

by. "If you find me here, you'll see I did not lose my head," Girard wrote on the back of a map that he had in his pocket.

Girard suffered a painful fall before World War I while looking over some timber up Trout Creek, near Superior, Montana, with Elers Koch from the Regional headquarters. Girard's should was dislocated. After painful efforts to relocate the shoulder failed, it was a full day before a doctor from Superior reached Girard and repaired the shoulder. After that, Girard led the group nonstop over the 12 miles back to Superior. "Small wonder you gained a reputation as one of the best woodsmen and the toughest man in the Forest Service," Peter Koch wrote some years later.

"To me, a green country boy fresh from a Montana logging and sawmill camp, on my first assignment as clerk on the Lewis and Clark National Forest, the tales of Girard's mountain climbing and woodsmanship were like the Superman strip of today," remembers a Lewis and Clark National Forest forester.

H.T. Gisborne, distinguished Forest Service researcher, told Girard, "You have had a very unusual career, which has not been equaled by any man in this country. With your great experience in dealing with timber all over the United States, including Alaska, you unquestionably know the timber situation better than any man alive today, or in the past." Hugh Redding, in 1945, wrote that Girard was "… a man who could tell the exact board feet in any tree by just walking through the woods."

Girard's 1921 revision of the National Stumpage Appraisal Manual" was for years "the appraisers' Bible." He wrote "Timber Cruising" in 1939 with S.R. Gevorkiantz. It is considered by many to be the best work in the field.

The tamarack grove on the Clearwater River at Seeley Lake was selected as his memorial because his Forest Service career started there in 1908. The memorial was a cooperative effort of the Intermountain Logging Conference; the consulting forestry firm of Mason, Bruce and Girard; the Anaconda Lumber Department; and retired Forest Service personnel.

Speakers at the 1953 dedication of the Girard Tamarack Grove on the shores of Seeley Lake included Meyer H. Wolff, dedication chairman and retired Forest Service associate of Girard's; Rutledge Parker, Montana State Forester; Thomas E. Kinney, head of the Woods Department of the Bunker Hill & Sullivan Mining & Concentration Co.; P.D. Hanson, Northern Regional Forester, reading a tribute from Richard E. McArdle, Chief of the Forest Service; and David T. Mason of the consulting forestry firm of Mason, Bruce & Girard of Portland, Oregon.

Mason, drawing on his 43-year friendship (1909-1953) with Girard, said "Although he had little formal schooling, he was recognized as reaching the top of the forestry profession by election as a fellow of the Society of American Foresters and by the University of Idaho awarding him the degree of doctor of science." Girard first met

Mason in September of 1909 when Mason, who had recently graduated from Yale, came to the ACM Seeley Lake timber sale to check the young scaler's work.

Mason went on to say, "I met Jim December 15, 1909, on the shores of Seeley Lake. I had just walked from Clearwater in lumberjack rubber shoes, 20 miles through the snow and over the ice of Salmon and Seeley Lakes, and had accumulated a crop of blisters. The hearty welcome he gave me to his cabin, headquarters for his scaling on the then biggest Forest Service timber sale, was the beginning of a friendship that spanned more than 40 years."

"You all know his kind, friendly nature, his tremendous physical and mental energy, his amazing short cuts to the solution of tough problems, his sound and accurate judgement, and other unusual qualities, all of which rightly made him a legendary figure in forestry."

This legend is marked by a stand of quiet and stately tamaracks on the shores of Seeley Lake in western Montana.

Slender and of average height (5'11"), he was a man of energy and strength. J.A. Fitzwater recalls the day Girard was cruising larch ties in a heavy snow along the Moyie River in north Idaho. "Every time we moved we got an avalanche of snow down the back of our necks. We were cold, hungry and disgusted. Jim asked me if I had any chewing tobacco. I had a fresh plug with a tin tag on it. " When Fitzwater pulled the plug out of his picket, Girard took the tobacco and "bit it right in half 'slonchwise' cutting the tin tag neatly in half and handed the remainder back to me…apparently now realizing that the tag was there."

Doc Brundage wrote that he first met Girard in January of 1939 at Manchester, New Hampshire. Scalers were "measuring frozen logs in frozen ponds. Frozen tallymen were grading frozen lumber at frozen ponds. Thermometers registered 30 to 35 below zero. You (Girard) casually meandered over the ice from log to log, expounding on log grading rules, sizing up defects and check-scaling – after removing your mittens on account of the heat." Girard was a young 62 at the time.

Jim Brooks tells how Girard came to Big Creek on the North Fork of the Flathead River in western Montana to help get a timber survey job started in the fall of 1919. "You had been out of bed only a short time after recovering from pneumonia," Brooks reports. "You nearly walked me to death the first day."

Philip R. Wheeler remembers "two-percent" Girard, as a man who could play 72 holes of golf in a day, and, after a tumbler of straight bourbon, could and would do a dozen one-arm pushups.

"During my career as a forester, I have taken more than a quarter-million sample trees for volume table purposes and have graded more than 1 million saw logs in standing trees in different parts of the U.S. and other countries," Girard wrote in his autobiography in the

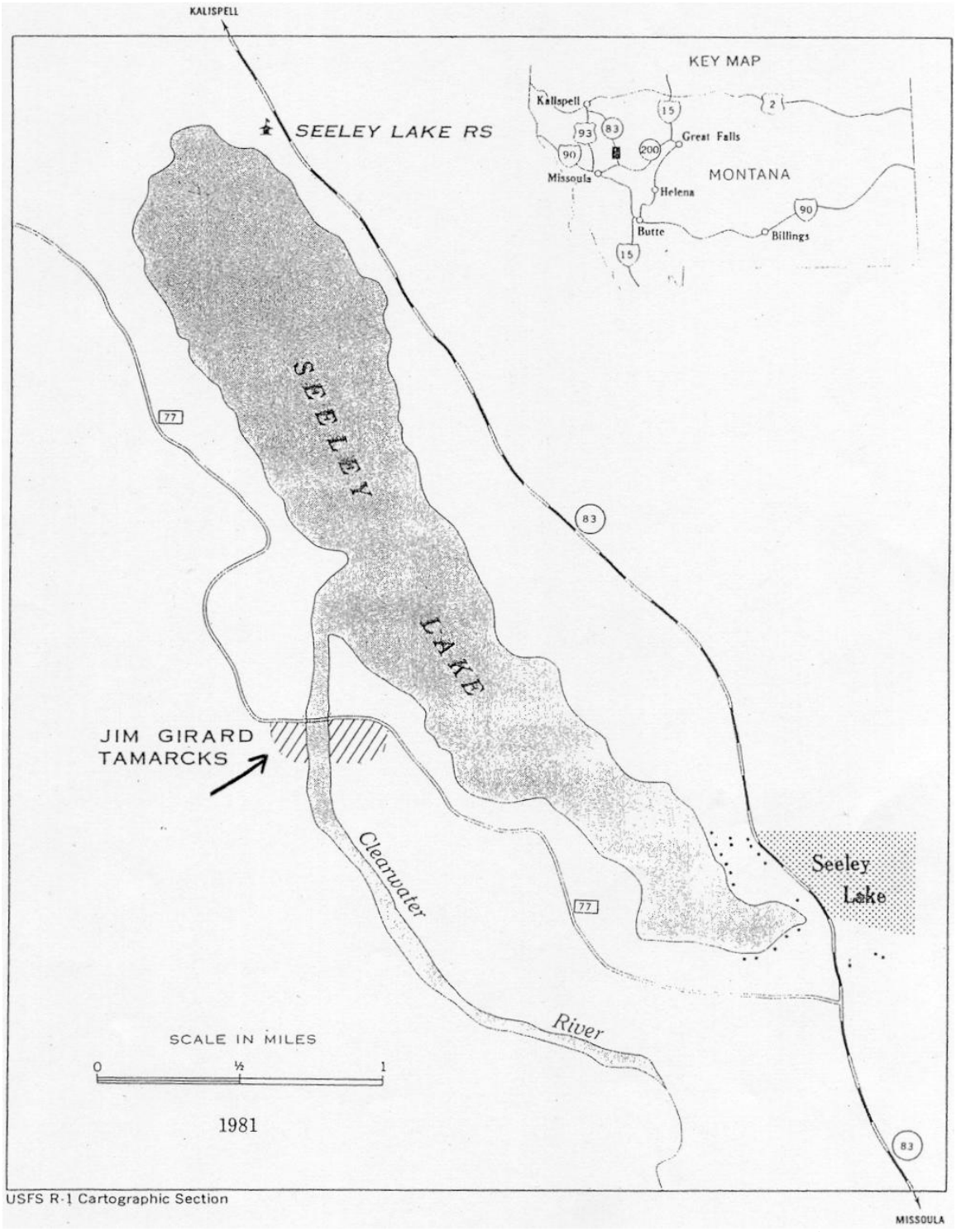
summer of 1948. "Sometimes I would mire down and get stuck temporarily, but by hard work and determination I was always able to pull out on my own power."

When the Forest Products History Foundation of the Minnesota Historical Society published the autobiography, "The Man Who Knew Trees", (1949), Rodney C. Loehr, director of the foundation, reported that when he went to see Girard in the summer of 1948 to secure "the bulk of the material that makes up this story, only an attack of pneumonia had kept him from going to Chile to survey that country's forest resources."

Loehr concluded, "No doubt the future will see him again striding through forests in the far parts of the earth. His skill in estimating timber, his independent point of view, his ability to solve urgent problems in a practical way, and his unmatched experience will continue to benefit his contemporaries."

photo by R. Freeman

NRMRA field trip to Girard Grove June 2003



courtesy of F. S. Archives

correction: should read JIM GIRARD TAMARACKS

JIM MOORE'S PLACE ON THE SALMON RIVER

By Irv Puphal

In August of 1940, when I was a ranger at Wallace, Idaho, I was sent to the 7000 acre Mallard Creek fire as a sector boss. (Nowadays they probably would just let a little fire like that go and say, "God bless.") I never really did know where we were but I took off from the end of the road at the foot of a mountain near Elk Creek (?) Ranger Station, in late afternoon with 75 bindle stiffs in tow. At midnight after hours of climbing we reached Robin Peak (?) and bedded down. "Bedded down" means flopping down among the boulders with grass for a mattress – no blankets, no sacks, no nothing. No sooner had the crew got comfortable, if I may use the word, arranged around the pinnacle than a phone call ordered us to "get off the mountain – now," down into the Salmon River gorge, down to the Jim Moore place on the banks of the Salmon River, 5000 feet below over a trail long since abandoned by the goats. So, whoop-de-do, I hollered the men out of the grass and down the trail we went, into a chasm as dark as the inside of a black cat. No lights, no grub, no water, faintly, ever so faintly, the bellowing of the River of No Return beckoned us on. I tallied up the violently blasphemous crew to see that all got there – "there" being somewhere below. Soon catching up with the last two stiffs, who were sitting quietly on the trail having a smoke, I too quietly sat down. Very quietly. They did not know who I was, but listening I soon found out that I was some kind of a ring-tailed-son-of-a bitch.

We camped, to use the term loosely, near Jim Moore's cabin. The fire had burned all around his place but had not caused him any damage. After a sumptuous breakfast of cold oatmeal and canned beans we started fire line construction up through the "breaks" with no lunches, and no canteens. We had been assured by radio that a pack string would come down the fire line at noon with these items. What a dreamer. It never came. No food, no water all day long. And not a man quit. We built and held a mile and a half of fire line that day, straight up. Upon arriving back at camp that evening, well pleased with our accomplishment, we found a message from the fire boss, which said, "get the hell out of the breaks." Which meant, abandon what you have done and start over elsewhere! What those two men on the trail said to me the night before was vehemently blasted, in spades, by telepathy to the author of that message. Anyway, I ignored it and we won the battle.

Each day going and coming, I passed Jim Moore's cabin. Each time he was sitting on the porch motionless, expressionless, silently watching with shaded eyes, totally unresponsive to my cheery greetings. Testing, testing, testing. On about the 6th day, as I was returning to camp, he silently crooked a finger, motioning me in. Well, let me tell you, the next hour or two was most delightful, especially after the second or third round of corn squeezin's. His place was what one nowadays dreams of as a place to escape the bomb. Fruit trees of all kinds hanging heavy with lush ripe fruit. A garden that wouldn't quit. Chickens happily clucking all over the place and an oversize patch of corn. When I inquired as to what he did with all that corn he nodded mountain ward and allowed as how he had a "can" up thar. I surmised as how said "can" had a coil attached to it. Many books, including medical books, lined the walls. He also has a battery-operated radio.

This was a presidential election year and he was surprisingly well versed on political affairs. He had not teeth and said he had been only as far as Dixie, some 20 miles over the hill, in the past 20 years. River rafters, he said, used to stop at his place for "supplies." Rumor had it, so I heard, that he was once a pirate off the west coast in the '80s and that he had escaped the law, if not the noose, by hiding out on the River of No Return – from which he never did.

When I arose to go he graciously presented me with a gallon of wine and a quart of pear brandy. The world looked considerably brighter around the campfire that night.

LeMARCHE CREEK

By Vern Sylvester

The Big Hole, itself is named because it's a big basin. I think it came from the early trappers. They'd call any high, mountain basin a "hole." Of course, examples of that are Jackson Hole, the Big Hole, and others in the west. We had one mountain called "Fool Hen". It was called "fool hen" because there were lots of fool hen grouse in that particular area. Alder Creek, you know what that means; there are lots of alder. I'm sure many places were named after early people. One that I can think of was LeMarche Creek, which was named after a fellow by the name of Jim LeMarche. I knew him. He was the first, what I consider, authentic cowboy that I ever met. There are stories of him taking 30-50 head of yearling out of the Big Hole with a horse and a dog. He would trail those wild yearlings to market in Anaconda. He was a real character. He got to be a very, very close friend. I'll never forget one ride I made with him. He was in his seventies at that time and had spent his whole life punching cattle. The Jerry Creek Association was having an awful time getting riders, so I recommend they hire old Jim LeMarche. I went out with Jim on one of his rides to look at the range. We got up on a granulated mountain on the hillside and it was time to eat lunch. You can imagine – this was in July when the grass was getting pretty dry. Jim gets off his horse, takes the saddle off and gives his horse some grain. Then he pulls out his lunch bucket; it's a coffee can. He had to have his coffee. So he cleared a little spot there no bigger than 10" around, got himself some twigs, made himself a little fire and brewed the coffee. He had pulled out an avocado and bread making himself an avocado sandwich and coffee out here on this mountainside. When he got through, there was practically no trace. You didn't really have to worry about Jim. He was one of the real characters that I remember.

Another story in particular was about the American Forestry Association that wanted to have a pack trip. They contacted me. There was one outfitter on the district, who wasn't very reliable. He was about the only one we could get to do it. I knew that it was going to be a catastrophe. I just knew in my heart that this outfit couldn't pull it off. So I talked to them and said, "Why don't you get Jim LeMarche to go with you?" I knew if anybody could handle this situation, it would be Jim. So they showed up. There must have been 15 old maid schoolteachers from back east and a couple of guys with the American Forestry Association. The outfitter had trucked their horses up. The first camp was supposed to be Seymour Lake. By the time they got ready, it was almost 2 o'clock in the afternoon. We should have been on the trail at 9 a.m. We knew we weren't going to make Seymour Lake. We got back about 5-6 miles and Jim said, "I think you'd better make camp. There's a nice meadow here." I had a man from the RO with me, Ed Slusher, who was in charge of wilderness. We were going into the Anaconda Pintler Wilderness. Ed and I tied our horses up; we grained them and let them graze. They left the other horses there in the far end of the meadow. We had the usual banter around the campfire. We went to bed. Jim said, "I'm going to sleep down here with you guys." We were down at the trail going out and Jim said, "I have just a feeling those horses are going to make a break for it." So we no more than got into bed, than we heard the thunder of hooves. They came by us. Jim jumped out of bed. He was always known to sleep in the nude except for his hat. He never took his hat off. Sure enough, I saw the hat

come up and Jim left. It was about 5 minutes later. He came in and dove into his sleeping bag like a woodchuck going down his hole. He was barefooted, too. He said, "I was going down the trail after those horses and I met one of the wranglers and this woman. I think they saw me." The next morning Jim got up and had coffee ready. He was standing around the fire. This lady came up to him and asked, "What were you wearing last night?" He said, "I was wearing my birthday suit."

Here's another story: Jim had worked for the Forest Service as a headquarter guard. He was out mowing the lawn. The Washington Office was coming through with Gifford Pinchot. The Ranger didn't know Gifford Pinchot at all. Gifford Pinchot got out of the car and walked right straight over to Jim and said, "Hi, Jim." Their jaws dropped. Pinchot and LeMarche went off and started talking and left the others just standing there. They were old friends. Jim was mowing the lawn barefooted.

