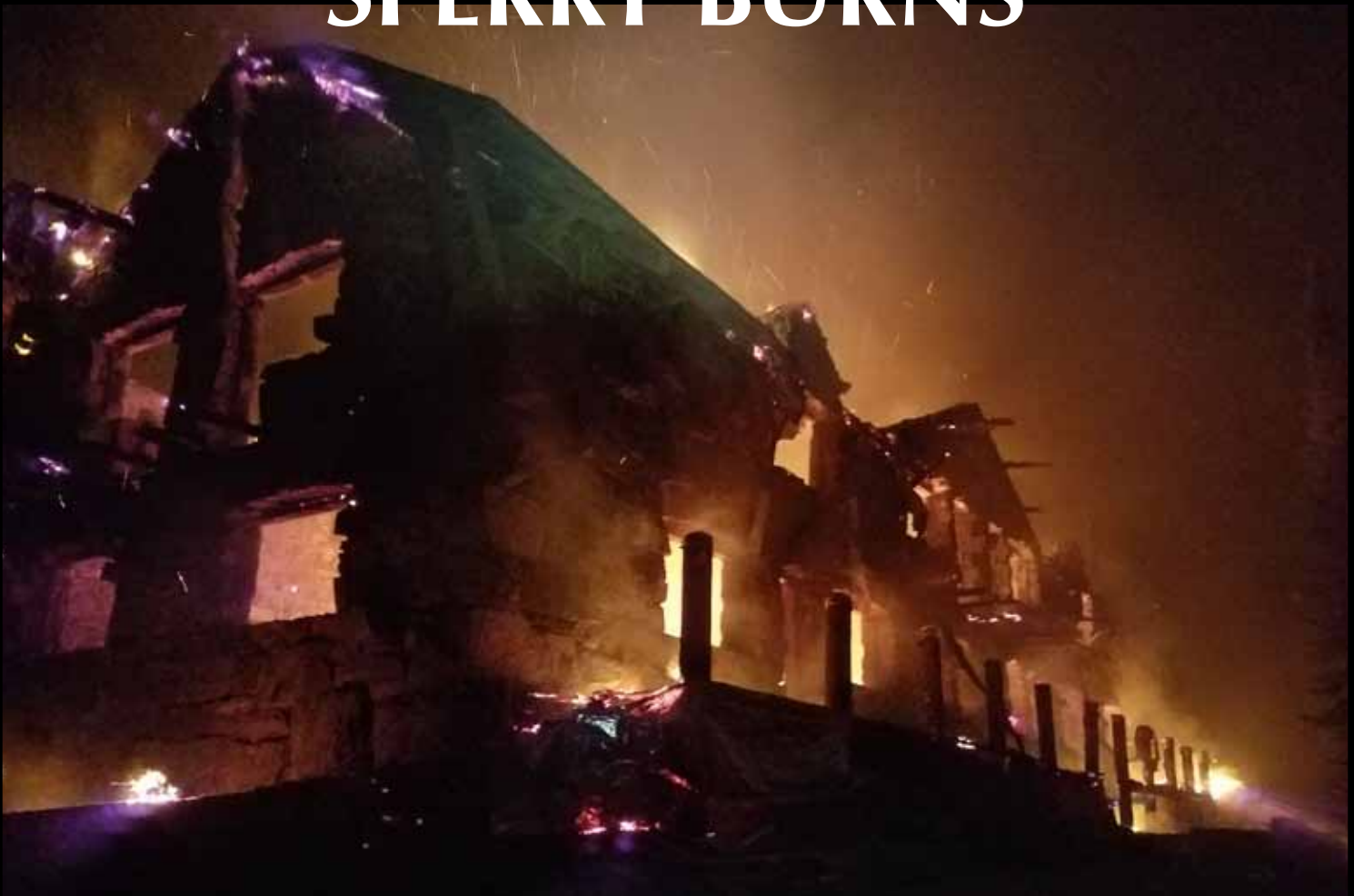


# THE INSIDE TRAIL



Voice of the Glacier Park Foundation □ Fall 2017 □ Volume XXXII, No. 2

## SPERRY BURNS



*(Photo courtesy of the National Park Service.)*

*In this issue:*

*• Wildfire in Glacier and Waterton • Lake McDonald Evacuated  
• Embers Shower the Prince of Wales • Remembering the Night  
of the Grizzlies • Death and Survival in Glacier • The Demise of  
the Chalets • Giants in Glacier • Jammer Tales • A Many Glacier  
Reflection • Unprecedented Traffic in the Park • The Twelve Days of  
Waiting • Inside News of the Summer of 2017*

# PARADISE LOST:

## *Traffic Congestion in Glacier*

The fires of August in Glacier Park generated national attention. Glacier veterans were shocked to hear that the fire had destroyed the main building at Sperry Chalets. Lake McDonald Lodge and its majestic cedar-and-hemlock forest lay exposed to destruction for weeks. The Prince of Wales Hotel, across the border in Canada, nearly burned. September finally brought deliverance, with much-prayed-for rain and snow.

