



# PONY TRACKS

Newsletter of the Northwest Montana Posse of Westerners

Vol. 8, No. 4

Kalispell, Montana

May 10, 2021

*Richard Hull, Editor and Printer's Devil*

## MAY MEETING

**Monday, May 17, 2021**

**Topic:** "Dynamic Montana in Time Lapse"

**Presenter:** Doug Ammons of Missoula, Montana

**Where:** The Red Lion, 20 North Main, Kalispell, Montana

**Time:** 5:15 pm Grab 'n' Greet and book signings  
6:00 pm - Dinner  
7:00 pm - Presentation

**Dinner:** Until further notice, buffet services are being discontinued. A limited number of dinner plates will be offered to include side dishes, beverages and dessert. Plates will be ordered directly from the wait staff.

**Dinner Reservations:** Call (406)752-9642 (leave message with names and phone number); or send email to [kbrittonrn@gmail.com](mailto:kbrittonrn@gmail.com) with the same information.

**Reservation Deadline: Wednesday, May 12, at 9:00 p.m.**

Posse members may join the program through Zoom by contacting [tim.chris@yahoo.com](mailto:tim.chris@yahoo.com) for registration and instructions.

## ABOUT THE PRESENTATION



Watch as Doug Ammons reveals the startling changes from then to now through the magic of time-lapse video



*Images courtesy of Doug Ammons*

Montana historian Doug Ammons presents "Dynamic Montana in Time Lapse", illustrating part of a new method he has been working on to retell our history, which uses early photos to create videos showing detailed historical change.

Coupled with his story-telling, these videos bring history back to life in a way that makes

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the viewer gasp in wonder.

The presentation focuses on the period from the 1870s to the 1920s, which is the most dramatic time in our history, as the wilderness was transformed into our modern world .

The method Doug uses changes one's perspective of our history, and visualizing how Montana has changed over time. Rather than verbal descriptions and sketches or even individual photographs, the time lapse videos show change in a way that doesn't require descriptions. It reveals the dynamic historical change, and it does so in a way that the change feels a part of one's own experience.

Starting with striking videos illustrating scenes across Montana, Doug then focuses on the greatest concentration of change, which took place in Butte.

There are scenes of the mines, businesses, and neighborhoods as a ramshackle small gold rush town grew into an industrial city like no other, and then fades from its zenith.

The show is guaranteed to be eye-opening as well as bring laughs and cheers for the amazing vitality of Montana's past.

This is Doug's repeat visit to the Posse. Last May he presented the well-received "A Darkness Lit by Heroes" about the 1917 Speculator-Granite Mountain mine fire.

### *About the Presenter*

Doug Ammons attended the University of Montana for degrees in mathematics and physics, and his PhD in experimental psychology, and has pursued many other interests such as geology and history. He is an award winning author, Emmy Award winning cinematographer, scientific editor, award winning adventure story-teller, and extreme kayaker.



## FROM THE SHERIFF'S SADDLEBAG



Looks like Northwest Montana is adjusting to a new social normal and applying some new lessons-learned techniques for the better. Our April meeting on the beginnings of Libby, MT was well attended and we added several new members for the Libby area.

We have several new and exciting programs coming later in 2021. One of the most exciting is the one for this month where you will never look at history as boring again.

Stay tuned for more exciting program news developments for 2022.

We are surprised and disappointed as to the large number of regular members who have not yet renewed the 2021 membership. Since the grace period deadline has past, those former members will not be receiving this newsletter. If you see any those past members, please ask them to submit their dues.

Due to the low dinner turnout at the Posse meetings, we will no longer serve meals buffet style but rather shifting to a small, select order form style where the entree is ordered directly from the Red Lion wait staff. Salads, some side dishes, beverages, and desserts will be available from buffet tables.

We will continue in our spirit of having fun, so historical or hysterical attire will be promoted at each meeting. Period attire is not mandatory and is entirely optional, of course, but greatly encouraged.