LIONS, BEANS, AND BACON

By George Engler

When I came to Montana soon after WWII to take a job with the U.S. Forest Service, I soon discovered I had landed in the middle of some of Montana's gold camps. My first duty station was headquartered in the town of Lincoln, which I learned had served as headquarters for several mining districts, including Lincoln Gulch, Arrastra Creek, the Jay Gould near Stemple Pass, the Mike Horse and others. I also learned that all the country around Lincoln and the Upper Blackfoot was mountain lion country. At the time mountain lions held more interest for me than mining, but I mention the mines because by coincidence my second duty station was at Townsend where other historic mining camps occurred. The most famous of these was Confederate Gulch, about 15 miles or so north of Townsend, and the site of Diamond City, which Montana historian Michael Malone has called "the most spectacular of Montana's boom and bust gold towns." It was Diamond City and the surrounding placer diggings that figured in some of my early Montana lion hunting experiences. But first some of my observations of Diamond City some 85 years after the boom-and-bust of mining.

Part of my duties with the Forest Service was the administration of grazing permits. Range Examiners, as they were called in those days, knew that old cemeteries, usually protected by fences to exclude cattle and other disturbances, served as ecological benchmarks. By comparing plant conditions in the cemetery with the surrounding open range, judgments could be made on how the grazing was being managed. While going about the business of examining the Diamond City cemetery I found that most of the headboards had rotted off and sagebrush grown over them. The names and vital statistics had been painted on the boards in black paint. The lettering was still visible but the boards had weathered away more than an eighth of an inch leaving the raised letters. Most of the occupants had died in the immediate years following the gold strike of 1864.

There wasn't much left of Diamond City in the late 1940's, just a couple of old buildings at the mouth of Boulder Bar Creek and old Robbie's cabin further up Confederate Gulch. Old Robbie was a reclusive hermit-prospector who found a home there long after the boom and bust placer miners had left. Robbie had a one-wheelbarrow operation. He would poke around different pockets that he thought had been overlooked, load the dirt in his wheelbarrow and haul it down to his washing operation. By the time the boom and busters, followed by the Chinese, got through working the Gulch, there wasn't much left for Old Robbie. Furthermore, it was pretty tough getting any investor interested in a one-wheelbarrow operation. You had to have at least one bulldozer so you could tear up the country.

Howard Perkins was a young rancher in the vicinity who had some mining claims on Cement Gulch in Upper Confederate. He visited these claims on a regular basis and in the process looked after Robbie in his declining years, taking him his mail and seeing that he was kept in groceries. It was during some of these wintertime visits that Howard became aware that mountain lions were frequently traveling through the area. He and I had gotten to be good friends and when he shared this information with me, we decided

we should get hold of Roy Guffey, the government predator control man who headquartered near Canyon Creek. Roy always asked if livestock was being lost or threatened.

We usually hedged our response some but we assured him there was always that risk, and besides the lions were preying on the wintering deer herd. Lions were also bountied at the time. Guffey did come on several occasions and three lions were taken right in the Diamond City area. A lot of action began and ended there.

I recall one hunt in particular. It started routinely enough in Upper Cement Gulch on a very crisp, sunshiny January day, with sparkling ice crystals hanging in the air. We had found day-old lion tracks headed towards White's Gulch and points west. We figured it was a big tom and Confederate was the east end of his circuit. He was now headed back through his home territory, staying just on the upper edge of the deer winter range. As he angled down into White's Gulch the terrain became very rough as the result of hydraulic mining during the same period as the Confederate Gulch activity. The gullies and spoil banks had grown up to Douglas-fir saplings 40 or 50 feet in height. It was here that the cat detoured slightly to try for a porcupine snack, but the porky survived. The lion had climbed the tree but was unable to reach the porky, which was still perched in the very tiptop several hours after the lion's passing. The porky looked us over suspiciously and was not about to give up the high perch, which he had clung to all during the night and well into this day.

The lion then led us through the placer diggings and on to the west slope of White's Gulch. Howard left us here and went back to leapfrog the truck to where we might be at nightfall. So much for well-laid plans. Guffey and I continued with the dogs and by late afternoon found where the big tom had killed a deer and covered the remains. From here on the trail warmed quickly and the hounds let us know in no uncertain terms this cat was going to be ours. However, surprisingly the cat continued to climb, leading us through scattered yellow pine, juniper and sage. The hound music was really ringing through the hills but it wasn't long before they were not only out of sight but of sound. We continued to plow our way through the knee-deep snow, following the tracks as best we could through the rapidly falling darkness. Then finally, as we broke up onto a ridge top we could hear the very welcome and unmistakable steady bark of the hounds as they told us Big Tom was in a tree. It still took us an hour or so to forge our way up the mountain to where the dogs were milling around under a big gnarly pine. We took off our packs and set about the business at hand. Guffey took out his tin can "palouser," lit the candle and shone the reflected light into the tree. There, dimly outlined, was the big tom, scarcely a dozen feet from where we removed our packs. Guffey dug out his pistol and prepared to shoot the cat. My job was to hold the four dogs so they wouldn't get torn up if the cat were only wounded. I had them all by the collars and doing fine until the shot rang out. Then they all lunged down the mountain with me in tow. We nearly all wound up in the middle of the lion but fortunately the shot was well placed and no damage resulted. After taking stock of things we decided we'd have to spend the night on the mountain, but then we looked down the mouth of Avalanche and saw the Avalanche Ranch bunkhouse and a faint glow of lamplight. We decided whoever was there would like to have us for

houseguests for the night, so down the mountain we went, sliding the lion behind us. When we got to the trail in the canyon bottom we hung the lion in a tree and dragged ourselves down to the ranch and knocked on the bunkhouse door. It had been a long day.

The prominent Helena lawyer and rancher W. D. Rankin owned the Avalanche Ranch. Rankin owned a number of ranches around the state. In most cases the main ranch house was boarded up and any ranch hands were housed in a bunkhouse. Mr. Rankin was not one to spend much money on capital improvements. Accommodations were quite Spartan. Such was the case of Avalanche. Quite a few of his ranch hands were jailbirds, released to his custody. Work-release programs so popular today were very possibly pioneered by him.

When we knocked on the bunkhouse door we weren't sure what to expect. When the door opened we were greeted profusely and jovially by One-Eyed Red. I had met One-Eyed-Red previously; I believe he was kind of a sub foreman. He invited us in after we explained our situation and asked if we had had any supper. When we said no, Red said, "Mr. Rankin doesn't feed too well. All we got is a few beans and a little bacon, but you're welcome to it." Well, a few beans and a little bacon was a lot more than we had so we took the offer.

Red had a partner who kind of gave me the willies. He sure as the devil wasn't the Marlboro man! Tall and slender with slicked down hair, he wore black, well-worn oxfords, pleated uptown trousers, and a once white shirt. I took him to be a bartender or work at some kind of inside job where the sun didn't shine. While we were eating he pretty much hung to himself but later he sidled over to me, took a press clipping out of his wallet, and handed it to me to read. His claim to fame was that he had hit some guy in Great Falls over the head with a lead pipe and had ended up in jail. Rankin had him released to his custody and put him and One-Eyed Red out to Avalanche to keep them out of trouble in town. They were afoot and about seven or eight miles from the nearest ranch. The lead pipe man apparently wasn't much company for Red because he talked like he had just come out of solitary. In cow country language you could say, "conversation flowed out of him like crap out of a hot steer." Well, Guffey and I both got enough of that after a while so we excused ourselves, and took the dogs, and went out to the cow shed, hoping we could find some hay to burrow into to make a bed for what was left of the night. Well, there wasn't any and hadn't been for some time as no cows had wintered there. There were a few coarse stems at the bottom of the feed rack so Guffey and I crawled in and pulled the hounds in on top of us. We had two dogs each but this January night was at least a four-dog night. We toughed it out for about an hour and then decided we'd have a better chance in the bunkhouse. We sneaked back in quiet-like so we wouldn't wake up Red. We stoked up the fire, stretched out on the plank floor, and passed a fairly comfortable night. The next morning we had a few beans and a little bacon for breakfast. About 9:00 our ride showed up so we went up Avalanche, picked up the lion and headed for home. As far as I know One-Eyed Red and Lead Pipe Man had to tough out the rest of the winter on a few beans and a little bacon!

Little Missouri Grasslands

Bernie Alt

The article in the March 1997 issue of the Northern Region News evoked a lot of memories about the Little Missouri Grasslands. A similar picture was taken by Lloyd Good, one of the original managers of the old ND LU lands (predecessor of the Grasslands) sometime in the 1950's. A copy of the picture has graced my living room since about 1962.

courtesy of F.S. Archives

Columnar Junipers near the Burning Coal Vein Campground in the Little Missouri Grasslands of the Custer National Forest

When I was the Ranger of the Medora District, Johnny Forsman who was then Custer Forest Supervisor, said one day that we should have a campground near there as many people came out to see the junipers and the burning coal vein. They picnicked and some even stayed overnight. I said, "But the coal vein will burn it out in a few years." So we had either Bill Hicks or Stu Hughes of the Minerals men come out and give us a time frame. They said 15 years. So John, in his usual logical and convincing manner, and with $5000 or $6000, said "Let's go ahead."

We had either Jerry Coutant or Joe Gutkoski, landscape architects, come out and draw up a plan. Anyway, we put it in about 1962. Frank Blackmer, the Branch Chief in charge of Recreation for the Region, thought it was a good idea.

Russ Alexander, our all-around man, who did all the work on the District, and Wes Harden, the L&R man, went to Amidon and put it in. Wes came to me and said the plan called for a well. I said, "Put it in." So he got a driller from New England, North Dakota, to do the job. I told Wes jokingly that it had to be witched. A week or so later he said he had got a good one, but had to move it a few feet from where it showed on the plan cause the witcher said that was where the water was. The driller was our witcher. Anyway, it was a good well – clear, cool, and alkaline as the devil. That didn't bother those North Dakotans. Both the locals and the Forest Service were real proud of our new picnic area.

You'd go about 40 yards west of the area and walk around smelling sulphur gas and seeing a few hot spots. But if you went out there at night it was scary as the cracks in the ground all showed up red and you felt as if you'd catch on fire.

Russ always went out and burned the area in late June so we wouldn't get a range fire on some windy day in August. Most days were so windy but some days were windier. Two or three days of wind would heat it up below and if there was any fuel, you had a big fire.

Funny thing about those coal vein fires, when you had a wet year, the fire burned a lot better and faster – something about the breakdown of water into its components made more oxygen, and you couldn't put them out by trenching, you had to pile dirt on top and smother them. The Bureau of Mines put a lot of them out, and a million yards of fill was not extraordinary.

Prairie dogs would burrow into coal seams sometimes and come out blacker than the inside of a cow. Locals would come out black too if they mined it for heating their homes. You ought to have heard Hank Greitl's choice of words when they'd come into the office after a day at the mines. If you heated with lignite, you soon started calling it "lugnite," as you lugged it both ways.

LOOK OUT STORY

By Jack Puckett

Memory seems to fade with time, but the story as I remember it concerns a fire lookout on the Powell District.

Back in the late 50's and 60's, when I was Ranger at Powell, we always hire a number of students for summer help from student requisitions. The student in this story didn't quite act like most of the summer hires, but we felt he could handle the Lookout job. He was sent on a trail maintenance job, from the lookout, that confirmed our suspicions, but we left him on the Lookout. He was on Bear Mountain Lookout, which is about 8 miles from the road on the south side of the Lochsa River. There were both telephone and radio communications with the lookout.

One weekend afternoon a little storm came over the district and started several fires. The lookout radioed that there was a fire across the Lochsa River in Post Office Creek. The dispatcher, Dave Parsell, ordered a couple of smoke jumpers for the fire and radioed the Lookout that he had ordered the jumpers and asked the Lookout to let him know when they jumped. The Lookout replied "ok" but that the fire had died down and he could hardly see it. The dispatcher made a flippant remark that maybe the Lookout should go blow on the fire.

An hour or so went by and there was no call from the Lookout. The jumper dispatcher in Missoula called and said they had dropped the jumpers. The dispatcher radioed the Lookout but got no response. He thought the Lookout was out of the tower for a few minutes, and being busy with other fires didn't think much of it at the time. At check in time there was no call from the Lookout and the dispatcher could not reach him either by telephone or radio. He kept trying to contact him with no results. Now the dispatcher is worried that the Lookout took him literally and really was headed for the fire to blow on it. It is getting dark by now and so at first light I headed for the Lookout on a saddle horse. At a trail junction a couple of miles up Warm Springs Creek there was a telephone on a tree. I rang the Lookout from the phone and was surprised to hear a cheery voice say, "Bear Mountain Lookout." It seems the squelch on the radio was making noise so the Lookout had turned it down, the telephone was knocked out by the storm between the Ranger Station and the phone on the tree, and the Lookout had forgotten to check in. He hadn't gone to blow on the fire. I breathed a sigh of relief. The dispatcher swore he wouldn't tell a Lookout to go blow on a fire again and every one lived happily ever after.

MIS - ORDER

By Dave Olson

Government explanation in supply books and surplus lists aren't all that good. One of the districts wanted a desk paper cutter. It probably weighted 3 pounds and was about 12" x 18" with a handle on it. I told the girls to order one from surplus. So one of the girls got a GSA surplus catalog and she found a paper cutter. She didn't read it all, but she placed the order. I was on the Lewis and Clark Forest at that time in Great Falls and I got a phone call one morning from the railroad company. "The Custer National Forest has a flat car sitting down here with a 40-ton paper cutter on it. Where do you want us to spot it?" I thought I was in a bad dream. Anyway, that was what came. It was one of these big paper cutters that cut magazine rolls and it did weigh 40 tons. There was a $500 freight bill on it! So what do you do with that – GSA wouldn't touch it; they accuse us of making the mistake. So I finally called up the junkyard that dealt in big engines in Great Falls and they paid the freight bill for it.

On the Custer National Forest once the District Ranger at Camp Crook ordered 40 rolls of toilet paper. We usually made a monthly GSA order and the girl in the office put that in there. Anyway, United Freight called up one day and said, "We have a truckload of toilet paper here – 400 cases. Where do you want it go to?" It went to a little ranger station, Camp Crook Ranger Station. They shipped toilet paper out of Camp Crook from GSA for 4-5 years. Those are humorous things that people didn't read, but we all get involved in human things like that.

BUNGALOW REMEMBRANCES

Earl Reinsel Ranger 1969 - 1971

When I was offered the District Ranger position on the Bungalow district in December, 1969,1 was working on the Nezperce Forest as the forest hydrologist. I had not been on the Bungalow district previously but I knew the land area contained erosive granitic soil and parts were within the highly erosive Idaho Batholith. From that perspective, I knew that land management activities such as road construction, timber sale administration and re-vegetation, to name a few, would be a challenge. What I also learned in time was that managing an in-and-out district located roughly 50 miles from town dependent on electricity generated from unreliable diesel generators, coupled with a three-party radio telephone offered another set of challenges. But, I was destined to remain at Bungalow for only about 15 months, until April 1, 1971, when the Bungalow district was divided between the Pierce, Canyon and Kelly Creek ranger districts and I moved upstream about 20 miles to the ranger job on the Kelly Creek district.

To my wife Anne and children, Mark(8) and Sue(6), the move in January, 1970 was both a challenge and an adventure. It meant living in Orofino during the school year and living at Bungalow the rest of the time. They all adapted to both situations and the outdoor activities such as swimming, hiking fishing and berry picking, to name a few... were great fun. The kids still speak fondly of the good time on the North Fork of the Clearwater River. Remembering times when there was no TV available and only radio once in awhile and the only telephone was the hand-crank set at home which you could use to call the office about a hundred yards away! Cell phones weren't even a dream at that time.

The time for me went by quickly during the next 15 months. Getting acquainted with the people, both staff and public, as well as trying to do all the aspects of my job keep me busy. There was never a dull moment. A flash flood in June closed the road from town to the station via Orogrande Creek, which meant making sure that people who were stuck between mud slides were safely evacuated - which they were - temporarily housing those folks at the station, making arrangements for opening the road and then conducting damage surveys for more long term solutions.

Luckily, the many capable staff such as Jim Shadle, Gary Meyer, Clark Fuller, Tanya Wooden and many others took the lead on these tasks and the crisis passed. A given in backcountry living was the ever present diesel generator, usually a used military surplus model. Ours was no different. Generators provided the electric lights and any other power needs. They were noisy things even with the best of insulated generator houses. But I became so used to the noise that if the generator stopped running in the middle of the night, I was instantly awake! And thought "what is it going to take to fix the dam thing" because filling the fuel tank is one thing but getting a complete overhaul would mean doing without power for maybe a week or two. There were no portable rental generators available then. Just another challenge!

REFLECTIONS OF A MOTHER AND HOUSEWIFE

By Anne Reinsel

Who among us has not dreamed of living in a mountain paradise surrounded by towering pine trees, views of rivers and lakes, and a variety of birds and forest creatures to keep us entertained?