These dramatic events drew attention away from a more mundane crisis in June and July. Overcrowding occurred on a startling scale,

beyond past experience in Glacier. The problem certainly will recur in future seasons. It poses a very difficult management challenge.

Glacier's charm always has rested in part on relatively light visitation. We've all thought complacently that Glacier is a cold park, far from large population centers, with limited lodging. We've given thanks that we don't have traffic jams like those in Yosemite and Yellowstone.

But no longer! Last July, Glacier drew more visitors than Yellowstone did. There was unprecedented crowding. Cars at the West Glacier

entrance sometimes were backed up onto Highway 2. Parking lots and campgrounds were filled by early morning. Emergency closures had to be imposed on traffic in the Swiftcurrent, Two Medicine and Bowman valleys.

Twenty years ago, the Glacier Park Foundation had a large role in developing Glacier's General Management Plan. We successfully advocated for a "status quo" baseline for Glacier's management. That baseline made good sense and reflected the desires of a vast majority of the visiting public.

The status quo is changing now, and management policies must be adapted. There will be no easy answers. The Park shouldn't undertake radical departures and restrictions on public use. But careful study, recalibration and creativity are essential, this winter and in the seasons ahead, to address effectively the dramatic increase in visitation to Glacier.

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*Overcrowding occurred on a startling scale, beyond past experience in Glacier. The problem certainly will recur in future seasons.*

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*The Glacier Park Foundation was formed by Glacier Park employees and visitors who have a deep love for this special place. The Foundation is committed both to the importance of wilderness preservation and to the importance of places like Glacier as classrooms where people can experience wilderness in intense meaningful ways, learning not only a love for the land, but also a respect that nurtures the skills necessary to preserve that land. The Foundation has a special interest in Glacier Park's history, traditions and visitor facilities.*

*The Inside Trail takes its name from the famous old trail which connected Glacier Park Lodge with the vanished chalets at Two Medicine, Cut Bank, and St. Mary. The name thus emphasizes the publication's focus on the lore and history of Glacier National Park. We invite submission of historical, scientific, or anecdotal articles, commentary, poetry, or artwork for publication in future issues.*

## WILD FIRE in Glacier and Waterton

A summer of crowds and broken attendance records in Glacier National Park ironically ended with much of the Park completely deserted. Extensive evacuation was forced by the Sprague Fire east of Lake McDonald. Sperry Chalets' historic main structure was burned by the fire, and Lake McDonald Lodge was menaced for several weeks.

Meanwhile, across border, the Kenow Fire ravaged Glacier's Canadian neighbor, Waterton National Park. The Waterton townsite was evacuated and the historic Prince of Wales Hotel was nearly burned. The dramatic events at Sperry and the Prince of Wales are described by Ray Djuff in the feature stories in this issue.

This was the fourth summer in fourteen years in which Glacier has lost prime vistas to catastrophic fires. In 2003, the Roberts Fire burned Howe Ridge on the west side of Lake McDonald, and the Trapper Fire burned the Loop Trail area. In 2010, the Red Eagle Fire ignited southeast of St. Mary Lake and consumed more than 30,000 acres around Divide Mountain and on the Blackfeet Reservation. In 2015, the Reynolds Fire burned miles of the Going-to-the-Sun Road corridor on the north side of St. Mary Lake.

These losses recall the apocalyptic forest fires of Glacier's early years. In 1910, in its very first summer, the Park lost 100,000 acres of forest (a tenth of its total area). In the 1920s,



*(Sperry photo courtesy of the National Park Service.)*

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*This was the fourth summer in fourteen years in which Glacier has lost prime vistas to catastrophic fires.*

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it lost another 100,000 acres to the Half Moon Fire and other conflagrations. (The early fires gave rise to many place names on the south side of the Park, including Firebrand Pass, Skeleton Mountain, Soldier Mountain, and Mount Despair.)

### **The Sprague Fire**

The crisis of 2017 began with a lightning storm on August 10. It touched off a fire in the Sprague Creek drainage below Mt. Edwards, a couple of miles from Lake McDonald. The fire was in steep

terrain where firefighters could not effectively work. Helicopters dropped water on the blaze, but were unable to put it out.

A rash of fires in the western U.S. had spread firefighting resources thin. For three weeks, fire managers sought to contain the Sprague Fire with limited personnel as its perimeter steadily spread.

On August 29, Xanterra Parks and Recreation (Glacier's concessioner) announced that Lake McDonald Lodge would be closed for the summer, a month ahead of schedule. The reason was that smoke from the Sprague Fire was settling thickly around the lodge.

Air quality monitors had registered "hazardous" readings. Xanterra was concerned for the safety of employees.

Glacier Park, Inc. had the same concerns, and closed its Motel Lake McDonald. The horse and boat concessions struggled on for a couple of days and then shut down.

On August 31, disaster struck. High winds drove the Sprague Fire rapidly eastward, more than doubling its size. An "ember storm" driven by the fire ignited Sperry Chalets' main building. The 103-year-old structure burned fiercely and was destroyed, leaving blackened stonework suggestive of London after the Blitz.