Raffle items and history themed book signings will be available during the Grab 'n' Greet session. Hope to see each of you at our May meeting on the 17th.

**Please bring a friend/neighbor, a historic photographer, an 'old fart,' a student, .....or one of each.**

## GENERAL MEETING INFORMATION

NMPW's meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of the month, except the months of December and January, at the Red Lion, 20 North Main, Kalispell, Mt. (East end of the Kalispell Center Mall).

All meetings begin with a Grab 'n' Greet for a chance to 'chew the fat' and to get acquainted, followed by the evening meal, and a postprandial presentation pertaining to Western history.

- Evening meals are open to both members and nonmembers. **Dinners require advance reservations.** Pay for the meals at the door upon arrival!
- Walk-in seating in the 'peanut gallery' for the presentation will be available free to all Posse members and youths under 16 and \$5 each for all non-members.
- There will be our usual raffle for door prizes.
- Local history authors will sign book
- Attire: Period or historical encouraged, but not required.

## FUTURE PROGRAMS

**June:** Monday, June 21, 2021  
Program: **Lewis & Clark Expedition - To the Pacific (Part 3 of a series)**  
Presenter: Hal Stearns of Missoula, Montana.

**July:** Monday, July 19, 2021  
Program: **Early Flyers and Aviation History in Montana (Part 2)**  
Presenter: Bryan Douglass of Missoula, Montana.

**Notice: The grace period for 2021 Membership Dues has expired. The Pony Tracks newsletter was not sent to those former members.**

## TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE MONTH

**Tim Christianson** scored again with the answer to the last month's trivia question about who was the Libby that gave the town its name.

In 1861 a group including Stephen Allen and Jack Sherry prospected on what is now Libby Creek. It was suggested that the creek be named after Allen, but he held out for naming it after his daughter, Elizabeth. A nearby creek was named after Sherry, only to become spelled Cherry.

There are alternative stories - a Captain Libby who was killed near the creek about 1871, and a red-headed "sporting woman" in the mining camp.

### This Month's Question

(Answer in next month's newsletter.)  
Famed artist Charlie Russell had a studio and summer home on private property on Lake McDonald. Which historic Montana politician had a cabin nearby?

Submit your answer to Ye Editor at [richardahull@charter.net](mailto:richardahull@charter.net) and we will print the names of all who submit an answer with special notice for those who get it right.

## NEW MEMBERS

The following new member recently joined the Posse:

**DeLain Kerney** of Kalispell  
**Peggy Rambo** of Libby  
**Mark and Sandra Fennessy** of Whitefish  
**Carl and Linda Haywood** of Thompson Falls (reinstated)

We would like to thank Posse members **Mike and Deborah Burris**, who contributed to the Live-Streaming Equipment Fund.

## FROM YE EDITOR'S DESK

By Rick Hull  
Photos by Rick Hull

You may live in a historic home and not know it.

There are 146 buildings, properties, districts, landmarks and one boat on the National Register of Historic Places in Flathead County.

Sixty-three of these in Kalispell. In my neighborhood, Fifth Avenue West has ten historic homes, Fourth Avenue West has four and Eighth Avenue West another four. The



The Houtz House on 5th Avenue West was built in 1899.

Kalispell eastside is grouped into a single district, with only a handful of homes described individually.

There are some surprise listings, including the empty shop at 313 Second Avenue West or the Brice Apartments on Second Avenue East.

The National Register of Historic Places was created by Congress in 1966, and is handled by the National Park Service. No restrictions come with the designation, other than for some federal loans. In fact, several Kalispell buildings have been torn down after they were placed on the list.

The easiest place to find local listings is on Wikipedia. The website is:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National\\_Register\\_of\\_Historic\\_Places\\_listings\\_in\\_Flathead\\_County\\_Montana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Register_of_Historic_Places_listings_in_Flathead_County_Montana)

It brings up an alphabetical table with a current photo of most listings. Clicking on the property's name links to a brief article. More detailed information is under the ID number, such as #86000155 for the

Polebridge Mercantile.