It was my privilege to live for two years at the old Noxon Ranger Station (Noxon, MT) and watch about two hundred swans descend onto the placid lake each spring and fall, spend about two weeks preening and swimming majestically, and then take off for either their northern or southern destinations. All I had to do to enjoy them was to sit at my living room window or take my little son out on the front porch to play. Yes, we missed the conveniences of television and the nearest movie house 50 miles away in Sandpoint, but it was only a half mile walk to the grocery store with no traffic (it was a busy day if two cars passed me), and I thought it was the most beautiful place I would ever live.

Then came Bungalow Ranger Station on the North Fork of the Clearwater River, which tied Noxon for a lovely setting but also supplied our family with endless activities. The little house sat in a meadow of grass facing Orogrande Creek as it entered the North Fork to the left of the house.

My children were now six and eight years old and knew better than to challenge the swift moving water. This indeed was the narrowest of canyons to place a ranger station with only enough flat land for the road from Pierce, Idaho. The station buildings spread out in a line between the road and creek, and the Ranger's house and an employee's trailer on the other side of the Creek. A trailer court on the north side of the North Fork provided additional employee housing. The station was a hub of activity as the main road continued across a bridge over the North Fork and met a road running from Canyon Ranger Station to Kelly Creek and beyond.

My children and I thought we had found paradise. The 14-15 hour days were not long enough to explore our surroundings. The waters were wild in June during high water but settled down in July. Mark, our 8 year old, took up fishing and Sue, 6, trailed after him looking for snakes or furry creatures. The neighboring trailer was occupied by the Fuller's who had four boys who joined in the fun. We found an ideal little beach just half a mile above the North Fork bridge where we spent many afternoons swimming, sunning, and floating in inner tubes. The only drawback was keeping the children close enough so they would not be drawn into the rapids. Later we found another stretch of beach with a quieter and safer stretch of water so we mothers could relax.

One source of daily excitement was the heliport across the river built into the hill. The helicopter and its pilot were stationed at Bungalow most of the summer and the clack-clack of the propellers always made us look to the pad or the skies to see if an injured worker or tourist had to be airlifted, visitors were arriving or leaving, or the copter had been summoned to a fire. The radio at a remote Ranger Station is always on for

communication; although the children were trained to stay away from the working world at the station, they were always intrigued when we walked by to hear the constant static and the mostly male voices responding to needs and emergencies. Mark and Sue will always remember "10-4".

And then there was huckleberry season! The choice purple berries grew in abundance that summer of 1970. Many days we were gone by mid-morning on foot or in the truck with a picnic lunch to explore a road or trail where we hoped to find berries. One day Julie Shadle and our five children with their little buckets in hand were just about ¼ of a mile ascending a trail when we found warm, steaming, bear scat in the middle of the trail. We quickly hustled the five back to the truck. Another day I decided to take my two children and Stacy Shadle on a hike to the closest lookout tower, about 4 miles away. We would have made it, too, but the berries on the trail were the biggest and most luscious we had ever tasted. Every time we decided we had eaten enough, we would come across another batch bigger and tastier then the last. We finally decided to give up on the lookout and just pick berries. And I will always remember Linda Fleisher as the champion huckleberry picker.

Bungalow was called an in-out district. That meant that the Station was only open from the spring to perhaps Thanksgiving, depending on snowmelt and snowfall. All permanent employees had a town house they owned in Orofino and a residence provided by USFS at the station. Couples with no or young children could live at the station for 5-6 months but those with children only moved the family from June until late August. My children and I never minded the moving as we looked forward to the adventures of living in a remote location and we had friends and playmates whether in town or in the woods. We also had mostly sunny days in the summer.

However, even in bad weather we enjoyed living in the woods. Think of the serenity: no radio, no telephone, no TV. A little tape player provided our favorite music. Reading library books, which we later exchanged with other families, kept us busy on rainy days. We learned many board games (my children today often turn off the TV and play games with their own children); used a lot of paper, paints, scissors, glue, paper bags, string, etc., to CREATE; experimented at cooking and baking, and had fun doing it all.

We only spent one summer at Bungalow as it was closed as a Station the next spring. However, we went on to spend the next two summers at Kelly Creek Ranger Station which was another 25 miles farther into the wilderness. My husband was always very busy and found it to be a 24/7 job. But my children and I will tell you that it was the best summers of our lives.

BUNGALOW REFLECTIONS

By Jim Shadle 1969 to 1971

The arrival – We moved from Newport, Washington, in the summer of 1969. We made our first visit to the site in July. As we descended the Lewiston Grade into the mid-summer heat of the Clearwater valley, Julie studied the brown cheatgrass hills and wondered why we were leaving all those good friends for "this." The road from Pierce over French Mountain Saddle and down into Bungalow did nothing but reinforce her hostile view of the move. Finding out we were to live in a mobile home didn't help. "It's a trailer house!" But, when we drove up on the hill to our new summer home she looked at the view of the confluence of Orogrande Creek and the North Fork of the Clearwater River, realized she was in a place that very few could ever share, and was sold on the Bungalow from then on.

The Children – Our children were too young to have serious friends left behind so the move to Bungalow was a huge adventure. They learned to swim in the river and could endure water temperatures significantly colder than the adults. We actually used a thermometer for the "date of first swim" but I have forgotten the exact tolerance. The children would rush outside to watch the helicopter come and go from the pad across the road from our home. They helped Sue Reinsel, the Ranger's daughter, sift for arrowheads on the flat near the ranger's house. They picked huckleberries, elderberries, and wild raspberries. Summer at the Bungalow passed quickly for the kids.

Great Hunter – For some reason Julie despised Columbia Ground Squirrels. They are not a particularly cuddly sort of rodent, but her dislike was (and is) intense. She complained "those creatures are too close to our trailer." (It never achieved mobile home status.) I showed her how to use a pump-up pellet gun and, wonder of wonders, she shot one and actually killed it. She was, however, loathe to touch the thing and hauled herself up to see Floyd Williams' wife, Ann. She had decided to ask Ann what she should do with it, hoping Ann would recognize the situation and volunteer to dispose of the carcass. Well, Ann was a native of the Idaho mountains, and she had seen a lot of young Forest Service wives come and go. She recognized the situation for what it was all right, and advised Julie to "Just toss it off in the brush, dear." Julie put on a rubber glove and gingerly hoisted the varmint a few feet. I performed a lengthier removal after work.

The Wrangler – The members of the public that passed through the Bungalow site were, for the most part, great folks. They were interested in the Forest and careful to care for their surroundings. There were exceptions, of course. One pompous hunter announced that he was going to unload his horses and mules just off the north end of the bridge. We asked him to use a convenient location away from the administrative site. He made it clear that the site was public land and he was entitled to use it. The area he chose for unloading was adjacent to the diesel generator that powered the whole site. It was equipped with a siren whose decibel count was a touch louder that a Titan missile launch. The siren activated automatically if the generator stopped so that anyone in the housing area or the offices could hear it and restart the power. Well, wouldn't you know it, the

generator stopped (wink,wink) just as the high-and-mighty hunter completed unloading his animals. The result was a rodeo with no riders, no points and no rules; just lots of kicking and running. He eventually corralled all his stock but the story continued. He complained, in writing, to the Forest Supervisor, Dick Pfilf, about his treatment. The letter of complaint was sent in a franked envelope from a county in Washington. The Forest Supervisor told us he contacted the county and asked if that was an appropriate use of franking privileges. Other than the re-telling, the matter was ended.

The Game Warden – His name was Joe Bross. He was on the job and stopped at the Ranger Station often. One autumn day he came in and asked if we had a thermometer. He was given the one we used to check the water temperature. When he returned the thermometer the next day he told use he was almost positive that a lady in a hunting camp had killed an elk one day, then gone to town and bought a license and elk tag the following day. That's not legal. Joe took the thermometer to the camp and checked their animals. When he came to hers he said, "This tag is one day old, but the kill is two days old. I can tell by the temperature of the carcass." He said that she initially denied it but eventually 'fessed up. Joe cited her and returned our thermometer. The entire apprehension was a bluff. Neither the science nor the thermometer were that accurate.

In looking back, the days at the Bungalow seem almost idyllic. We would look for excuses to go to the Weitas Guard Station because Jan, the wife of the reforestation forester, Bob Hamner, made the best cinnamon rolls. We didn't even go to town on weekends because life at the Bungalow was so good. The children pestered to go to the dump to watch the bears, then told their grandmother back in Iowa about those adventures. The poor lady never understood that we were not in a lawless wilderness. Our parents and other relatives from the Midwest would visit, and I believe such as Bungalow was beyond their frame of reference and almost beyond their comprehension. An uncle of mine rode in via Orogrande Creek and was upset because the forest was so "messy." (It wasn't litter. It was the usual forest floor.)

Bungalow in the winter of 1970. photo by Jim Shadle
All I remember is the marvelous over-the-snow trip along the river from Canyon R.S.

NEAR FATAL EXPERIENCE !

By Chuck Spoon

(This experience occurred in 1959 during my first summer with the U. S. Forest Service. It occurred while working as a Forestry Technician on the Galice Ranger District, Siskiyou National Forest located in southwestern Oregon.)

Preface

Early August in southwestern Oregon is usually hot and very dry. August 7th, 1959, was such a day. There had been a long, dry period and the forest was suffering from the extended heat. Successive hot days had dried the forest litter, brush, hardwood and conifer trees to the point of quick flammability. All that was needed for a raging forest fire was an ignition source. And indeed, one came!

Early morning, a family living on a piece of private land adjacent to the national forest let their guard down. As best as could be determined, an accident in the kitchen caused a fire to erupt. The fire quickly spread through the simple structure forcing the occupants to run for safety!

Before they could get the local authorities notified, the Onion Mountain lookout spotted the smoke flowing up through the trees in the deeply incised canyon. Onion Mountain was a prominent mountain upon which was the main lookout tower of a lookout network in the Galice Ranger District of the Siskiyou National Forest. The lookout quickly plotted the fire's location. This, along with the description of the fire's characteristics was phoned to the district headquarters. (White radios were just then being placed in the lookouts, military style phones were still preferred. These phones were connected to the ranger station using #9 wire strung on glass insulators attached to trees and makeshift poles.)

In the late 1950's, the call was usually received by the fire control officer. If he was not available, either the ranger or the district clerk would take the call. All three were very capable of assessing the situation and deciding who should be dispatched for suppression. The daily sign out sheet showed locations of all personnel and during the heat of summer, both field crews were instructed to have a Motorola radio. These were heavy radios, far too bulky to be carried while doing fieldwork. Usually field crews would call in at predetermined times during the day in case their services were needed. Of interest, these three and maybe five other employees made up the entire permanent work force. So each emergency was dealt with by this small group of permanent personnel along with a few seasonals.

The Fire!

Miles away from the district headquarters, in what was know as the old Spauling Mill site, I was working Blister Rust with a crew of two. We were searching for Ribies (gooseberries and currents), alternate host of a tree rust disease responsible for the killing

five needle pines, in this case sugar pine. Due to the extreme fire weather conditions, I was instructed to call in every two hours. I left the radio in the pickup and every two hours we returned for the call.

At the 10:00 check in, I called Onion Mountain, "Nan 3-1, this is Spoon portable." Due to the mountainous terrain, Onion Mountain had to relay information to the ranger station. The response came back: "Chuck, we have a fire off Highway 95 burning in Butcherknife Creek. Take your crew and go to the fire! Start the suppression action as best you can and we'll be there as soon as we can. The Ranger would be there shortly and take over." (At this time the ranger station was down the Rogue River about 25 miles northwest of Grants Pass. The Ranger had a minimum of an hour's driving time while I would arrive in half an hour.) I was further informed that access appears to be by way of a secondary road off Highway 95. "You will probably be the first on the scene. Give us a call when you arrive letting us know the situation and what additional resources are needed for suppression! Then do what you can until we arrive."

We immediately set out for Butcherknife Creek arriving after a quick 30-minute drive.

Butcherknife Creek was a deeply incised drainage heavily covered with old growth Douglas-fir trees with a brushy understory. Both sides were very steep approaching 70% side hill and heavily timbered. The stream bottom had been patented as a mining claim and supported one private residence. A short distance up the creek, I could see the smoke. I parked in front of what appeared to be a burning pile of rubbish.

A woman with two kids was standing nearby watching. I quickly called the station to report it appeared a pile of rubbish was set afire and had escaped. While the pile was still smoldering, the fire had already spread to the south towards the steep hillside. There was little chance the fire would spread north given the road being an effective fireline. I informed Onion Mountain of the fire's potential should it start up the steep sidehill. After all, here it was August, extreme burning conditions, heavy fuels, steep sidehill and still before noon. To me it spelled disaster! Like, to get ready for a big one!

As soon as I signed off, the woman, whom I quickly learned was listening to my every word, quickly informed me the pile of rubbish, was in fact, her house! Feeling very small, I tried desperately to make an appropriate apology. Things began to move too quickly to dwell on my mistake.

The fire, having already destroyed the structure, began spreading up the north facing slope and slightly up drainage. The day's warming had put the wind into a typical up slope flow. As I was completing the initial assessment, the fire was starting to burn into the lower branches of the fir trees pushing toward the crowns. The steep sidehill made it a "to be expected" behavior. Mother nature was operating true to form! It was now becoming a full-fledged forest fire, burning in heavy old growth timber and dense understory brush covering the entire hillside. The brush species included chinkapin oak, manzanita, poison oak, madrone and ninebark, all high heat generators when burning.

The Ranger and Fire Control Officer arrived shortly after I called in my initial assessment. I quickly told them what I knew and my thoughts on the fire's potential. They pulled out a topographic map using the truck's hood as a table. Pondering it as all fire people do, we discussed the probable direction the fire would spread as he set up a "make shift" suppression plan.

What the Ranger needed and didn't have was information on what specific fuels lay in the fire's path. This was essential information to predict fire behavior. Topography, beyond what we could see was determined by looking at the topographic maps. He desperately wanted information on fuels and to get it he decided to use me. After all I had been hiking cross-country for the past five months putting me in great physical shape.

With what I believe was with little real thought, he assigned me as scout directing me to get as close as possible to the fire's head and give him periodic reports on its activity. Viewing the topographic map we all saw that the steep slope rose about a quarter of a mile then transition into a gentle slope for half that distance. On the upper edge of this slope was a ridge on which was located the forest road leading from Highway 95 on top of Hayes Hill. It was the main road leading to Onion Mountain. They both believed this was the best place for me to leave the truck.

This I did.

The Ranger's last minute instructions were for me to quickly get in front of the fire where the gentle slope dropped into the creek. Here I was instructed to find a suitable vantage point where I could keep him informed on the fire's activity. Without questioning, but immediately thinking to myself, if I was to wait until he told me to leave how would <u>he</u> know when that magical time was right? At this time in my career, it was considered suicide to question the Ranger or ask him to rethink his decision. After all, he was Ranger, the all-knowing wizard of the District!

Leaving the truck, I took the heavy radio and began descending the gentle slope toward the smoke plume. A dense stand of sapling sized Douglas-fir trees covered the slope making for difficult walking.

The fire was looking totally different as I approached ever closer to its advancing head. From the burnt homestead, the fire looked safe; safe because it was burning away from me. Now it was coming directly at me! To make it worse, I was purposely moving toward it. I felt like I was walking into a bar fight with the odds stacked heavily against me. I hiked through the dense saplings and soon began smelling the tart acid smoke. The closer I got the more anxiety I felt!

It wasn't long before I reached the topographic break. Here before me was my worst fear about working wildfire! Looking down was like looking into the jaws of death! Why the hell was I here, I kept asking myself! While the Ranger assured me it would be okay, I knew he had no idea of the danger! Of all the cautions I have been taught during the past

two years, I knew that being in the front of a raging uphill fire was like being tied to a railroad track with a locomotive steaming my way in the dark of night. Resident fire experts would have had a coronary if they only knew! Only one good difference about this situation gave me hope; "I was not tied!" I could leave anytime I decided, Ranger or no Ranger's orders.

But the Ranger gave the command and I would obey!

As the smoke thickened from the rapidly advancing flames, I mentally recorded what I could about the surrounding vegetation and quickly radioed it in. While feeling threatened, I added my assessment of what the future would soon hold. I informed the ranger once the fire reached the break it would change fuels. The break was not only a topographic change but a vegetation change. The gentler slope was made up of a dense stand of sapling sized Douglas-fir trees. I knew this for a fact, because I had just walked through it to reach my current position. I ended the conversation telling him the fire was quickly advancing in my direction emphasizing I should leave now! However, the Ranger in his bland wisdom quickly assured me again that I was okay and should stay at least another five minutes. He wanted to know when the fire reached the break and it's behavior once it burned into the "dog haired" thickets.

He added I should stay until the absolute last minute. I signed off knowing he could feel my anxiety. To him, this was probably just a New York boy's first experience on a, soon to be, large wildfire. He probably felt I was over reacting.