The Sperry Chalets have been an icon. Everyone familiar with Glacier is shocked and saddened by the main building's loss. The chalets

are reachable only by arduous uphill trails, seven miles from Lake McDonald or thirteen miles from Jackson Glacier Overlook, over Gunsight Pass and Lincoln Pass. Countless hikers recall relaxing at Sperry after weary miles on the trail, enjoying a pitcher of Kool-Aid and a slice of the chalets' famous pie.

Three days after the chalet was lost, the wind shifted to the east and drove the Sprague Fire in the direction of Lake McDonald. The Park Service ordered an evacuation from the south end of the lake to Logan Pass. The Mount Brown fire lookout, imminently threatened, was wrapped in protective materials. Other buildings also were wrapped, including the Lake McDonald residence of Montana's long-ago Senator Burton Wheeler (a famous isolationist in the '30s) and various patrol cabins.

Historic artifacts were removed from Lake McDonald Lodge, and defensive efforts were focused there. Firefighters from several communities in the Flathead Valley came to the lodge to assist with protection. A "Rain for Rent" system with roughly two miles of hose and high-capacity sprinklers was deployed around the lodge. A similar system was deployed at the Trail of the Cedars and Avalanche Campground. These systems were meant to cool the area, increase humidity and create a "rain forest" environment.

Meanwhile, the Sprague Fire made terrific runs down mountain slopes overlooking the lake. Nocturnal witnesses at Apgar, watching the fire ten miles away, described it as "like Christmas lights coming down," and expressed disbelief that it could be stopped. A witness to a run in the Lincoln drainage said that it was "like a bomb going off."

Smoke settled incessantly around Lake McDonald Lodge. Firefighters described it as "like soup," and had difficulty breathing. The smoke's diminishment of oxygen, however, dampened the fire and had a protective effect near the lodge.

In late September, rain and snow finally came to Glacier and beat the fire down. The majestic 500-year-old cedar-hemlock forest along Lake McDonald and in the Avalanche area was spared, as were all the structures on the lake. But thousands of acres of forest along the trail from the lodge to Sperry Chalets, on Mt. Brown, on Snyder Ridge, and in the Lincoln and Walton drainages were charred. And we all mourn the loss of the chalet.

### **Other Fires**

While the Sprague Fire was Glacier's most destructive blaze this year, other fires also impacted the Park. The Adair Peak Fire started on the ridge south of Logging Lake and burned some 4,000 acres. This fire forced the closure of several North Fork trails and campgrounds during late August and September.

The Elder Creek Fire started just north of Glacier in British Columbia and burned down into the Kishenehn Creek area in Glacier. South and west of Glacier, very large fires in the Flathead and Lolo National Forests destroyed many thousands of acres.

Because of the extreme fire danger, the Park Service completely suspended the issuance of backcountry permits in Glacier for two periods in late August and September. Hundreds of existing permits were cancelled.

Many trails in the Lake McDonald Valley, the North Fork, and the Goat Haunt area had to be closed.

Meanwhile, in Canada, the Kenow Fire blew eastward from British Columbia and devastated Waterton National Park. Flames sometimes billowed 400 feet high as it bore down on the Waterton townsite and the Prince of Wales Hotel. As Ray Djuff relates in subsequent pages, the town and the hotel were barely saved. Some 30 percent of the Park was burned.

### **Unprecedented Visitation**

Through June, July, and early August, before the onset of the fire, Glacier Park had unheard-of visitation. Emergency measures repeatedly had to be taken to deal with traffic congestion.

Lines of cars at the West Glacier entrance sometimes extended back for half a mile, through the townsite. The Park Service had to "flush" traffic, letting cars in free of charge. The east side entrances saw unprecedented volumes of traffic as well. The St. Mary entrance had more than a 60% increase in June 2017 compared to June 2016, even though Logan Pass had opened two weeks earlier in 2016.

The Logan Pass parking lot, always crowded at midday in previous summers, now sometimes was full by 8:00 AM. In August, the Park Service began imposing a time limit of an hour on about 60 parking spaces to let more visitors use the lot.

The Swiftcurrent Valley repeatedly

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*Sudden death in Glacier Park typically involves cliffs or treacherous water. This year a sudden tragedy was triggered by both.*

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experienced overflow traffic, with no parking spots at Many Glacier or at Swiftcurrent and cars parked along the road. The Park Service had to impose emergency shutdowns, stopping ingress completely or allowing one car in for one car out.

Parking problems were rife at Avalanche as well, with disorderly parking along the roadside. (In 2016, a car parked on the brink of the ditch tipped over!) “One car out; one car in” protocols had to be implemented at Bowman Lake, and Two Medicine experienced multiple closures.

The Park Service is pondering strategies for the future. Existing planning programs for Going-to-the-Sun Road and for wilderness management will focus on the traffic problem. Travel last summer was boosted by unusual factors, including the 150th anniversary of Parks Canada, low gas prices, and a robust economy. But increased traffic and congestion on the roads will almost certainly be a permanent

reality in Glacier.