For most Kalispell sites, the information was prepared by local historian Kathy McKay in 1992-93. Her detailed narrative gives a biography of the early owners. For Boyd's Shop (now The Forge), she writes, "Paris Boyd was born in 1871 at Noble, Illinois. His father died when he was 14, and he supported his family. In 1898 he married Emma Bryant in Indiana, and they came to Kalispell in 1908. The Boyds had three children."

Her history often contains added gems, such as, "This site was part of Kalispell's Chinatown in the 1890s. The lot was occupied by 1892 by a steam laundry, with a Chinese laundry and dwellings on the west end of the lot."



Boyd's Shop, as photographed in 1992 by Kathy McKay for the National Register of Historic Places application.



The same building today, after being remodeled as The Forge and the Desoto Grill.

Outside of town, you can look up details on the Cattle Queen Snowshoe Cabin or the Heaven's Peak Fire Lookout in Glacier National Park. To cast your net wider, Google "national register of historic places montana" and pick the Wikipedia website.

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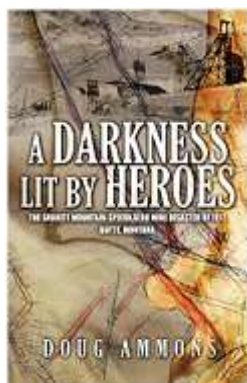
## CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Members aware of events not listed here are encouraged to contact Ye Editor with the particulars at [richardahull@charter.net](mailto:richardahull@charter.net)

- June 2 : Montana History Book Club will discuss *River With No Bridge* by Karen Wills. Meet at 2 p.m. in the Northwest Montana History Museum in Kalispell
- October 8 & 9: Westerners' International Third Annual Gather and 75th Los Angeles Corral in Los Angeles. Details coming.

## FROM THE BOOK SHELF



*A Darkness Lit By Heroes - The Granite Mountain-Speculator Mine Disaster of 1917* by Doug Ammons. This book has a five-star rating on Amazon. Based on over 600 pages of eye-witness testimony, it covers the largest hard-rock mining accident in the U.S.

Water Nymph Press, 2017. \$22.00 233 pages



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# The Lost City of Glacier National Park

By Rick Hull

If you know where to look on Google Maps satellite view, you can see the grid of former streets — so technically this lost city of Glacier National Park is visible from space. Consisting of 375 lots, it sits deep in the woods at the base of Apgar Mountain. It is just northwest of Blankenship Bridge where the North Fork and Middle Fork meet.

But don't expect it to be featured soon on a four-part special on the Discovery Channel. The street were never paved, only a handful of structures built, and certainly there was never a post office or down town. The town existed largely in the imagination of the developer — and buyers.

Little remains of this mystery town. Forest fires have destroyed the buildings, fallen trees block the only access road, and a key bridge has been wiped out by a flood. Access is now a lengthy trek by foot. The only remaining structure is a small, futuristic dome, visible on Google Maps as a tiny white dot.



The only cabin in the subdivision in 2002.  
Photo by Lloyd Barrie of Barrie Appraisal

The city's name is Glacier Summer Sites and it was created in 1956. The 50 x 98 ft. lots were originally sold for \$200 each, or \$10 a month.

Glacier Summer Sites is not the only subdivision in the park. There are others near Polebridge, and Lake McDonald still has large pockets of private land, including the small town of Apgar.

However Glacier Summer Sites is perhaps the most audacious. It was created by Charlie Green, a developer and real estate agent based in Coram. Green wasn't shy — he published a four-volume biography and authored a steady barrage of letters to the editor of local newspapers in his time.