Deep in my soul I was truly torn. Yes, I also wondered if I was over reacting since I lacked depth in wildfire suppression. However, did he himself know fire well enough to accurately predict the risks from afar? Maybe, just maybe, he was the inexperienced one and maybe he sent me on this mission with a complete lack of understanding the danger I was soon to confront. I would never know the answer. Sure he needed the information; I understood that, but at what price? Whatever the need … this was my life! And unlike a cat, I only had one! I knew I had my personal limits and as the minutes ticked away I might just find out what they were.

I had never before been at the head of a fast moving wildfire. I doubt if anyone who had, has ever lived to tell about it. Sure, I knew fire spread faster when burning uphill, and feeling it's intensity as it ignited the dry fuels was scary. Real scary, knowing I was in its path! The noise was deafening and the smoke getting thicker. I felt a sickening feeling knowing I was in a very dangerous place. At this point, I remember again thinking the Ranger would never put me in harm's way. It was the only comforting thought I could anchor to, giving me the hope this all somehow made sense. My belief was much like a child believing in his teacher. After all, that quality of knowing is why people are elevated to become leaders, right? So even though I felt this was a bad situation, I put my trust in the Ranger. However, the longer I stayed the more I wondered. Now may be my time to take control away from the Ranger and make a decision which just might save my life.

The fire was roaring louder as it sucked in air to feed its insatiable appetite. Smoke rolled up the slope. Once the smoke hit the break it slowly leaned over onto the flat. I could sense more danger should the smoke completely engulfed the sapling stand thereby hiding my only escape route. I called the Ranger – what I thought would be the last time before evacuating. I felt for sure he would tell me to get the hell out of there!

I told him, "The fire is just about at the break, sparks are igniting the duff in the sapling stand which also happens to be my only escape route. Smoke is getting thick and soon I won't be able to see my way out. I'm heading out while I still have time." He still directed me to stay there just a while longer, emphasizing his need for updated information. Momentarily, I thought about my choices. Do I obediently stay or look out for my own safety and defy the Ranger's orders?

Initially, I had minutes to make my decision, but now … only seconds. The decision might be my last! Smoke and fire brands were filling the air, reminding me of a winter snowfall. But no snow here, only the closing of my only escape route! Now was the time to learn a lesson and take responsibility for my own life. This suddenly became a very personal thing. Now is not the time to be worried about repercussions of not following orders! I made another call. This time I told him I was heading out, signing off without waiting for a response.

The gentle slope was now completely engulfed with thick smoke as I made my move. As I turned to leave, I could hear the beast roaring behind me! Now, instead of just another wildfire, it was a force threatening my very existence.

Ahead, was an ominous sight!

Before me was a thick jungle of saplings filled with whitish gray smoke. Now for the first time I noticed the burning fire brands. Now, instead of floating benignly into the air, the brands were landing, igniting the duff well ahead of where I had to pass. Smoke and ash were filling the air spaces around the trees making the stems appear as ghosts standing like bars in a prison cell. I felt like a prisoner about to make the final walk down death row.

On both sides and in front, the firebrands were actively starting new fires. Some were only spots where flames had just burst, igniting the ground liter. Others were already burning areas five to ten feet in diameter and expanding rapidly. Flame heights were already reaching two to three feet and seeking to rise up through the dead limbs of the tightly branched firs. While they started out as separate fires, they were beginning to spread toward each other. The heat was so intense I could feel my facial skin tighten like a sunburn from a 100 degree day. I knew if they were all to connect before I reached the road and safety, I would be well inside the jaws of the beast.

I was now in full near panic condition. What I feared the worst was now happening. I was now running for my life! Hanging on to the radio, I ran just short of a dead run through the burning trees. While feeling threatened, I still held my composure enough

not to get into a full panic mode. I knew I must keep my wits about me and use my best judgment and physical skill to beat the beast to the road. My only other choice was … "well, I'd rather not think about it."

Islands of burning trees were everywhere now and each getting larger. I skirted the worst of the evolving fires trying to seek out the coolest route. As I ran I could feel the individual fires seeking what oxygen was available. They were quickly burning together as I would pass between them. I thought about the extensiveness of the sapling stand remembering having just walked through it minutes before. It was large and if the fire was torching out pockets on either side of me I was wondering how far ahead the fire was burning on my flanks as well as directly in front. Through the smoke, on my pathway to safety, I could see other fires igniting. The flames were getting so intense they appeared through the smoke like red eyes of a dragon. At times I would just make it between a patch before the trees would torch. The heat would sear my cheeks spurring me on even faster.

Here I was, trying to out run a full blown developing "blow up" condition which only later would I grow to appreciate. Later, I would study the Mann Gulch Fire of August 5th, 1949, where 13 firefighters lost their lives fighting a wildfire along the Gates of the Mountains stretch of the Missouri River, north of Helena, Montana. Then, again, the Storm King Fire in 1994, which killed another 14 firefighters in Colorado. Both incidents involved a "blowup" where tremendous heating of fuels would liberate combustible gases from the woody material to finally ignite everything in an explosive event. All woody material and anything else intertwined with the combustible fuels would be consumed. There was no chance of anything surviving should they be so unfortunate to be caught within.

And here I was, about to be engulfed by one!

Reflecting now, forty years later, at the time I was not aware of being caught up in a "blowup". Actually, I had no real appreciation for one. I was only concerned about how to get out without getting burned or worse…killed!

I quickened my pace, while still not breaking into a dead run. It was as if I was just keeping pace with the fire's speed. Occasionally, I would brush against torching trees. All I could do was turn my back shielding myself from the heat and flames. Smoke was filling my lungs causing coughing, watery eyes and a dripping nose. I finally made my way beyond the small connecting fires and quickened my pace, racing ever forward. Feeling panic, I began running as fast as the stems allowed. Stumbling through the final stretch, I wondered if I would make it to the road before the fire over took me.

Finally, the road!

Smoke prevented me from seeing much of it until I was actually on the gravel surface. The fire was creating it's own wind picking up dust as it blew across the road. Seeing the mixture of smoke and dust confirmed the fires direction. I quickly turned left running

downhill towards Hayes Hill to get out of the smoke and harms way. I knew my pickup was to the left, but whether I would drive it out depended on conditions. At this time I was just trying to find fresh air and get to the side of the fire's impending danger. Finally, as if breaking through a wall, I suddenly cleared the smoke gulping volumes of fresh air. The knowing of finally being safe went through my entire body.

Then, I noticed! There parked along side of the road were three Forest Service vehicles, mine included, with a number of people, including the Ranger, standing there waiting for some sign of my fate.

Exhausted, I remember looking back at the smoke I had just came through. The smoke was flowing fast over the road ahead of the oncoming fire. Given the wind direction, we were safe from its direction of spread.

Before I could tell my story the entire fire area blew up! What only moments before was my only escape route, was now burning in one large explosive fire consuming all the vegetation on the entire flat. The noise was deafening as the fire ignited the liberated gases from the preheated woody material. Standing there, we were on its edge and luckily escaped its direct impact.

I had escaped with my life with only moments to spare!

We quickly evacuated to Hayes Hill. The next fifteen, or so, minutes were full with excitement and eventually discussion about the magnitude of the blowup. Next, what was needed for suppression? The fact that I just escaped with my life never seemed to be a big issue. Maybe, what's not said is sometimes more important than what is. Anyway, I believe deep in the "guts" of all who were there, they silently understood how close I came to being *dead*! Quickly it was forgotten in the interest of suppressing the fire. The Ranger never questioned me about why I left when I did and I was too naïve to bring it up. After all I didn't want to appear weak!

Once the fire was contained, I worked on mop up for a few days. Here, I had lots of time to reflect on just what happened as I dug the final dying embers from the root pockets in the forest soil. Often, I would look over the gentle flat focusing on the blackened remains of the thick fire trees responsible for the fast rate of spread and more importantly the "blowup". What was once thirty-year-old trees, just getting started on life's journey, were now black skeletons.

I escaped the jaws of the beast, but only because of my decision to leave. Had I listened to the Ranger's encouragement to stay longer, he would have had to deal with a death! But, I lived.

From this scary experience, I learned there are times when leaders fail. More often than not, even they don't have the experience to keep everyone out of harm's way. So there are times not to follow orders. There are times to listen to one's own assessment. As a result of this event, I developed a habit of mentally questioning superior's directions,

especially if my personal safety was involved or if I felt strongly my personal interest was not being adequately considered.

The following spring the Butcherknife Fire, as it was officially called, was salvage logged and then planted. Very few merchantable logs came off the flat given the tree size and burn intensity of the blowup. I am thankful I lived through the experience rather than becoming the first person to die fighting wildfires on the Siskiyou National Forest.

NOT ON MY WATCH

By Ed Corpe

John Milodragovich was a new supervisor of the Lolo National Forest when I reported here as deputy supervisor of the Lolo. The Lolo was a big and busy place. John had moved here from the NezPerce and I came up form Region 5, the Tahoe, arriving just a few weeks after John. Interstate 90 was under construction right through Missoula at the time and they were pressing hard to go ahead on further east with the construction, when I got an interesting insight into John's character. We found out the grade crossing at Rock Creek was going to be continued with an off ramp off the freeway there. Rock Creek is a very busy place. The trains are generally moving along in excess of 50 mph there. John felt it was not in the public interest to build anything there but a separated bridge over the railroad.

The engineers were appalled. They had the structure, what they needed, the off ramp and the grade level designed and staked and, I guess, practically under contract. And they sure didn't want to change it. John wouldn't have it any other way. The regional engineer leaned pretty heavily on us. When that didn't change John's attitude, the governor got into the act. Still no change – John refused to sign off on the grade level plans. It kept escalating and finally the Regional Forester paid us a visit and indicated the Forest Service just couldn't have their way on this one. We were going to lose.

John's reaction to this was that he was the boss, and if he said so, we would have a grade level crossing, but John would not be a part of it. It would not happen on his watch. They could find someone else to be the supervisor of the Lolo N. F. if the Forest Service was going to do this. I guess the Forest Service decided that they needed John Milo as supervisor of the Lolo, because the answer was for the state to get busy and re-design it, and it's the way it is now.

Whenever I go by Rock Creek, I think of a guy with so much integrity; he would lay his job on the line for the public interest. John Milo stood fast in my estimation, and I think dozens of other Forest Service people who knew him agreed with this estimate of his character and determination. We all admired his integrity and determination to do his job with the public interest foremost at all times. He was a wonderful man and I learned a lot from him. I can't tell you how strongly I feel about what a wonderful person and Forest Service employee John Milodragovich was!

ONE YOUNG MAN AND FIRE

By Gary Nelson

Fifty years ago this summer (1999), Smokejumper Bob Salee was one of three firefighters to survive the deadly Mann Gulch fire on the Helena National Forest. More recently he has been quoted as wondering why things happen as they do. Why did many things work together to let him survive while 18 others didn't. Of course, it a rhetorical question, but it's one that we often tend to ponder.

I've asked the same question many times when I think of my good friend Jim Harrison, the lone "non-jumper" who joined the jumpers at their landing spot in the bottom of Mann Gulch and died with them that day.

Prior to the jumpers' landing, Jim had discovered the fire and was building a fire line on the ridge separating Mann Gulch from Meriwether Canyon. Why did Jim drop down into the gulch and join the jumpers? He was probably thinking his effort should be coordinated with an organized approach, or he may have thought he knew some of those guys and wanted to be with them. He had no way of knowing what his decision would lead to, and we have no way of knowing what his thoughts were.

Fortunately, Jim has been included in the memorial for the smokejumpers as though he was one of them. We are all grateful for that. However, for the sake of accuracy, most stories of the fire point out that he wasn't a jumper, but instead he was a "ground firefighter" who had joined the jumpers at the fire. I know that no slight to Jim's memory is intended by this explanation, but I've often wonder whether, if Jim hadn't been with the jumpers that day, would he have been memorialized at all? The question could possibly be asked if he was less a firefighter than the smokejumpers he died with. Does he deserve the same recognition that the smokejumpers, who are considered the elite of forest firefighters, deserve? Other ground firefighters who have died fighting fire have been virtually forgotten.

It's kind of late in the day for me to do so, but on this 50th anniversary of the fire, I would like to tell you about Jim Harrison, and how he came to be in Mann Gulch.

Jim was more than just a "ground firefighter" who fought fire and shared the fate of the smokejumpers the afternoon of August 5, 1949. While it's technically correct that Jim wasn't delivered to this fire via a jump plane, he was a highly competent, fully trained and experienced firefighter with previous training and experience as a smokejumper. He left the program through no fault of his own or that of the smokejumper organization, but instead out of respect for his mother's wishes.

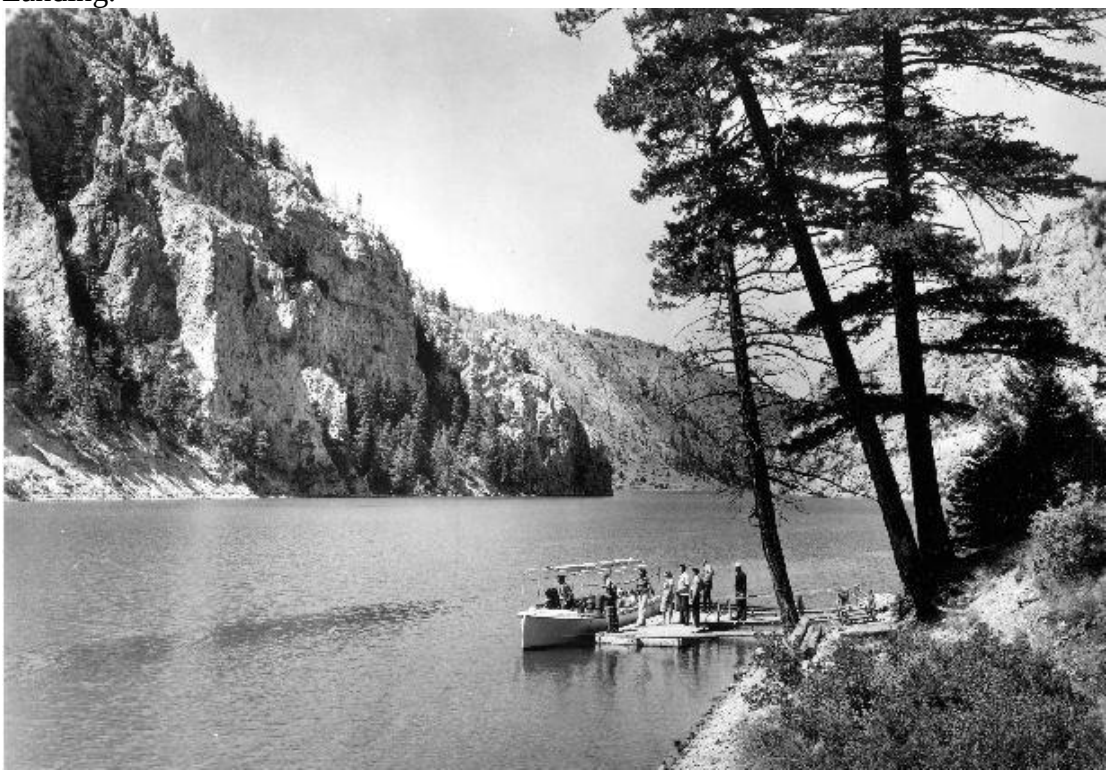
Jim Harrison was from Missoula, Montana. He was a chemistry major at the University of Montana, and he had a great love of the outdoors. He was an excellent student by anyone's standard. His scholarship, personality and strength of character were that of a superior individual. I came to know Jim and became his friend when he and his brother

Jack joined the college fraternity I belonged to. Both were very popular within the fraternity.

After the 1948 fire season, I returned to the University to resume my studies in forestry. Some time during the fall quarter, Jim came to me and asked if I could help him get a ground job in the Forest Service next summer. His mother had objected to his jumping out of airplanes, so he was looking for a job in the outfit that was less dangerous.

Jim knew that I had been a District smoke chaser on the Helena Forest during the previous seasons, and I might know a contact he could talk to. What he didn't know is that the District Ranger I worked for had already asked me to be on the lookout for some good men while attending school that year. Jim was a good man. I told him to send a completed SF-57 to Ranger J. Robert Jansson, with a note attached saying we had talked. Later that year Jansson was in Missoula on other business and met Jim. After a short visit, Jansson hired him on the spot and told him that he would fill a newly created job as recreation guard at Meriwether Campground. He explained to Jim that the campground was located at the mouth Meriwether Canyon, just south of Mann Gluch on the Missouri River, and was accessible only by boat.

Every two hours an excursion boat with up to 100 passengers would leave Hilger Landing, pass through the famous "Gates of the Mountains," return past Mann Gulch and drop off passengers at the Meriwether Campground. Two hours later the boat would return, unload passengers; pick up those from a previous boat trip and return to Hilger Landing.



Merriweather Canyon boat dock photo courtesy of F.S.Archives

Jim's job was to greet passengers, care for the facilities and, in other ways, represent the Forest Service. He would live in a small cabin at the campground. The cabin contained only his bed and the SPF radio with which he was to meet scheduled communications with the Ranger Station.