### Tragedy at Haystack Creek

Sudden death in Glacier Park typically involves cliffs or treacherous water. This year a sudden tragedy was triggered by both.

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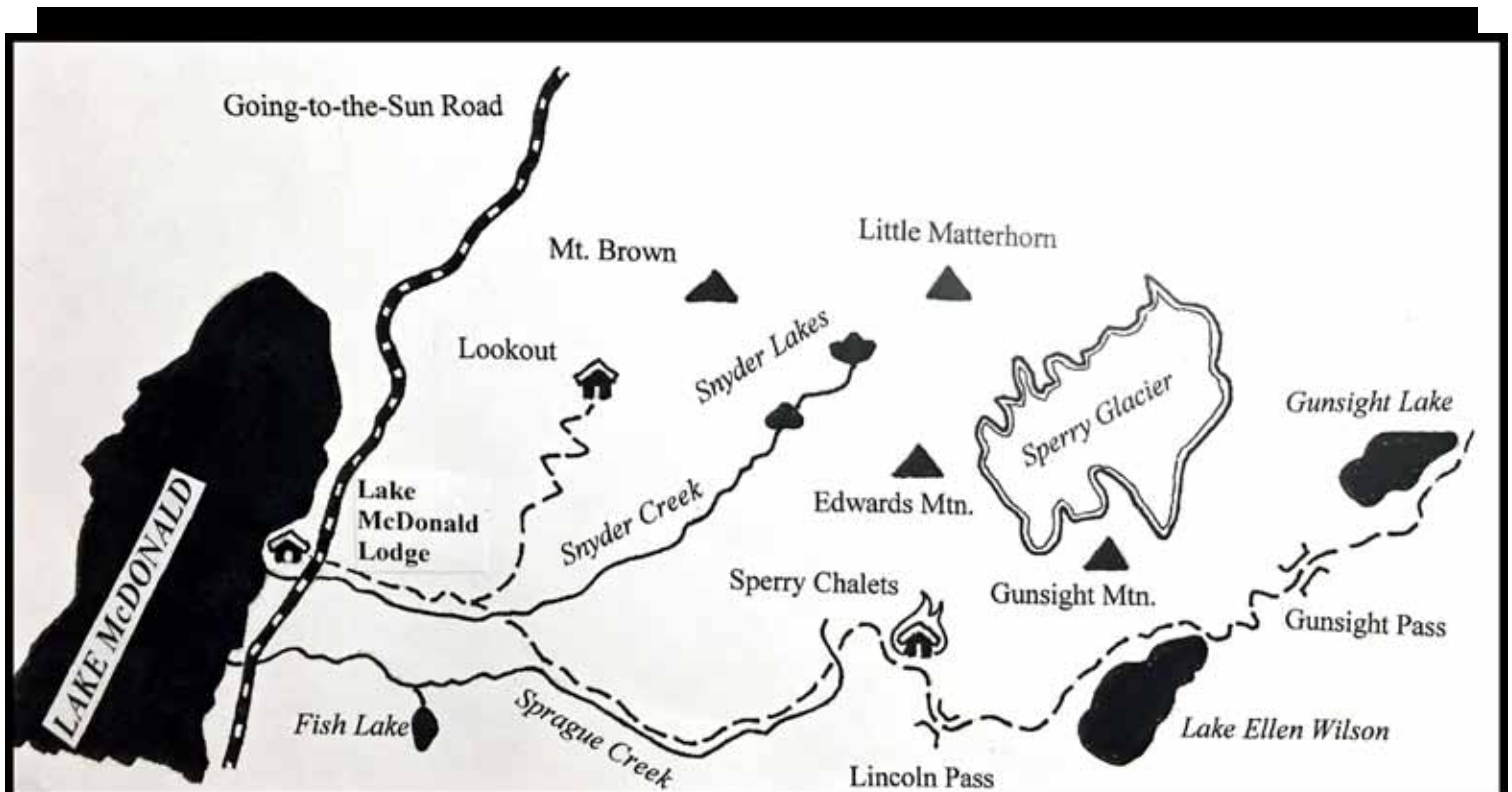
In late July, Robert Dunbar, 26, of Corvallis, Oregon, was travelling Going-to-the-Sun Road with his family. They alighted at Haystack Creek. Dunbar was taking photographs when he slipped and fell into the creek, which runs through a culvert under the road. Dunbar was carried through the culvert and washed over a cliff. He fell about a hundred feet to his death.

### “Tiny Homes” at St. Mary

Glacier Park, Inc. expanded its St. Mary Lodge facilities at the gateway to Glacier with a compound of ten “Tiny Homes.” These miniature cabins recall the cabins that Hugh Black used to build in a day when he

and his bride Margaret first established the St. Mary compound. They measure about 10’ by 20’, with a steeply arched roof that accentuates their miniature scale.

Unlike Hugh’s little white cabins, however, the Tiny Homes are brightly colored. A sliding barn-style door in the interior of each cabin separates the sleeping area from the living area. Each cabin has a separate bath house with sinks, showers, a toilet and a tub.