The period preceded Montana's Subdivision and Platting Act. Development required only filing the paperwork at the courthouse. No

planning office looked at the proposal and no public hearing required before the planning board. And Green went well beyond the typical subdivision, filing three adjoining plats to create a new town.

Private lands in national parks are known as inholdings. All are on homesteads and purchases made before the parks were created. When Glacier National Park came into existence in 1910, virtually all the land between West Glacier and Apgar was privately owned. There is still a motel, shops and numerous summer homes on along that corner of Lake McDonald. Even upper McDonald Creek up to the falls was in private hands, and old timers remember the motel in the woods east of Lake McDonald Lodge.

Some of the original cabin owners on Lake McDonald, like Kalispell Mayor C.W. Whipps, were among the earliest advocates of the park. But many treated their inholdings as nothing special.

Posse member **Bill Dakin** said Green clearcut his property on Apgar Mountain, enraging park officials with the visible scars. And Posse member **Arne Boveng** has picture of a bridge across the Middle Fork that the Lee Brothers built when they were logging their holdings in the park.

The National Park Service originally saddled the private land with restrictions designed to force to the landowners out. Most of the area along lower McDonald Creek ended up in government hands.

But property owners in Yosemite Park organized the National Parks Inholders Association in 1978 and fought back. The group has since renamed itself the American Land Rights Association, and spread its mission to cover other issues involving federal lands.

Local court cases have allowed Glacier National Park inholders to build homes or even win the right for motorized access to isolated sites.

In 2017, private inholdings accounted for 2.6 million acres of the 84.6 million acres in national parks.

The National Park Service switched to only pursuing willing sellers. But federal red tape, including special appraisals, and the need to find the funding, means properties are often snatched up before park officials can act. However Glacier Park has managed to acquire all but 12 of the Glacier Summer Sites. A friend of Dakin acquired one lot through a tax-deed, and Dakin handled the sale to the park.

I first learned about the lost city as a newspaper reporter. In 1955, Quaker Oats

Glacier Summer Sites subdivision plat



A photo of the bridge the Lee Brothers built across the Middle Fork to log their property in Glacier National Park. Courtesy of Arne Boveng

had offered a deed to a square inch of Canada's Yukon Territory in return for cereal box top. Charlie Green took the idea, and during the 1964 Montana territorial centennial, had divided up a lot and starting selling square feet of Glacier National Park. The lots soon became delinquent for property taxes and 25 years later their unsure status was haunting the county Clerk and Recorders' office. A copy of a square-foot deed hung for years in the plat room, but it has since vanished, along with any details about the episode.

Later I went to work for Barrie Appraisal, which won repeated bids to value lots in Glacier Summer Sites when they came up for sale.

Glacier Summer Sites was accessed though Quarter Circle Bridge across McDonald Creek and then through the woods for another seven to eight miles. The town never consisted of much more than 40-foot-wide streets cleared through the forest. Eight streets ran north and south, two ran east and west.



View of 3rd Ave in 2012, after the Roberts Fire.

*Photo by Lloyd Barrie of Barrie Appraisal*

Posse member and summer ranger **Michael Ober** remembers when it was still possible to access townsite in four-wheel-drive truck.

Before the Roberts Fire of 2003, only two summer homes that had been built in the subdivision and one had burned.

For a while Glacier Summer Sites could be accessed by mountain bike.

But the 2003 fire destroyed most of the subdivision, and fallen trees made wheeled access almost impossible. In addition, a 1996 flood wiped out the bridge over Rudideau Creek, and beavers inundated another portion of the road.

The last time appraiser Lloyd Barrie went to site, he and a ranger had to canoe across the North Fork and hike in.

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**NORTHWEST MONTANA POSSE OF WESTERNERS**

c/o Clerk of the Posse, P. O. Box 10811, Kalispell, MT 59904.

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For submissions to the Posse Dispatch, contact the Editor by e-mail first for submission requirements.

The next issue of Pony Tracks will be issued June 14, 2021 (or thereabouts)

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