Jim's job would also include making a fire patrol. This meant hiking up the north ridge of Meriwether Canyon after all lightning storms, and when otherwise directed, for the purpose of checking on any smokes that might be visible.

In June when Jim arrived at Helena, I met him at the bus depot. As we drove the 20 miles to the Canyon Ferry Ranger Station, Jim's anticipation and enthusiasm for the job were already affecting me, and he wasn't' at Canyon Ferry long before it did the same for the entire District organization.

During those early weeks of the summer, Jim, myself and others of the District fire organization did get a chance to drink a few beers and sing a few songs at the Ferry Road Inn just down the road from the Ranger Station. We had a lot of fun together. But the fun was over when our orientation was finished and fire season got underway. Jansson was a teetotaler, but didn't seem to object to our indiscretions prior to the fire season. I guess he thought it was all part of the team-building process.

In late June we all reported to our summer duty stations. Hogback Lookout was manned, and Jim went to Meriwether. The District Headquarters Fireman was on duty and we all seemed to see each other only occasionally for the rest of the season. As I remember, we had quite a few fires in July and actually had five fires going including two Class E fires (Mann Gulch and York Hill) in August.

Shortly after the fires were contained and activity was slowing down, Jansson took me into Mann Gulch to show me where Jim had died. We landed at Meriwether Canyon and proceeded to Jim's cabin. Inside was the note Jim had left tacked to his door, "I've gone to the fire," and signed "Jim." He had apparently tried to report the fire to the Ranger Station but was unable to reach anyone, so he left the note. Jansson then commented about how Jim always paid attention to detail. In fact, all summer long, Jansson was strong in his praise of Jim's performance, and anyone who knew Bob Jansson knew that he didn't throw accolades around very freely.

We continued up the trail toward the north ridge, and we found a burned out area where Jim had built quite a bit of fire line. Of course his line didn't hold when the fire blew up, but it was evident he had worked hard. As we dropped down into Mann Gulch, we met Henry Thol, an old retired Ranger whose son had died in the fire. Needless to say, he was suffering. Anyone who has ever lost a son knows what the old man was going through.

We then caught the excursion boat at the mouth of Mann Gulch and continued on to Hilger Landing. I rode in the seat behind Jansson and Thol, and realized then that Henry

Thol had a lot of questions as to the actions of everybody on the fire. Jansson did his best to explain those actions.

When we arrived at Canyon Ferry, Jansson designated me to represent the District at Jim's funeral in Missoula. My first concern seemed a bit frivolous considering the gravity of the situation. I was worried that I didn't have suitable clothes with me, and also I badly needed a haircut.

Mrs. Jansson pressed one of Bob's dress suits, and fortunately it fit fine. When I got to Helena I got a haircut and reported to the Supervisor's Office where I was to pick up some fire overhead that were to be returned to Missoula. I was called into an office and told by ARF Tom VanMeter that when in Missoula I was not to talk about the fire to anyone. I thought this was kind of unusual and unnecessary, because I didn't feel I knew anything that could be considered sensitive.

While all the bad things were happening in Mann Gulch, Assistant Ranger John Rogers and I, with two others, were very, very well occupied trying to hold part of the south side of the York Fire that had blown up some dozen miles to the southeast of Mann Gulch. We didn't even know there was a Mann Gulch Fire until the morning of August 6th, let alone have any knowledge that could be questioned. However, while in Missoula and for a long time after, I avoided talking about the fires.

After attending the funeral and spending some time with Jim's family, I returned to Canyon Ferry. The season for us would soon be over. We had a lot of work to do and in the process; we had a lot of getting well to do so.

All those who died were precious to someone. The Canyon Ferry personnel felt the loss of Jim the most because they knew him. I'm sure they would have felt the same loss if they had known the others as well. We all felt that Jim knew the best of both worlds. He was a smokejumper, but he was also much respected as a ground firefighter in the Canyon Ferry District organization. We took comfort in knowing that Jim was a religious young man who knew where he was going to spend eternity. Jim was always open about his faith. When he spoke of it we didn't realize his words would give us comfort after the fire and, for that matter, whenever we have thought of him during the last fifty years.

OPERATION SNOWPACK

By De Smith

Remember when our job descriptions ended with the phrase; "and other duties as assigned"? Here's an "other duty" I remember very well as I was on skis nearly every working day from the first week in November until the last week in June and away from my family for over 3 months.

The NRM experiment Station in Missoula had a Division of Flood Control Surveys headed by Martin Baudendiestel with a field office at the Priest River Experiment Station where data on the effects of timber cover on snow accumulation and melt were collected by my boss Austin Helmers and me. (See Note)

Operation Snowpack was conceived and conducted in the spring of 1950 to take advantage of the coincidence that standard Interagency snow measurements indicated that the 1950 snowpack in the upper Columbia basin was nearly a duplicate of the one in 1948 which had contributed to disastrous flooding downstream and the nearly complete destruction of Vanport, a WWII community on an island at Portland, Oregon. It seemed to be an excellent opportunity to confirm the idea that manipulation of the density and distribution of timber cover in the headwaters might be an effective way to help control spring snow melt flooding downstream, if data over a wider sampling area could be collected.

For the "Columbia Quickie," additional sites were selected for snow sampling at several locations in western Montana and Idaho that could be reached by road and measurements begun. Some of the people involved in the data collections were: Norm Tripp, Paul Ingebo, Vic Rosich, Gordon Hutton, George Weyerman, Al Friedrich, Dick Alvis and possibly others. Another site was selected to represent the more remote headwaters in northern Idaho on the Clearwater N. F. In March, before there was any significant snow melt at the higher elevations, I was assigned to Liz Butte L.O. on a spur ridge north of the Lochsa-Clearwater divide. Plans were made to supply a two-man crew by air and it was my good fortune to have Arne Nousanen, a Ranger from the Clearwater N.F., as my partner. After meeting at the Orofino S.O., we were driven to the end of the Lochsa River road and hiked up river about 5 miles to the not open, seasonal Lochsa Ranger Station and then worked our way up to the Sardine-Sherman ridge trail for 5 miles, gained 3000 feet above the Lochsa and ate lunch on the North Fork Clearwater-Lochsa divide. So far it was a great, clear and sunny spring day. We were both in good shape so our backpacked personal gear and the snow sampling equipment that we swapped back and forth were not a problem. The snow tubes, scales and record keeping forms were in short supply and we did not want to take a chance of loss or damage in the airdrop. Arne had bearpaws and I had my WWII GI short skis and canvas climbers. I had assumed I might have the easier time because I had been on skis since early November but after my fairly long traverses across any open slopes, Arne had gained about the same elevation following the trail and we carried on the old "which is the better equipment, skis or snowshoes" debate without a clear winner.

The last couple of miles were easy going since Liz Butte at 6140 feet is only a little higher than the divide road. An airdrop was scheduled for 3 P.M. to make it likely we would be on site to chase down or at least spot the general location of the cargo chutes. It was only a little after noon when we finished lunch and then our luck ran out. In a few minutes it clouded up and then a snow squall blew in from the west. The snow soon quit but we were socked in solidly with about a hundred yards visibility. We followed the ridge trail to the L. O. without any trouble and found the log cabin in good shape, dug out the ten-foot snowdrift that covered the porch and door with Arne's snowshoes, checked the stovepipe and built a fire. We never got another look at the sky that day and it was plain we would not get our airdrop. A thorough search for edibles ended very shortly and we had found a large container of chocolate pudding mix and 2 lbs. of raisins, not even a stray can of sauerkraut. As an ex-lookout I had fully expected to find ample supply of that delicacy but the previous tenant must have been the one in a hundred that could use that gourmet item in the 30 M/D rations. We pooled what we had left from our lunches for supper and had just lugged in some more firewood and lighted a candle when a REAL blizzard hit from the NW. It soon became obvious that we could well spend some time in the AM improving the chinking job on the N side as we whiled away a couple of hours measuring how far the snowflakes made it before hitting the floor of the cabin. The record was about seven feet. We alternated bundling up in shared coats, etc. for naps on the cot and tending the fire, swapping yarns and discovering mutual friends and praising the L.O. for the excellent and ample wood supply on the porch. In the morning we did a few chores like caulking with bark and lichen, shoveling a path to the outhouse and watching it snow some more, a lot more. About noon we lunched sparingly on our pudding and raisins, opined that it was nice that the wind had quit but it was high time for some flying weather. It was not to be, and by dark we were making plans to get the hell out of there.

Arne figured that we wouldn't gain much by going back the 14 miles to the Lochsa and to the dead end of a 20-mile remote road. So he decided if it did not look like there was a chance of good weather and visibility by 10 A.M. we would hightail a mile west and down the Little Weitas ridge trail about 10 miles to Weitas Creek cabin where we might be able to phone the Bungalow R.S. the next morning. If we couldn't get through by phone we would only have four miles to the end of the Weitas road and five more to Bungalow. Perhaps you have already guessed what the name of Weitas was before it was officially sanitized by the geographic names crew. We read most everything available by candlelight and had a relatively comfortable night.

You already know what we had for breakfast but we enjoyed it because it was calm and clear with a high ceiling and we though we might skip the 20-mile hike. Sure enough, soon after 8 the Travel Air buzzed in from the north and skimmed our ridge close enough to blow loose snow from the lodgepole pines revealing the track for the drop. We separated on opposite sides of the ridge so we could spot the chutes as there wasn't much of a clearing. Six beautiful chutes and one solid missile were dropped in two passes and we waved OK and good-bye. We retrieved our entire package count and spent the rest of the day unpacking our food, beds (kapoks), tools and radio. The manti that covered the missile (the chute didn't open) revealed most of a hind quarter of beef and 5 lbs. of

butter which had exploded and completely coated the meat and the inside of the manti. We scraped and repacked butter in papers, spare dishes and bowls, dug a 2'x2'x4' refrigerator with a manti door off one end of the porch, hung the beef, strung up the SPF antenna and checked in with Missoula and Bungalow. SPF sets were among our first portable radios, they weighed about 15 pounds and were in a gray plywood box about 7x10x16 inches with two compartments of about 1/3 and 2/3rds with hinges and clasps so the small compartment could fold open and rest on the top of the other. This top unit held the speaker/microphone and the bottom had a panel with tuning-volume knobs and a signal strength meter. The power was from dry cell batteries. The AM performance was full of static and the reception varied with the weather, the height and length of the antenna, the patience of the operator in tuning, condition of the heavy side layer in the stratosphere, etc., etc. but SPFs were state of the art in the '40's. When the conditions were just so, we had conversations late at night as far away as a taxi cab dispatcher in Chicago. The RO station in Missoula and Bungalow R.S. nearly always came in fine but I was never able to get a clear exchange with my home station at the Priest River Exp. Station. We did some housekeeping, washed up and had a well-deserved steak dinner.

Our assignment was to locate 10 sample, paired snow courses in as many comparable timber cover and open locations on as many different aspects and elevations as we could handle and measure them as frequently as possible until the snow had melted. After scouting the east, north and west slopes at about the 5000 foot contour we found only a few open areas and they were so small that we abandoned the attempt to sample for elevation and located about a dozen pairs, open and timber, between 5000 and 6000 feet. It wasn't possible to find any suitable southern exposure with room for open and timbered pairs but we set up one that was essentially flat. Each course had ten stakes ½ chain apart and as much on the same exposure and elevation as possible. The timbered courses had different stands and densities of cover and we placed them into 3 classes - dense, medium and light cover. In order to not spoil the sampling integrity after the stakes were driven we successively sample in a predetermined direction and distance from each stake. For example three feet north and we were careful to disturb the remaining snow as little as possible. When the planned sampling position was bare we did not sample at that stake. This system gave us about 12x20=240 points to measure per round and we averaged a measurement about every 3rd day until melt started to reduce the load. Strangely, we never had snowfall with measurable water content after the first couple of weeks. We had to hustle during the next five weeks or so to make the schedules rounds but as the work became routine, the days and sunlight lengthened and dust, debris and soot accumulated on the snow pack a lot of sampling points were eliminated. For a fairly high percent of the points with dense tree shade and on the north and east aspects, the losses so far were hardly perceptible.

We had a few airdrops of fresh stuff and other supplies. After the middle of May Arne and I were missing our families and chafing a bit because no end was in sight. I don't remember what Arne's family consisted of but assuming my wife, Judy, and little ones aged 3, 2 and 9 months were doing O.K. without any direct contact was not fun. I can't imagine a more suitable partner, Arne more than carried his share of all the work and he was a great companion. My Forest Service experience had been almost entirely in

research and Arne passed on a lot of his knowledge and experience in administration. As a district ranger he felt as though the work on his district was suffering. I appreciated this a few years later when I was detailed away from my Kootenai district on occasions such as project fires. At last, after about 8 weeks, Arne got paroled and eventually another fellow from the Clearwater took his place. He learned the routine quickly, the work load diminished day by day but the sampling points in the deepest shade hung on into the second week in June. Herb Floodberg, the Ranger at Bungalow, made fun of my constant hints for relief on the SPF set and named me "Whispering Smith" and suggested that if I complained a bit louder and longer they could hear me in Missoula without using the SPF. Later during the spruce bark beetle epidemic, Herb was ranger at Libby and I worked for Ernie Grambo in TM at the Kootenai S.O. When Herb and I met while were scrambling to locate, sell and cut more and more dead and dying spruce month after month and year to year he'd grin and say; "Let's go back to Liz Butte."

So after all this, what were the results?
There was no snowmelt flooding, the weather cooperated with clouds and light rains and the near record snowpack left calmly without damage downstream. The data were compatible with that from the Priest River Experiment Station, which showed that for 4 years data in north Idaho:

1. The snowpack at 5 to 6 thousand feet has about 50% more water content that at 2 thousand feet.
2. The openings in dense timber stands collect 32% more snowpack water than under the canopy.
3. Snowpack on NNE exposures average about 2 times as much water as those on SSE slopes. This effect increases rapidly as elevation increases from 2700 to 5500 feet.
4. The snowpack melt date in dense timber stands averages 2 weeks longer than in opening.

After another fiscal year the budget axe fell on Flood Control Surveys and only Norm Tripp was left to close out. The Kootenai N. F. acquired me to manage their spruce bark beetle surveys. I never returned to research and after the Kootenai, I specialized in timber management.

__*Footnote*__ During 1947 the Priest River study located and established paired snow courses in open and under different densities of timber cover on 3 aspects N, S and W and 3 elevations at 1, 3 and 5 thousand feet and measured the accumulation or melt weekly from Nov. through June until 1951. Some of the courses had an instrument cluster with a precipitation gage, hygro-thermograph and an instrumented soil stack of up to 10 moisture and temperature gages (electric chips) buried at the various soil horizons in a 3 to 6 foot soil pit. Most of the plots were in the Benton Creek watershed with a year around recording stream gage. At the height of the snow season travel and sampling at each sampling point required warp speed to complete the data collection in a week during daylight hours. It was only possible with pre and post daylight travel by jeep to snowline, snow cat and skis since there was no way to meet all the desired sampling conditions near the road.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE SELWAY FOREST BURN

Carl Weholt's story of that summer in 1919

Many who travel the Lewis and Clark Highway along the Lochsa River wonder at the sparseness of timber on the hillsides. The answer is the 1919 crown fire, which started in the inaccessible Black Canyon and raced with the speed of a freight train toward the Bitterroots. Though it happened more that 60 years ago, the event is yet indelibly printed on my mind.

It seemed like a normal season, that beautiful mid-May morning. Although the sun was warming the mountain tops, a chilly breeze was blowing in off the Lochsa, whetting my eagerness to begin the 20-mile climb from Pete King to my new home at Canyon Creek Ranger Station. I was 18 years old at the time and had been selected as head smokchaser for the Pete King District of the Selway National Forest. In an area of no roads and few trails, I and four other smokchasers, each armed with shovel, canvas bucket and a Robinett tool (later named the Pulaski), would be responsible for the fire safety of nearly a half million acres of virgin forest.

On the highest point of Austin Ridge, a wind-fall invited me to sit and rest my shoulders from my heavy pack. Also, the 25-mile hike from Kooskia to Pete King the previous day had left me a few sore spots. Fresh in the morning dew, a carpet of wild flowers surrounded me. White, gold and blue, they spread their petals wide to the sun, which, like burnished gold, shone bright in a sky of robin-egg blue. Miniature violets and pungent skunk cabbage grew to the very edge of softening snow banks. Squirrels, chipmunks and bird of many species paused in their busy domestic pursuits to eye me curiously.

To the east lay the Lochsa, a ribbon of silver in a never-ending forest of pine, fir, and giant cedars that dipped their branches in the swollen river. To the west a marshmallow cloud floated over home and friends that I would not see again for four months.

My home for the summer was a spacious, one-room log cabin standing alongside a long narrow meadow rimmed about with tall alpine fire. A tiny, trout-filled stream sneaked through the luscious meadow grass, only a hundred feet from my door.