(Area of the Sprague Fire. Illustration by John Hagen)

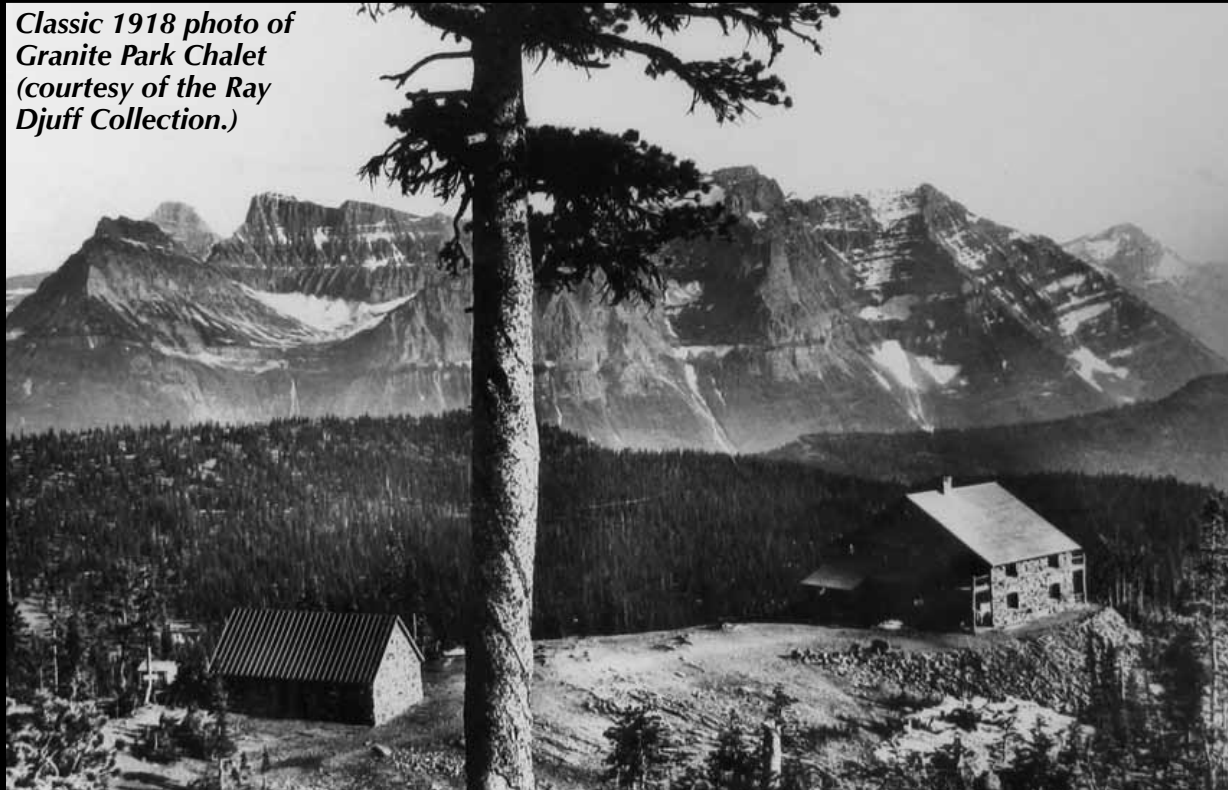
*Photo of Sperry Chalet, taken during better days. Upper right corner is view of the same building after the fire. (Photo courtesy of the Ray Djuff Collection.)*



*View of a Controlled burn on Upper Waterton Lake, conducted by Parks Canada, burning vegetation ahead of the fire's front, preventing the fire from spreading south into Glacier Park Photo taken September 12, 2017.*

*(Photo by Dan Rafla, Parks Canada)*

*Classic 1918 photo of Granite Park Chalet (courtesy of the Ray Djuff Collection.)*



# SPERRY BURNS

## ... but the historic structure may be rebuilt

By Ray Djuff (Prince of Wales 1973-75, '78)

As quickly as the Sprague forest fire destroyed the dormitory, or "hotel," building at Sperry Chalet on August 31, 2017, there was talk of rebuilding the historically significant structure. The morning after the fire, Doug Mitchell, newly appointed executive director of the Glacier National Park Conservancy, was talking with park superintendent Jeff Mow about the next step.

The Conservancy quickly established a \$90,000 emergency fund and hired DCI+BCE Engineers to come up with a stabilization plan for the damaged building. The Conservancy also pledged to buy supplies to do the stabilization work.

To support this work, go to <https://glacier.org/support-sperry-chalet/> or write to the Conservancy at P.O. Box 2749, Columbia Falls, MT 59912.

DCI+BCE Engineers is a Seattle-based structural and civil engineering firm, with offices in Missoula, Kalispell, Bozeman and Billings. It was consulted on repairs to Sperry Chalet after it was damaged by an avalanche in 2011.

Superintendent Mow told the *Missoulian* newspaper that it was too soon to know what the future holds for Sperry, but "this work represents the first step in assessing the extent of the damage to evaluate what future actions might be possible."

For U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke, a native Montanan and former U.S. representative for the

state, there was no doubt about the future. "Rebuilding Sperry is one of my top priorities," Zinke said in a news release from Glacier. "Today's announcement is the first step in that process." The sentiment was supported by both of Montana's U.S. senators, Jon Tester and Steve Daines.

The fire that gutted Sperry Chalet was caused by a severe thunderstorm on August 10 that saw some 150 lightning strikes setting off several small blazes in Glacier. One was in the Sprague Creek drainage on Edwards Mountain, east of Lake McDonald Lodge.

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The forest fire grew rapidly, from 10 to 101 acres within days of its discovery. It cut off access to Sperry Chalet along the trail from Lake McDonald, stranding chalet staff and 39 guests. The last guests to arrive at the hotel was a group of five women, among them Khi Soldano, daughter of Black-foot artist King Kuka (1946-2004).

In face of the growing fire threat and after consultations with the National Park Service, chalet manager Renee Noffke closed the building and led the staff and stranded guests to safety on Friday, August 11. They hiked out via Gunsight Pass, a 13.5-mile trek to Sun Road.

For Soldano and her four hiking partners, who had struggled over that same trail just two days before due to

being ill-prepared and ill-informed about the hike, the return trip was a daunting thought. "I wasn't sure if I could ever do that [hike] again," Soldano told the *Great Falls Tribune*. "Then that thought was thrown in my face. I'd have to do it again."

With the public evacuated from the Sperry region, a group of highly skilled firefighters was assigned to defend the chalet. They did fuel reduction around the five structures in the area, laid out an extensive line of hoses, put sprinklers on the chalet roof and set up a pump system. As well, the firefighters put protective wrap on exposed wood and around the bottoms of buildings with decks.

It was decided that it would be too unwieldy to try to wrap the entire dormitory.

Logistically, it is difficult to wrap a building the size of the chalet, said Glacier fire information officer Diane Sine. Each roll of the fire-resistant material weighs about 100 pounds and the crew couldn't get to the top of the two-storey building.

Sine said using a fire retardant gel also presents difficulties, as it has to be maintained and hauled in buckets to the site. "They felt that the sprinklers were enough," Glacier's public information officer Diane Mann-Klager said.

Despite the best efforts of firefighters to contain the Sprague fire in the heavily wooded and steep sides of Edward Mountain, it continued to grow, from about 500 acres on August 18 to 4,600 acres on September 1.



With the fire spreading unchecked and causing dangerously poor air quality conditions in the valley, Lake McDonald Lodge announced August 29 that it was closing early for the season. It was originally supposed to close on September 27. The move was out of concern for employee safety – because they work and live onsite they have a longer-duration exposure to the air conditions.

Four days later, Sun Road was closed from Apgar to Logan Pass. Everyone around Lake McDonald was ordered to leave.

had gotten inside the building and had set the interior alight.

A “valiant stand” was made by the firefighters, supported by three helicopters with water buckets, to save the structure, but they were unsuccessful. The 103-year-old Sperry dorm, a national historic landmark, was gutted. Fortunately, the rest of the buildings survived the fiery onslaught (including the notorious “million dollar toilet,” discussed below).

The public reaction when photos of the burning building and the remain-

Beth Dunagan of Whitefish lamented: “My heart is breaking not just for my family, but for everyone who so dearly loved that chalet.” Dunagan, another member of the extended Luding family and a former employee, recently wrote a book, *Welcome to Sperry Chalet*, about the place.

Dunagan spent all of her childhood summers and five years as an adult at the backcountry lodge. “There’s no place on earth I’d rather be,” she told the *Daily Inter Lake* newspaper shortly after her book was published in 2013. Dunagan’s book is as much a tribute to the chalet as it is to the Luding family, which has operated Sperry Chalet since 1954.

Sperry became a tourist destination in the early 1900s. The Great Northern Railway paid Dr. Lyman Sperry to have students from the University of Minnesota build a trail from Lake McDonald to his namesake glacier, which he’d earlier located.

Upon the Glacier region being designated a national park in 1910, Great Northern president Louis Hill commissioned a series of camps to be built for tourists on saddle horse trips. A tent camp near the present Sperry Chalet opened in 1911.

The first buildings appeared the following summer, 1912: two log cabins and a 22- by 80-foot dining room/kitchen complex made of locally quarried stone and lodgepole pine. The kitchen/dining room opened for business in 1913.

That same summer, work started on the 32- by 90-foot dormitory building, again made of rock and wood. It was finished and opened in the summer of 1914. The two-storey dorm had 23 guest rooms.

Both stone-and-wood structures at Sperry were designed by Spokane, Washington, architect Kirtland Cutter. He also created the plans for Lake

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Firefighters moved in to protect Lake McDonald Lodge and neighbouring buildings. Pumps were put in Snyder Creek and Lake McDonald, hoses were laid out and an extensive “Rain for Rent” sprinkler system was used to increase the humidity around the lodge.

The fire was now on Sperry Chalets’ doorsteps. “The fire team . . . worked tirelessly to contain this fire and protect structures and infrastructure,” said Superintendent Mow.