A packer had just supplied the station with enough food to last me a month. Two slabs of bacon and two smoked hams hung from the ceiling joists. The rest of the food was stored in mouse-proof chests. A homemade bench supported a 2-½-gallon water bucket, a tin wash pan, and the ever-fragrant, ever-working sourdough jug. My bunk was not exactly a Sealy, but was surprisingly comfortable. The spring was of slim tamarack poles and the mattress was of dry bear grass.

It was only dusk, that first night in my new home, when I crawled into my bunk and pinched out the candle. Secure in a crevice in the wall, a cricket scratched out his incessant call for a mate. From a pond down meadow, frogs sang their welcome to spring. A hoot owl hooted at a full moon. Then, until the sun clothed the valley with its

golden mantle, causing a million diamonds to glitter on the dew-laden grass, I slept on a marshmallow cloud.

As the season advanced, the forest became dryer by the day. There had been no rain since early May. Every day I walked the mile and a half to the lookout tree on Frenchman Butte, where, 80 feet up, I would sit on a study limb and scan the forest for fire. Then for an hour or two I would just sit and dream kid dreams while enjoying my incomparable domain.

By midsummer the forest had lost its enchantment. The flowers that had bloomed so profusely in the spring were all gone. Dust and dead leaves lay deep in the trail. A highly inflammable resinous substance broke out in globules on all leaves and needles. A spark was all that was needed to turn the forest into an inferno.

The blow-up came about the first of August. A massive black cloud rolled in over the ridge from the west, flashing its forked headlights. The roar of thunder, as fire danced within the cloud, was punctuated with earsplitting claps as bolts of lightning found their mark. Then the cloud went grumbling off to the east, its amber taillights blinking like a giant plane in the night. A few drops of rain pockmarked the dust in front of the cabin, kicking up small blasts as they hit.

When I got to Fish Creek, three miles away, the fire had already crowned out and was headed for Rocky Ridge. The fire on McLendon was soon suppressed by a smokechaser from Fish Butte and me. Twenty miles from my cabin was a hot fire on the east side of Bimerick Creek. Three of us fought the stubborn blaze all night and until almost noon the next day. Then the ranger called us out on the open ridge to witness a sight I shall never forget.

The little fire that had been smoldering so innocently on the south side of the inaccessible Black Canyon had suddenly leaped into the treetops and went racing to the south and east. The hungry flames leaped from ridge to ridge, while the draws became a swirling mass of flame. Huge pines were wrenched in two and tumbled in the air. Clouds of gray smoke, laced with red, shot into the sky, where, as it got a fresh supply of oxygen, exploded into a churning ball of fire with a boom like a cannon shot. The flames swept across the Lochsa, leaving the north side as barren as the other. No living thing was left in its wake; only red burned earth and ghostly charred snags remained.

The ranger promised to send us a supply of food by the packer, Stanley McKenzie. Stanley got as far as Bimerick Meadows when he saw fire pouring over the ridge. He quickly dropped his packs and raced back down the trail, barely escaping with his life

Exhausted, discouraged, and hungry, we lay on the open ridge with wildfire on every side. With all combustible material burned, however, the fire quickly cooled, so the next day we picked our way, among widow-making snags and the acrid smell of burning logs and roots, back to our stations.

I stayed on at the cabin alone while the fire crawled among the trees to the east. I could hear trees falling or crowning out. The smoke was so thick that objects across the meadow were mere shadows. I was thankful that the west wind held, thus saving my cabin, my fish, bird and animal friends, the beautiful trees around the meadow, and my life.

The Lochsa fire was never manned, but hundreds of IWW's* came and went on the Fish Creek fire, to no avail. Early in September a three-inch mantle of snow wafted the ground where it tuned to a dirty brown.

* International Workers of the World

RELUCTANT TRAIL HAND

By Dave Owen

Of short stature, possible five foot three or four, slightly bent from the shoulders, "Red" Harlan was a quiet, taciturn individual. Given a reclusive nature, he rarely conversed with those he encountered. His deeply furrowed, dark brown face gave an indication of constant exposure to sun, wind and rain: weatherworn. Red had few teeth; I doubt he had ever seen a dentist. His mouth, when opened to speak, gave a view like the inside of a cold barrel stove. A few lower teeth were yellowish stumps; four middle upper teeth were missing. His age was difficult to determine. The deep furrows on forehead, cheeks and hands seemed to indicate possible mid-60s. He was not a young man.

Each time I met him on the trail, Red's attire seemed the same, in heat of summer or cold of late fall. An almost knee-length, dark-brown mackinaw, dark worn "friscos" held up by suspenders, worn packer-like boots suitable for walking or riding – these are what I recollect. His hat of course was unique. A narrow brim with domed crown, much like a battered derby, with a western crease and roll to the brim. A decided circle was formed by dust, dirt and sweat around the band, the dark color grading into what once was a gray hat.

Red's companions were a pair of black mules, medium weight, probably 750-800 pounds, 13-14 hands in height, and a saddle horse. The horse, a sorrel with a white stripe on the forehead, possibly 16 hands in height, appeared older, with heavily feathered fetlock and pasterns and rather large hooves, pie-tin-like, maybe #3-4 shoe size. The animals, particularly mules, appeared rounded, well fed. I suspect they were not overworked. Two, possible three, trips to Dixie during the year for groceries constituted most of the work. I'm sure an elk, mule deer and an occasional bighorn came into camp to supplement Red's diet, and wood of course for fire would on occasion be required.

His rigging appeared well worn, yet serviceable. A couple of sawbuck saddles with four canvas-covered pack boxes were the extent of it. His saddle was worn, early – 1900 vintage with high pommel and horn as well as cantle.

Red was probably one of the last of the Salmon River nomads (real mountain dwellers). His home during the summer was the sweeping bunchgrass ridges of the River breaks. Wintertime would find him in more sheltered locations, ponderosa pine coves near plentiful wood and water. His house was a 12 x 14 foot tattered wall tent, heated by a lightweight sheet-metal sheepherder type stove. He at times would be an opportunist, moving into abandoned, decaying cabins on mining claims along the River in the winter for short duration, and then moving up-slope as the weather warmed.

Red probably ate somewhat sparingly, being a bachelor, yet fairly well, as game was reasonably available. At higher elevations, blue grouse and fool hens were not uncommon. Additional subsistence items would likely have been salt, flour, baking powder, dried beans and canned goods purchased at the general store in Dixie.

An unusual, unpredictable stroke of bad luck occurred in the late 1940's that changed Red's life. For a short time he was forced to deal with the outside world while settling a debt. By his very nature, he loathed owing anyone anything. It was an infringement on his freedom. If circumstances placed him in a debtor status, the debt was to be retired as fast as possible.

It was late spring, the breaks had warmed by mid-May, and Harlan had, as was his custom, moved up from the River onto the ridge between Moccasin and Indian creeks. He'd found a spring at the head of Cougar Creek and south of the long ridge separating Indian and Cougar Creek from Crooked Creek. The location was ideal, south-southwest exposure, open on the crest of the ridge, elevation around 4,000 feet, wood readily available.

Although it was early in the season, with bunchgrasses beginning to green, remnants of many years growth, forming dense litter carpeted the open ridge tops. Late warm afternoon updrafts created by the warming river canyon below quickly dried the litter.

It was on one of those late spring mornings that Red's stove overheated; his tent, few belongings and the surrounding grass-ridge top went up in flames. It was the most inconceivable stroke of bad luck for Red that the Jersey Mountain lookout, recently occupied, detected this early season smoke. Elated at this early find, the lookout immediately reported the fire to the dispatcher at Dixie Ranger Station.

A small crew responded to the call and was initially trucked three miles by road from the Station to south of the lookout and the junction with the Jersey Mountain-Shepp Ranch Trail #214. The trail followed the crest of the long ridge downhill from the fire. By this time, the fire had made its run uphill in the bunchgrass and had feathered into the scattered timber and rock on the north side and had stopped in the relatively moist draw on the east. For all practical purposes, it had burned itself out and was stopped by rock and the moist environs of timber on the east and north exposures. Although not a large fire, it had covered 15-20 acres, most of it in open bunchgrass. Yet there was enough in the scattered timber and rock at the perimeter that needed to be lined, hot-spotted and put out. Four days by the crew, a packer's day wages for supplying the crew with groceries, extra tools and water generated a bill of $800-900. Harlan was caught pretty much "Red"-handed, as it was obvious what had taken place. In those days, as today, if you are responsible for an escaped fire on National Forest land, and the evidence is irrefutable, you are billed for the cost of putting the fire out.

Red had no politician or lawyer to plead his case; he made no excuses. It was also evident and true that he had no money to contribute or be recovered. To force sale or seize his mules, saddle horse and rigging would have condemned him to…well, dust. In those days it seemed the ranger had more imagination and empathy than are exhibited today. An arrangement was made for Red to work off his debt by working trails on the district until the debt was extinguished. His tools, tent, stove and groceries would be furnished, meals deducted from his wages. Red insisted on working alone. He could move himself and had worked his entire life alone and wouldn't start working with others

under any circumstances. To a certain extent you might judge he was "shanghaied" into the job, yet it worked perfectly for both parties.

For a summer and the better half of the second, Red sawed logs, cleared slides, cut brush, picked rock and drained mud holes. His pace was somewhat slow, yet steady, interrupted only by a grub run by the packer Bill Hart, whom he respected and trusted. His work was good; he understood what was necessary for safe passage of mules and man on steep terrain.

When you look back on it, you would have to conclude that Red came out on top. He was a shrewd negotiator. Not only did he end up with a new tent, stove, shovel and grub hoe, he ate well for two summers. The ranger hoped Red wouldn't get the idea, in the future, that he needed a new outfit.

SEARCH GRANITE PEAK FOR ERNEST BRUFFEY IN 1959

By Joe Gutkoski

The Montana earthquake of August 16, 1959, centered in the Upper Madison River Basin killed more then two dozen people who were buried under the great Madison River slide, which subsequently formed Quake Lake.

Missoula Forest Service employees were involved with rescue efforts and this story involves the search for a lost mountain climber, Ernest E. Bruffey, from Havre, Montana, who disappeared on Granite Peak the night of the earthquake.

We formed a five-person search party in Missoula shortly after the earthquake, consisting of Thad Lowery (F.S. Regional Budgeting Officer), Ed Slusher (ex-Myers Creek District Ranger, Custer N. F.), Hugh Fowler (smokejumper foreman and emergency medical technician), Lloyd Reesman (smokejumper squad leader), and Joe Gutkoski (landscape architect and ex-smokejumper foreman).

We drove East toward Alpine on the East Rosebud River, Custer N. F. and on the way we checked in with the sheriff's office of Park, Sweetgrass and Stillwater counties to learn of their search and rescue efforts. We learned that Bruffey was a true wilderness traveler. He dressed in buckskin for weight and warmth and never left a footprint in mud or soil if he could help it, so that there would be no trace of his passing. He parked his car at the Mystic Lake Power Station on the West Rosebud River and told Montana Power employees he would be crossing Froze-to-Death plateau to hike over Tempest Mountain first and then climb Granite Peak. The powerful earthquake struck at 11:00 p.m. Sunday night. When Bruffey hadn't returned to his car by Thursday the power plant employees grew concerned and sent out the alarm.

Ernest Emil Bruffey, 38, came from an important family around Livingston and Big Timber who settled in the area in the 1880's. Ernest was an only child born in 1921. He was six feet tall with dark hair, educated at MSU in Bozeman with a BS degree in Engineering and was the 1941 State Wrestling Champion. He later earned a BS and MS in Physics plus a Doctorate in Education. A decorated WWII combat veteran, he served in the Special Forces Division in Europe and brought home an English bride, Audrey, whom he met in Leeds. In Montana the Bruffeys settled in Havre, where Ernest worked as an engineer developing subdivision.

When we arrived at East Rosebud Lake at the small community of Alpine we talked and coordinated with the Carbon County Sheriff. We then put our equipment together and young Johnny Bronger, a local outfitter agreed to horse pack our gear into the Froze-to-Death 10,000 ft. plateau. Elder John Bronger, Sr. helped with the loading of the horses, although he must have been over 80 years old, he was still robust and a legend in the area.

We then proceeded up the Phantom Creek Trail and up onto the 10,000 ft. plateau. Autumn was quickly setting in and it was very windy and cold. On the way up we cut

three lodge poles for our small canvas, sheepherder teepee. Johnny Bronger wanted to take our supplies as close to Granite Peak as he possibly could and if anyone could do it, he could. He headed the loaded horses up the plateau towards Mount Tempest 12,478 ft. in elevation.

Eventually, after seeing the horses' bleeding hooves, pasterns and fetlocks cut up from stepping over sharp rocks, I told Johnny to stop, unload and go back before they became injured further. You must be careful with the yellow brown, saturated gravelly spots below melting snowdrifts as these can sink a horse up to his belly. The ground that is covered with sod is the safest going with horses.

We found good water and some west wind protection at the head of a side drainage into Phantom Creek, near 11,765 ft. on Froze-to-Death mountain. We erected our wind firm teepee tent in the cold wind. It was not large enough for cooking with all five occupants so I stayed outside and handed in what was needed to cook supper over the gas stove. We rested soundly that first night, but with all five occupants we did not have room for any of our equipment inside the teepee.

With a cold wind blowing in the morning, we proceeded on foot, south up the plateau and side hilled past 12, 478 ft. Mt. Tempest and dropped into the low saddle between Mt. Tempest and the NE ridge of Granite Peak. We searched the climbing route to the snow-bridge and agreed this was the most probable route that Ernest would have taken to the summit. Thad Lowery and Ed Slusher with Jim Stevenson had climbed Granite by this route in August of 1952 when Slusher was a district ranger at Myers Creek station. For the remainder of that day we split up and searched over the East and North slopes of the mountain but found no trace of Ernest. We retreated back to the teepee in the cold wind, climbing to the top of Tempest on the way back.

The next day we approached the E. ridge of Granite Peak carrying two 120 ft. climbing ropes. We all roped up at the snow-bridge and Thad cut steps into the frozen snow bridge with his ice ax. We crossed safely and attempted to climb on the ridge top but a few places we climbed to the right on the N. side then back on the ridge top then left on the S. side of the ridge. Thad led the way, being very tall with good reach of arm and leg. We remained roped up right to the summit. We found the plastic tube register and Ernest had written in the register the same day as the earthquake, and wrote that next he was headed for Wolf Mountain.

From the top of 12,800 ft. Granite Peak we searched to the West where Ernest would maybe have traveled. We searched with binoculars down the steep ridges and gulches of the summit ridge. I observed that there was not as much rock fall in evidence from the quake, as I had expected. The weather was clear and with nothing but a cold wind to cope with, we remained on the summit ridge and continued our search. In late afternoon we roped up and retreated back down and hiked back to the little teepee with the light of our headsets. Three more days were spent searching the North, NE, East flanks of the peak with no sign of Ernest.

In the morning, we dismantled our sparse camp, cargoed it up for Johnny Branger to pick up and headed back down the Froze-to-Death plateau. We hiked back down to Alpine on E. Rosebud Lake. At the Alpine meeting room we met with a group of distressed friends and relatives of Ernest's, anxious to know anything of his whereabouts. Ernest's mother and father, Mr. & Mrs. George M. Bruffey; his employer Everett Shuland; his neighbor from Havre; and his British born wife, Audrey; were at the meeting hall.

We learned that Ernest and Audrey had recently adopted four children from a broken family. There was much tears, weeping and pleading, and we agreed to continue the search from the Cooke City side on the south side of the Beartooth Mountains. The family sensed that we were the only hope of finding Ernest. The Bruffey supporters agreed to purchase the food for our extended search out of Cooke City. We than backpacked in and first searched the South flanks of Granite Peak, Sky Top Glacier, Mount Villard, Glacier Peak, Mount Wilse, Sawtooth Mountain and the flanks of Wolf Mountain. At that time there was no register on top of Wolf (I later put one up on August 12, 1965) and we found no trace of Ernest. After searching the area for five hard days, we became alarmed at Thad's ashen face and rigid appearance, indicative of heart trouble. (Thad died of a heart attack a few years later.) We decided to return to Missoula, after an absence of two weeks I was happy to get back to my wife and 3 children.

On August 16, 1999, some 40 years after the search, Joe Kampf, a mountain climber from Coalstrip found the remains of a man's foot in a weathered leather boot on the N. face of Granite Peak. A year later to the day, Alan Kesselheim and a group of climbers from Bozeman found two vertebrae, the broken ends of a femur and a tibia and the sole of a left boot, in the same area. On Tuesday, August 29, Dr. Gary Dale, the Chief Medical Examiner for the State of Montana, had confirmed that the bones found in year 2000 and those found in 1999 had belonged to the same person, despite the fact that the soles of the right and left boots differ. Al Jenkin, Park County deputy Sheriff and county Coroner said, "I don't know if it's Ernest Bruffey, but somebody's on that mountain and I think they want to come down."