While battling an “ember shower” from the approaching fire, the firefighters noticed puffs of smoke under an eave on the Sperry Chalet dorm. It was approximately 6:10 p.m. on Thursday, August 31.

The firefighters sprayed the area with water because they thought there was an ember on the roof. Almost instantaneously, a window in the dorm broke out and flames were licking at the eaves. From a photo taken of the event, it would appear that embers

ing rock walls of the chalet were published was shock and grief. “I am utterly devastated that our beloved Chalet has been lost to the Sprague fire,” Geneva Warrington, a member of the extended Luding family which operates the chalet, posted on Instagram.

“Each and every person who was lucky enough to spend time here knows what a magical place it was, and what a terrible loss this is,” Geneva wrote. “My family has been incredibly blessed to get to share this magnificent place with the public for the past 63 years, and we are so very sad it has ended in this way.”

Kevin Warrington, Sperry Chalet co-ordinator for Belton Chalets, Inc., which operates the chalets, called the loss “a sad day.” “I have been around Sperry for my entire life and I have never expected to see anything like this,” Kevin said. “It has been a privilege to share Sperry with the great many people that love it.”



McDonald Lodge, which opened that same year, 1914.

Situated on the edge of a cirque 6,500 feet above sea level, the chalets offer a fantastic view of the surrounding mountains and down to Lake McDonald. The hike from the lake to the chalets is a rigorous 6.7 miles, gaining 3,300 feet in elevation.

Sperry Chalets were a popular destination for anyone wanting to visit the nearby glacier, and a welcome stop for tourists on saddle horse trips. During the Great Northern era, fresh bread and pastries were made daily, served at mealtimes by waitresses in uniform. Each bedroom had metal beds with springs and mattresses, a sink with cold running water, and chamber pots so guests wouldn't have to go the outhouse during the night. Lighting came from kerosene lamps.

The creation of Going-to-the-Sun Road, along with the Great Depression, radically changed the nature of tourism in Glacier. More people drove themselves and fewer ventured on horse trips into the backcountry.

By the 1950s the Great Northern Railway was looking to get out of the hospitality industry in Glacier. In 1953 it sold the Sperry buildings to the National Park Service for \$1.

While other chalet colonies the railway had built were razed due to lack of use, Sperry got a reprieve. In 1954, the Park Service leased the operation to Ross and Kathleen (Kay) Luding. It was the beginning of a six-decade-long revival of the complex. The Luding family started and maintained new traditions at the fabled site, so remote that it is supplied by mule train arrivals each week.

Kay Luding, a sprite of a woman with boundless enthusiasm and a welcoming smile, became the heart of Sperry. In her book about Sperry Chalet, Beth Dunagan said Kay Luding always put others first: "It doesn't matter to me how many discomforts I have up here just to serve the public," Kay Luding said. "I couldn't care less, because I want our guests to have a memory

they'll take home with them that will last forever."

She achieved her goal, turning Sperry into a spot where tourists champed at the bit to make a reservation for the following year. Openings were hard to find during the short, 60-day summer season in which it operated.

That reputation was maintained by Kay's son Lanny Luding and other generations of the extended family following her death. It has sparked the push to rebuild the fire-ravaged Sperry Chalet dorm building.

When Doug Mitchell, who had only taken on the top job at the Glacier Conservancy six weeks before, heard the news of the Sperry fire, he said: "This puts all hands on deck. We will marshal the troops and do what we can to help. Our mission is to be here for the long run."

The Conservancy's immediate goal was to raise \$106,200 to cover the cost of

*"My heart is breaking not just for my family, but for everyone who so dearly loved that chalet."*



*(Sperry photo courtesy of the National Park Service.)*

the engineering study and stabilization work. As of October 20, the “Sperry Action Fund” had received \$112,060 in donations. The Park also received \$18,500 in Park Service funding.

With the Conservancy’s support, a team of engineers has visited the site and is putting together a plan to stabilize the rock walls of the fire-charred dorm so that they survive the winter. A ten-man crew led by engineer Tom Beaudette arrived October 4 and spent the next two weeks preparing the structure. It took fifteen helicopter trips to bring 100 16-foot-long six-by-six-inch beams, 24 24-foot-long six-by-six-inch beams and 24 sheets of three-quarter-inch plywood to Sperry. Each beam weighed 140 to 180 pounds, depending on length. The crew then faced an onslaught of winter-like weather.

“I am so pleased that the crew was able to complete the project despite 12 inches of snow and freezing rain,” park facility operations specialist John Lucke said in a statement. “I’m particularly happy that we were able to do this with no injuries to anyone on the crew.”

Meanwhile, the Heritage Partnerships Program at the National Park Service’s regional office in Denver, working with Glacier personnel have come up with four proposals for the future of Sperry Chalet. To our understand-

ing, the Department of the Interior is reviewing the options.

In preparing the package, the Heritage Partnerships Program sought a copy of the original blueprints for Sperry. The Glacier Park Foundation’s historian Tessie Bundick located the blueprints in the Minnesota Historical Society archive, and they were forwarded to the Heritage Program.