Ernest's father continued to search taking small airplanes over the mountain that claimed his son. At the 10th Street house in Havre, Audrey left everything just as it had been on the day her husband left. When Ernest's mother died in 1965, she was cremated and her ashes were scattered on Granite Peak, as were those of his father in 1970. Audrey died in 1996 and her ashes were dispersed over the wild and craggy mountain.

(The Madison Basin earthquake of 1959 generated much rescue work by the U.S. Forest Service and this is intended to make a record of the search for Ernest Bruffey who was lost on Granite Peak the very night of the earthquake.)

SEQUEL TO THE RIDGERUNNER

by Del Radtke

(Del had many contacts with Bill Moreland, the Ridgerunner, between 1955 and 1962, when he was picked up by the sheriff for the last time and returned to the state mental hospital.)

I thought it might be interesting to peer a bit deeper than Rick Ripley's excellent saga of "The Ridgerunner," Moreland's "disappearance" from the Clearwater area in 1963 remains as much a mystery today as his original reason for 13 years of withdrawal from society between 1932 and 1945.

My first contact with the Rigerunner legend was in 1947. It was my first summer job in a white pine blister rust control (BRC) camp on the Canyon District of the Clearwater Forest. Moton Roark, who caught and arrested the Ridgerunner in 1945, was my first boss. After a few weeks I got a smokechaser job at the Canyon Ranger Station.

The Ridgerunner's exploits were a frequent evening subject at the BRC camp and at the Ranger Station. Some of the old timers delighted in priming the summer students with numerous stories about the Ridgerunner, bears, and mountain lions.

Smokechasers frequently were sent alone to fires (even at night) in those days. The poor guy was sure he would meet one or more of the above behind any bush or rock. My turn came within the first week. I was dispatched on a 15-mile night hike with full fire pack to help the Goat Ridge lookout on a fire. I was spooked all the way.

Several years later, one alternate ranger was still telling wives about the Ridgerunner and all the young girls he supposedly strangled or killed. As a result, when I was gone on overnight trips my wife would stay up all night reading by gas lanterns (No way would I show her the nasty letters Moreland wrote and left at the station when we were stationed there again some years later.)

In the early 1940s the Goat Ridge lookout warmed some water in a tub in the sun for a bath. He left the building for one more trip to a spring for his drinking water supply. An hour later he was surprised to find dirty bath water, and some clothes and $2.88 in change missing. He called the Ranger Station about it, and was told it was probably the Ridgerunner. Then they had to talk the lookout out of going after him. The story persisted for years that Mooreland still had the guy's $2.88 when captured.

Two things were certain about the Ridgerunner during the early period: He didn't want to be seen and he never stayed long in one location, even in winter. He seemed to have an uncanny ability to sense when someone was due at a station and left a day or more ahead of pursuers. He was especially adept at living outdoors in winter and eluding pursuers on snowshoes. By 1943 he was a real thorn in the side for the St. Joe NF, the Clearwater NF, and the State of Idaho fire protective associations. Constant raiding of Forest Service food caches finally led to redoubled efforts to apprehend this unseen raider.

Amazingly, no one saw the Ridgerunner or caught him in a F.S. building for 12 years. When Holt and Cole at the Flat Creek cabin on the Bungalow District surprised him, he easily escaped. Holt and Cole didn't realize until too late that the stranger with small feet just might be the Ridgerunner. The man simply said, "I'll go get a pail of water for supper." He left the pail at the creek and kept going! This man turned out to be the Ridgerunner. A year later, in February 1945, Roark and Lee Horner finally captured the real Ridgerunner, Bill Moreland, on the steep slopes downriver from Skull Creek cabin.

During his free roaming years, the Ridgerunner was very secretive and never confronted or threatened people. There were no reports of food theft from campers or hunters, although he covered campsites looking for cast-off clothing.

Life after his capture in 1945 was a dramatic change for Bill Moreland, the former Ridgerunner. Many people tried to be helpful and provided jobs for him. He lived in camps with coworkers, made friends, and things seemed okay for a while. Trouble always seemed to develop between Moreland and the boss or with a coworker after several months on the job. The pattern for trouble was always similar, moving from friendship, to suspicion, to confrontation, and sometimes threats with his rifle.

These incidents often led to charges against Moreland and varying periods of confinement in the county jail at Orofino. Just as often, he was set free with a finding of not guilty or charges were dropped. Moreland started writing nasty and very filthy letters to the newspaper, Forest Supervisor, and state officials, usually accusing them of threatening Moreland. The sheriff was a frequent target. Moreland always accused him of raping women prisoners and other brutality. (No wonder he was freed from jail so often.) Other letter receivers got their share of his tirades and accusations of illicit sexual activities. The letters were factors in his later commitment hearing.

A few Potlatch Co. people chided the Forest Service after his first arrest for "trying to put this little old man in jail for using your cabins." Later Potlatch provided Moreland a job in its logging camps. But it wasn't too long before he got into a wrangle with logging superintendent Bradbury at the headquarters logging complex and was fired. One aspect was that Moreland thought Bradbury's daughter was in love with him.

Shortly afterwards, a large bulldozer was dynamited at a logging camp and Moreland's footprints were found beside it. The shoe was now on the other foot – Potlatch's, that is. He was charged with destruction of property and jailed. Potlatch had a battery of lawyers and witnesses at his trail. They related his presumed motive and submitted plaster casts of his small footprints taken at the scene of destruction. Moreland admitted on the witness stand that he had been there. But he said he had merely laid his packsack on the dozer track while he went to the cookhouse for a cup of coffee with his friend the cook. He was found not guilty and released.

About 1954 Moreland was working at Studebaker's Sawmill in the vicinity of Pierce, Idaho. A friendly relationship of five or six months turned to distrust, friction and finally

a threat. Moreland fired his rifle into the ground at close range near a coworker. He was arrested and jailed again, charge with assault. Somehow, he got off again.

Once more Moreland got into a confrontation with guns. Frank Marquette was a 70-year old miner who had a claim and a small cabin about four miles up river from Milk Creek. Frank was a nice old miner who had worked his tunnel and claim every summer for the last 40 years. He knew the former Ridgerunner and didn't like or trust him. One day he apparently decided Moreland was out to rob him or steal his claim. He took his rifle and hiked down his mountain trail and downriver to "shoot" Moreland. But this confrontation ended with Moreland talking Marquette out of his rifle by trading something for it. Frank never would tell what he got in the trade. He hiked back to his cabin without his gun.

Between 1954 and 1958 Moreland spent most of his time in a cabin on private land at Milk Creek about eight miles below Canyon R.S. It was much too small and broken down for good winter shelter, so he would just move into the Canyon R.S. during the winter.

Moreland spent part of one winter with Perd Hughes at his homestead cabin. Hughes worked at logging and other jobs in summer and hunted mountain lions with dogs in winter. Moreland accompanied him on his cat hunting trips. Hughes later related to Skip Stratton Moreland's unerring ability to find his way back to the cabin from anywhere on the mountain. He also reported Moreland skipped taking food on some trips depending instead on venison he had cached in the vicinity.

During the winter of 1954-55, Moreland caused a big stir with a letter accusing the Forest Service (Canyon Ranger) of poisoning elk with porcupine control blocks. He claimed there were 75 dead elk around his "Milk Creek Substation." A subsequent check of the bone marrow and stomach contents of these elk by Ranger Stratton, Chuck Kern, and Idaho Fish & Game biologist Mel Francis revealed they died of starvation. This was a common problem in the river bottom during heavy snow years and fewer than 25 dead animals were found.

Bill Moreland was a man of contrasts. He was friendly with Perd Hughes, Skip Stratton, various district personnel, and me. He met and occasionally talked to Skip's family and my wife and four children. He was given snuff by district people and sometimes asked them to buy him a roll of snuff in town. He even had our trail foreman buy him a deer tab in the fall of 1955, although he lived on deer much of the year. Moreland always wore long johns and multiple castoff shirts, the outer ones without sleeves. He always smelled smoky from his cooking fires.

Moreland now spent a lot of time in the summer writing letters and casually leaving them at the Ranger Station. He would come by, talk with people awhile, and then leave. Later we would find one of his letters on the front porch. His letters became more hostile and were filled with dirty language and accusations. His venom was directed at the sheriff, Ralph Space, Dwain Space and Floyd Cowles, the new Canyon ranger.

He disliked tall people and he especially disliked Cowles and the .357 Magnum he carried some of the time. He always asked me if the ranger was still carrying "that big pistol."

Cowles arrested Moreland in the winter of '55-56 for trespassing but he was released when the U.S. District Attorney refused to prosecute. In 1957 he was again arrested and brought to town. This time his case was turned into a sanity hearing. His many hasty letters signed as "Agent in Charge, Milk Creek Substation" finally did him in. The judge asked Moreland if he ever received an official appointment for the title he claimed? "No!" "Were you paid for your work?" "No!" "How did you get a Forest Service key?" His answer, "They sent it to me down the river from the Ranger Station on a raft." (He had his own key made from a tobacco can and used it with a thin knife.)

Finally the judge ruled him insane and ordered him taken away. Moreland protested, "But I've got a lot more to tell you!" Thus ended the problem of Moreland's repeated arrests and releases from jail between 1945 and 1956.

Still, each spring as the weather got warmer; Moreland would just walk away from the mental hospital and return to Canyon and the Milk Creek cabin he called home. He usually beat the ranger out to the district by one or two days. This happened several times while I was ranger between 1958 and 1962. When we located him, we would call the sheriff and a deputy would pick him up and return him to the state hospital. Where did Moreland go after 1963? My guess is that they took his pencil and paper away too many times. So he just picked up some gold he had cached someplace and left the country.

SLEEPING CHILD FIRE RECALLED

August marked the 20th anniversary of the largest wildfire in the Bitterroot NF's history – the Sleeping Child Fire. The following story on that fire was written by the Bitterroot's information officer, Tina Schwartzman August 1981

Temperatures over 100 in early August, high winds, and a dry lightning storm on August 4, 1961, resulted in the largest wildfire in the Bitterroot Forest's history – the 28,000 acre Sleeping Child Fire. It took about 2,400 firefighters, 1,000 overhead personnel, 40 bulldozers, 42,000 gallons of fire retardant, 56 miles of fire line, and $2.4 million to bring the fire under control.

Lightning set off the blaze at 4 p.m., August 4, just south of the fluorspar mine on the Darby Ranger District in the Sapphire Range. By 7 p.m., 300 acres had burned; 36 fire fighters stayed in the mine that night while the flames consumed another 200 acres by daybreak.

On August 5th it was 101 degrees, and another spot fire flared up about one-half mile south of the main blaze. Gusty winds up to 70 mph fanned both fires, causing a major blowup. Over the radio at noon came a special "red flag" weather forecast. At that point, 350 men and 10 dozers were battling the wildfire. By evening, 9,000 acres were destroyed.

High winds blew day and night for 10 days and the fire burned out of control until August 13, devastating nearly 31 square miles of Forest lands. During those 10 days, 48 other fires burned on the Bitterroot Forest. (That summer, burning conditions on the Forest had reached a severe level by mid-June. Precipitation was well below normal. August 4 to 6, with temperatures reaching 101 degrees, were the hottest 3 successive days in 30 years. The season chalked up 222 fires.)

The fire ignited on a steep slope in the Sleeping Child drainage where the ground was covered with dead lodgepole pine. Nearly 80 percent of the mature trees had been killed by the mountain pine beetle epidemic in the late 1920's. The decomposed downfall ignited easily, sustained fire, and burned completely with explosive violence, sustaining a 40,000-foot column of smoke.

Slopes were steep, with narrow ridges and deep draws - - difficult terrain for fighting fire. Access was limited to trail, and dead material on the ground made cross-county travel extremely difficult.

Where the fire burned hottest, grass, brush, and trees were totally stripped from the land, baring soil in the headwaters of four drainages – Sleeping Child, Rye, Cameron and Martin Creeks. Fallen trees plugged stream channels. Nearly 600 million board feet of timber was gutted. Extensive denuded areas in the vast watershed were of immediate concern, as the following spring's thaw could ravage the unprotected soil. So rehabilitation began immediately after the fire was brought under control. Stream

channels were cleared, check dams built, roads rehabilitated, and the entire area seeded to grass.

Two Ford tri-motor planes spread about 180 tons of grass seed in 10 days, as the weather stayed clear. Six species (annual rye, hard fescue, timothy, orchard grass, smooth brome, and white Dutch clover) were mixed in two local grain elevators. Mixing took 4 days. The planes were loaded with one-and-a-half tons of seed, and flown some 75 to 150 feet above the still-smoking mountains. The following spring the blackened burn was transformed into a green carpet.

High temperatures from the fire opened millions of lodgepole pine cones and the seedlings took hold. In some areas, as many as 50,000 seedlings per acre were counted in 1971.

Today, the Sleeping Child burn is thick with lodgepole pine, and thinning is a continual job. The Sleeping Child fire – a reminder of nature's awesome power also illustrates fire's role in renewing the forest resources.

TAKING CATTLE OUT THROUGH LAKE COMO

By Don Williams

I was 17 years old when I went to work for the Bitterroot Forest in 1944. The Moose Creek Ranger District was on the Bitterroot then with A. B. Gunderson, Ranger. Bob Henderson was the second alternate in charge of the old Bear Creek Station where I was assigned.

I was the trail crew foreman for one of two trail crews on the Bear Creek end. I got to know Sid Poppe quite well, also Phil Shearer. One evening Sid asked me if I wanted to go with him to visit Phil. I agreed – so we walked to his place. Phil was sitting on his front porch and greeted us as we walked up. We shook hands and he offered us a chair. Both Sid and Phil rolled their Prince Albert smokes in brown paper. (I had Bull Durham!) After about an hour of sitting and smoking in silence Sid finally said, "Phil, you talk too damn much." We walked back home to Bear Creek. That's the way they visited and enjoyed each other's company.

That fall in early September Bob Henderson asked me if I would be willing to help Phil Shearer take his cattle out to Darby by way of Bear Creek, Paradise Creek, to Belle Lake and down Rock Creek to Lake Como.

It took us about 4-5 days. In the evenings around the campfire Phil would loosen up and talk a little. He told me about Martin trapping and making bootleg whisky. He said the Revenuers tried many times to catch him packing out whisky to the Bitterroot Valley. Phil would leak out the word he was coming out Bear Creek to Lost Horse and he would go out over Elk Summit – or out through Paradise. Said he made about $5000.00 between the whisky and trapping. He would then go to Butte and rent a room in the big Whore House. He bought all the supplies he needed for the winter and then spent all the rest of the money enjoying his sex and booze.

When we crossed the divide at Belle Lake there was a large fire burning (138 acres). We took the cattle down Rock Creek about a mile to camp for the night. The Ford tri-motor dropped 8 jumpers on the fire. The next day we trailed the herd the 16 miles to Lake Como, where other friends met Phil. I went on to Darby and about 0300 the next morning led a 25-man crew back up Rock Creek to Belle Lake. That was the last time I saw Phil Shearer.

In 1945 I pulled a full string out of Bear Creek most of the summer. Jack Parcell was back as Ranger at Moose Creek. (Gundy went to the rubber project in California.) Bob Henderson went to the Army, and Dave Langley and his wife were at Bear Creek.

In June I took all of our stock to Moose Creek for shoeing – about 16 head. I was not a "shoer" so I was to take Bill McCouns string, loaded with bridge materials to Three Links. There were 8 to 19 German SS prisoners of war at Moose Creek to build the bridge. A Region One bridge foreman was in charge of the construction. (Don't

remember his name.) Fred Parks was Headquarters Guard and his wife was the cook for Moose Creek Ranger Station. She cooked on that old wood stove for a number of years.

At breakfast I sat at a round table with the German SS. Mrs. Parks brought us a big plate of hot cakes fresh off the griddle and sat it on the table. A long arm came from every direction and before I could open my mouth all pancakes, bacon and eggs were gone. Mrs. Parks, seeing my dilemma, brought me a special plate – all for me. The bridge crew left about an hour before we had our 2 strings loaded and started down the trail. I was in the lead string when we caught up with the crew at Halfway Creek flats. They had a mule on each end of the main bridge cables carrying the buttons. Scattered between were SS carrying the cable on their shoulders. They heard us coming and all stepped down into the brush to clear the trail. When I pulled alongside they all raised up in unison to see the pack strings. Well, they also saw a little rodeo – the whole outfit was spooked! It took us almost an hour to get settled down and reloaded. That was the beginning of the Three Links Bridge. I heard later the SS troops enjoyed the work but were scared to death of rattlesnakes.

I went to the Nezperce in 1964 as Fire Staff and was there until 1970 when I went to the Regional Office in Fire Control. In 1967 we had a tough fire season. Three men were injured by rolling rock on one fire and were in the Grangeville hospital. I went up to visit them and in the same room was Sid Poppe. We visited quite awhile and he showed me a picture of him taken over on the Hi-Line in Montana. Three or four cowpokes were in front of a sod shanty in woolly chaps – one was Charley Russell, the famed western artist.

Sid was a little guarded about telling me what was ailing him so I didn't pry. About a year later he shot himself at his home in Kooskia. He was suffering from lung cancer.

TRADITIONS AND ANECDOTES

By Larry Cron

When I was a sophomore in ROTC at Oregon State in 1959, I was part of a special Air Force drilling unit called Silver Wings. You know, one of those fancy outfits that showed up to entertain folks at half-time of high school basketball games wearing white gloves, white spats, and white hats with summer tans and braid hanging from the shoulders. We did fancy formations and twirled our rifles and threw them to each other. We were supposed to march smoothly without bobbing up and down. Several times in practice on campus our drill instructor called a halt and made me march up and down in front of the whole drill team to demonstrate not bobbing up and down, and he exhorted the others to march like I marched. After these demonstrations there were always one or two who asked me how I was able to walk like that. The only answer I could give was that while I was growing up my father, Robert H. (Bob) Cron, would take me with him while working in the woods and, if I was going to keep up with him, I didn't have any time for bobbing up or down, it had to be flat out.

My father was noted for many years for his walking. I believe he walked from home to the office his entire working career, except perhaps that last six years here in Missoula. I know he did from 1946 to 1964, and rain, sleet, or snow would not dissuade him from his habit. I've been told by numerous sources that he had a tradition while timber staff on the Modoc and supervisor on the Kootenai of taking new foresters out for a test walk. I suspect that what they learned from the experience was not so much based on the physical ability or endurance required to survive the test with some measure of grace and dignity, but more likely, they learned that he expected them to move it and get something done in the time they spent in the field. For Bob Cron his feet and legs were not made for ambling or strolling, they were for picking up and putting down to get from one place to another without wasting valuable time that could be put to better use in locating a corner, marking timber, catching fish, or getting to where the hunt was going to start. One of his noted walking paths was along the sidelines of the high school football field on the opposing teams' side of the field so that he could have a line of scrimmage view of every play. And, somewhat to the irritation of opposing coaches, he was not exactly quiet while engaging in being his own moving cheering section.

There were other traditions associated with Dad that I learned from him while growing up. I remember once going out to look at some young timber stands north of Sugar Hill on the Modoc, not far from Buck Creek Ranger Station. Probably due to the failure of the previous user of the Forest Service sedan, we ran out of gas. The problem then became how to get gas without anyone, or, at least as few people as possible, knowing that we had run out of gas. Why? Because running out of gas was simply a no-no. It just wasn't done. And he was sure to hear about it and suffer embarrassment in the future if word got out. So, I was sworn to secrecy. I believe the ranger at Buck Creek also knew about it because that was where we went to get the gas; but he (Red Giffen) was also sworn to secrecy. From this I learned something about a tradition of loyalty to one another in the Forest Service. There simply was little point in causing embarrassment or

an appearance of incompetence by spreading stories around about trivial things that have no good purpose in being revealed.

Another tradition was associated with our home life. While growing up through elementary and high school on the Modoc, it was common to have visitors from the RO as well as new people on the forest and my father's co-workers to dinner or occasionally over for a poker game. My father's house rule was that they didn't talk business while socializing at home. I suspect he maintained that pretty much the same as a supervisor and timber staff director. While this personal tradition was perhaps just that, personal, I suspect it served a very practical purpose in not only separating home and social life from work but also in avoiding idle rambling, gossip, and inappropriate talk about subjects, which should be reserved for the work place. I think my father also believed that the work place was for work and the home was for home and social life; and, perhaps, that the two were not to mix in order to avoid confusion or misinterpretation.

Another tradition associated with my father was his professional quirk of expecting himself and others to know the scientific names of trees, shrubs, and bugs. Some who knew Bob Cron probably didn't know that his under-graduate degree was in entomology and only his graduate degree was a master of forestry. So he had a big leg up in knowing the bugs; and he worked at learning the Latin names of the flora wherever he worked. It was important to him that foresters know their stuff, and part of knowing their stuff was to know the Latin names of the trees, brush and other flora.

Well, those are just a few anecdotes about some traditions from the past that were associated with one of our predecessors. Perhaps those of you who knew Bob Cron may remember some others; and I'm sure each of you have big and little traditions related to other old-timers. Anyway, that's enough for now, thanks for listening.

TRUE BLUE MULE

By Ralph Kizer

This is a true story. I'm not making any of it up!

In 1961, when I was the Ranger at Superior, an elderly hunter was lost somewhere in the upper Burdette drainage, a tributary of Fish Creek. A massive search in a heavy snowstorm was fruitless. Deep snow made it impossible.

In the spring of 1962, when most of the snow was gone, Mineral County Sheriff Francis Tamiette, Game Warden Bill Harriman, our packer Tom Vann and I packed in to the head of Burdette Creek to search it out again. We had horses and three mules.

We picked a place to camp for a couple of nights - - an old burned-over area – and started taking care of the mules and horses. There is where the "fun" began.

Tom took the last mule; a big black one named Powell, and looked for a suitable place to tie it up temporarily. About all there was left was a charred, small 5-inch diameter stump about five feet tall. Tom shook it to see if it would hold. He decided it would. It didn't!

Tom tied the mule to it. As he turned and walked away, the mule obviously didn't like the looks of that stump. It took a wary step toward it and sniffed it. Didn't like the smell of it, either. It took a quick step back, the halter rope became taut, and the stump snapped toward the mule. In sheer terror by now, old Powell jumped about three feet up and six feet backwards. The stump came up and out fast, and hit him right between the eyes.

He whirled and, with fierce, lunging jumps, headed toward town. Every time he jumped, the stump bounced up and hit him in the belly. In about 50 to 100 feet the stump broke off from the halter rope, and Powell disappeared out of sight down the trail. Tom, while forcefully expressing his dismay, leaped on his horse and gave chase.

For a couple of seconds everything went well. When Tom and his horse, at full gallop, came to the stump, he went from full speed ahead to reverse in a split second. He stopped and bucked Tom off. Tom invented a couple more words, jumped back on, got by the stump and was gone.

In about a half hour, Tom was back with Powell in tow. Harriman, Tamiette and I were still rolling around on the ground, wiping tears from our eyes. It would be a couple weeks before Tom saw much humor in the event.

We rode the backcountry for two days and sadly found nothing. But we couldn't exactly call the search uneventful.

VALUE OF THE FINAL REPORT

By Hoot Gibson

Some of the activities were major projects that required good planning, short nights, worrying and hard work. When they were completed, they were the highlights that you compared other projects to. Some were off duty activities that seemed routine but were the source of good memories much later in life. And then there was the rare incident that lasted only a few minutes, but immediately created lasting impressions.

In the late fifties and early sixties, I was the Ranger at Spearfish in the north end of the Black Hills National Forest. In September of '59, after an especially hot, dry and windy summer, a citizen on the west side of Deadwood decided to burn some waste paper in a burning barrel.

In about three hours the fire had burned 5400 acres and a number of houses, out buildings and businesses around Deadwood. Charley Hathaway was my neighboring Ranger, we had what crews that were available doing some flanking work, and control was out of the question right then. We met at the district boundary and caucused on what we might do immediately to save something. The post and pole yard came to mind. We drove over there and into the yard. There were post piles, buildings and equipment burning fiercely.

What got our immediate attention was the sight of two three-foot jets of blue flame coming out of the filler pipes of the saddle tanks on one of the trucks. We left the scene. The fire burned a large part of a steep drainage that drained through a fairly narrow creek bed that went through Deadwood. The next concern was for the City of Deadwood during the spring runoff.

It was the responsibility of the Soil Conservation Service to recommend the necessary treatment. The one they liked best was a series of large terraces at 25-foot vertical intervals. Some folks didn't think it was possible to build terraces on such steep hillsides but they didn't look much different than places I had located preliminary line for logging roads on the Shasta-Trinity Forest in northern California. We advertised for a contractor. The successful bidder showed up with 4 D-8 Cats with winter cabs and hydraulic blades and rippers. We went to work.

I hunted up the folder prepared by the Ranger long before when a gas pipeline through the area was installed. It was cleared and marked with signs. His final report stated, "The permit calls for this pipe line to be five feet deep, but some places it is only eighteen inches down, because of the rock in the area." That report and what happened later was one of the things that taught me the value of doing your homework. The day we started work the cat skinners were warned of the gas line and instructed not to build terraces across the right of way.

The following May, on the day the final quarter mile of terrace was being built, the Forest Engineer and I were standing on a road above the cat that was finishing the job.

The cat skinner had been in an accident and walked with crutches. Suddenly there was a sound like a jet airplane coming over a hill and right over our heads. The cat broke the pipeline right at the surface. The sound was eighty PSI of natural gas escaping. The cat skinner kicked the machine into neutral and in a few seconds he was standing next to the Engineer and me on the road. His crutches were still on the cat. The damage had hardly been repaired before the frowning, wringing of hands, scapegoat hunting and rumors of lawsuits abounded. A copy of that old Ranger's final report turned out to be the trump card in that game and everything soon simmer down.

We hired a couple of our fire crews from the Pine Ridge Reservation to plant 500 acres of the better sites to ponderosa pine seedlings and helicopter seeded most of the burn to grasses and legumes to anchor the soil in place.

The following December at the annual Forest Christmas Party where individuals received gifts recognizing their involvement in the year's Forest activities, I received a roll of friction tape from the Forest supervisor.

WE NEED A CLERK …

By Jim Freeman

Slate Creek Ranger Station was a brand new station, sitting between the small towns of Riggins and White Bird, Idaho, right in the depth of the Salmon River canyon. We were desperately in need of someone to run our office. We tried several people. Finally I remembered one lady who was a waitress at the Seven Devil's Café in Riggins. This young lady had come very close to getting an electrical engineering degree and was now married to a rancher, and lived up Rapid River, south of Riggins. She was making minimum wage and the way things were, she was required also to take one meal there at the café, which really cut into her earnings. And I thought, well, the worst she can do is say, "No". So I went down to see her and asked her if she would be interested in considering coming to work for the Forest Service and working with us at Slate Creek Ranger Station. She said, "Well, I'll talk to Bill and we'll see."

We made an appointment for several days later. In the meantime, I had a date to go up in the hills to go elk hunting with some friends. On the appointed day I rode down through a snowstorm to make this meeting. I met this woman in our home there at Slate Creek. We talked quite a little bit about what the job would mean and what she would have to do to really do justice to the job. She lived about 10 miles south of Riggins. Our ranger station was about 10 miles north of Riggins, so that meant that she had about a 20-mile drive to get to work each day. Remembering that this was back in the late 1950's, this was not a super highway that she was traveling. There was also the problem of her children attending the Riggins School system and she needed to have some sort of arrangement made that she could take the kids to school and then be able to pick them up again in the evening. In those days, adjusting anything out of the standard workweek was a really difficult situation, but we did it. What happened was that Betty would take her children to school, drive on up to Slate Creek to work, taking ½ hour for lunch. Then her kids would ride the afternoon school bus from Riggins that came up our way. Our station was at the end of the school bus line. They would bring the kids right on up to where Betty was working. When they got there, that was the end of Betty's workday. She'd sack them up and back down home they would go. It worked out very well.

Betty wound up working 30 years for the Forest Service, her name is Betty DeVeny. There was no question that Betty was responsible for a great deal of the success we had at Slate Creek. She would tackle almost anything reasonable that you asked her to tackle. We had logging trucks that would pull into the yard to be scaled and she'd run in, pull on a pair of jeans, run out with a scale stick and scale up the load of logs, write them down, and send the logger on his way. She'd record the weather data from the weather station. She'd help with the dispatching.

One particular incident stands out in my mind. One day we had a really hot lightning storm that came out of Oregon and set fires all across several districts there on the south end of the Nez Perce Forest. This was on a weekend. We had kept crews in on standby, but there were so many fires that we didn't have enough people for all the fires and there was a lot of chaos going on. We tried to recruit people and called local ranchers to come

in and pick up a smoke chaser pack and take on the job of getting on the fires. Things were pretty hectic. I noticed suddenly that there was a certain amount of calm coming over the office and when I had a chance, I stuck my head out of my office. There was Betty. It was on a Sunday. Nobody had called her. She lived 20 miles away over some not necessarily modern roads and I said, "Gosh, Betty, I didn't expect to see you, but I'm glad you're here." Her answer was, "We heard the thunder up there on Rapid River, and I thought you might need me." So there she was. She had a sense of duty and camaraderie, and she was there for us; we sure appreciated it. We all got back together about three days later after we had most of the smoke snuffed out and grinned at each other because everything had gone so well.

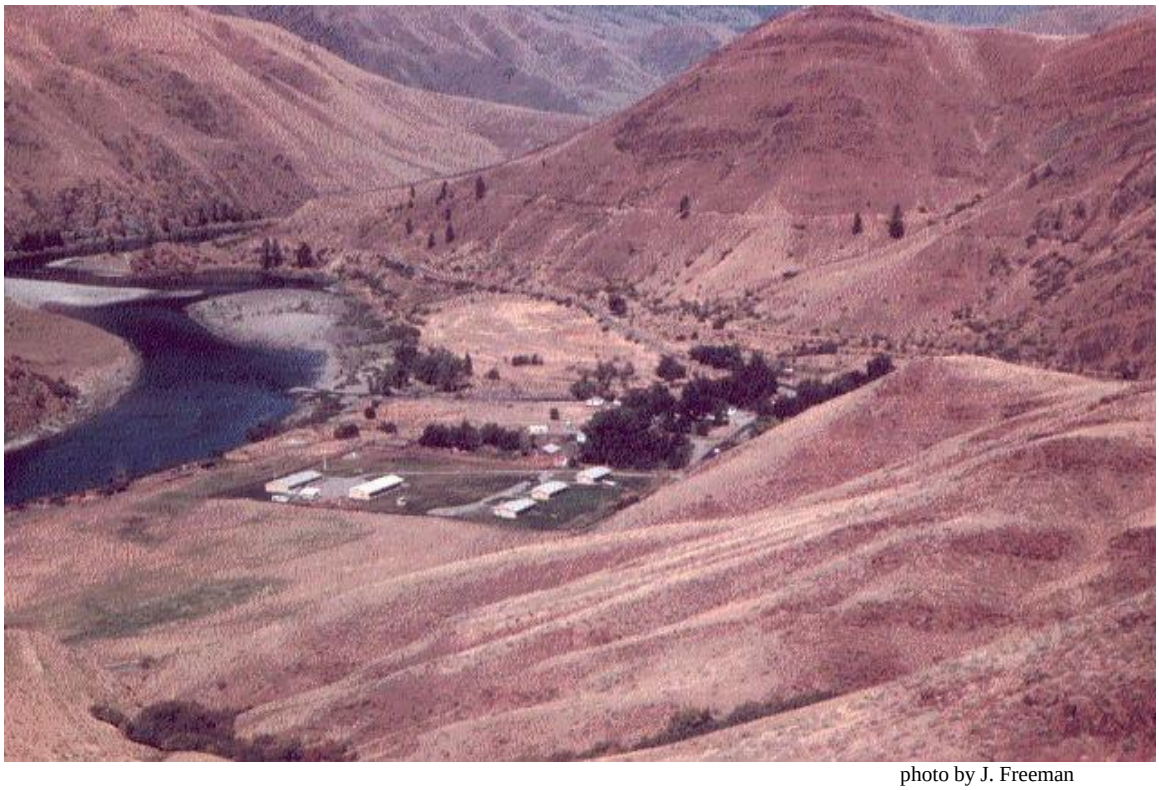


photo by J. Freeman

Slate Creek Ranger Station 1961

WILDERNESS

By Ralph Space

Defining “wilderness” is very difficult to do,
It means to me one thing -- and something else to you.
It is beauty; it’s solitude; it’s everlasting peace.
It’s nature at its finest -- where man-made changes cease.
To put it in one sentence, the very best I can;
It is a maximum of nature and a minimum of man.

I stand upon a mountain. I look out across the hills.
I’m awed by vastness; my heart within me thrills.
In the distance is a river and a myriad of creeks,
Row on row of ridges and lofty mountain peaks,
But there are no roads or houses in the area I scan
For it’s a maximum of nature and a minimum of man.

I sit beside my campfire when the sun is sinking low,
I hear an elk that bugles in a basin far below.
There’s a blue jay scolding and a raven’s raucous call.
Then a peaceful silence settles softly over all.
With just the wind a soughing as it has since time began,
It is a maximum of nature and a minimum of man.

I came upon a fall within a rushing mountain stream.
There the mist is flying, and the crystal waters gleam.
In a pool some trout are swimming and close by an ouzel sings.
Above the roar of falling water, his multinoted ballad rings.
The water swirls and eddies just as it always ran.
There’s a maximum of nature and a minimum of man.

I walk within a forest where few other men have trod.
I feel a part of nature. I’m much closer to my God.
I bow my head and humbly tell my gratitude
For nature and its wonders, for peace of solitude,
For the privilege to be a part of God’s plan
In a maximum of nature with a minimum of man.