As fans of Glacier Park eagerly await news of the fate of what remains of the Sperry dorm, and the rebuilding plan, the Glacier Conservancy continues its fundraising campaign. The effort is reminiscent of the “Save the Chalets” campaign in the 1990s, after Sperry and Granite Park Chalets were closed by the Park Service in 1993 due to substandard sewage and water systems and inadequate life-safety provisions.

A citizen-initiated group, Save the Chalets, aimed to raise \$1.2 million to make necessary repairs at Sperry. Congress stepped in to fund the work, along with upgrades to the chalets, which reopened in 1999. The work restored the buildings, which had been added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1977. The effort also

created the so-called “million-dollar toilet,” which garnered no end of public criticism as a solution to Sperry’s water-and-sanitation problems.

Elsewhere, Glacier’s staff is looking at the huge job of cleaning up some 30 miles of trails where the Sprague fire swept through the Lake McDonald area. It felled some 1,900 trees on the hiking and riding paths.

Park spokesperson Lauren Alley said it’s possible that some popular routes, such as the Mount Brown Lookout trail, Snyder Lake trail and Sperry trail will be closed well into next year. The Lincoln Lake and Lincoln Creek trails were among the most heavily affected by the fire, she said, with two bridges damaged on Snyder Ridge.

Milder weather, rain and snow diminished the fire, which at last report before publication continued to smoulder. It had burned more than 17,000 acres in the park.

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*The Conservancy quickly established a \$90,000 emergency fund and hired DCI+BCE Engineers to come up with a stabilization plan for the damaged building.*

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*(Sperry photo courtesy of the National Park Service.)*



# A Close Call at the Prince

## *The Prince's 90th birthday was nearly its last*

*No one could have imagined, when the Prince of Wales Hotel marked its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary on July 25 this year, that only weeks later a forest fire would come uncomfortably close to making it the last birthday party for the building.*

*Aerial view: Courtesy Member of Parliament John Barlow. This photo was taken September 20, 2017.*



*By Ray Djuff  
(Prince of Wales 1973-75, '78)*

No one could have imagined, when the Prince of Wales Hotel marked its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary on July 25 this year, that only weeks later a forest fire would come uncomfortably close to making it the last birthday party for the building. The birthday celebration came about by chance. I was at the hotel in May giving a historical orientation talk to staff, on behalf of the Glacier Park Foundation. I asked manager Chris Caulfield what was planned for this year's anniversary.

I pointed out that it would be the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, which prompted Caulfield to say it was a good reason for a celebration. I volunteered to come up with ideas for a possible party, and sent them to Caulfield, who promptly forwarded them to Christie Pashby, content marketing manager for Glacier Park Inc.

In due course, I was invited to attend the hotel on its birthday to give a short, five-minute toast. Pashby had hoped the toast would be during a 1920s-themed dinner in the dining room (I supplied copies of old menus to inspire the chef), but a last-minute shakeup in the kitchen saw the dinner spiked. Instead, Champagne cocktails (based on a 1920s recipe) and hors d'oeuvres were served to

hotel patrons in the lobby, with the toast to be given at 7 p.m.

Everyone was having such a good time, and the crowd kept growing, that the toast was put off to 7:30 p.m. By that time some of those attending had had several Champagne cocktails and were feeling no pain.

Rather than rehash my talk here, I invite you to check it out online (as well as a shortened version, with additional film by Mike Quigley, a videographer for GPI), at the Glacier Park, Inc. Facebook page. Look under the videos section.

Remember that some audience members were truly in the spirit of the occasion. When I said, "And lest we forget that's why this hotel was built by Alberta labour in a Canadian national park for an American railway: so thirsty U.S. citizens could skirt Prohibition," a boozy cheer rose from the crowd.

I ended my talk: "So I ask you to raise your glass and give a toast: to this hotel on its 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, to those who took this remarkable hotel from idea to reality, and to those who have created traditions and kept them thriving all these decades. We salute you!"

A little over six weeks later, the Kenow wildfire, which had been burning since

August 30 in the Canadian section of the Flathead Valley in British Columbia, took a large run eastward and was suddenly just across the Continental Divide from Waterton Lakes National Park.

Roads and hiking trails in Waterton near the Divide were closed on Sunday, September 3. The next day, residents and businesses in the townsite of Waterton Park were told they should take precautions for a possible evacuation alert as firefighters worked to contain the blaze in the Kishinena Creek region of B.C.

On Tuesday, September 5, a voluntary evacuation alert was issued by Parks Canada as the by now 11,000-acre fire was poised to spread eastward into Waterton. "Forest conditions are super dry," said Dennis Madsen, Waterton's resource conservation manager. "There's nothing that's going to put this fire out."

Many people took heed of the warning. Waterton Park townsite was eerily quiet on Thursday, as firefighters cleared brush at the edge of town, and hoses were laid out and connected to pumps installed on the shore of Upper Waterton Lake.

"We have a perimeter all the way around the townsite that's basically plumbed with sprinklers," said Stephen

Cornelsen, Parks Canada incident commander for the wildfire. “Within that we have facility protection around critical infrastructure for the park.”

The evacuation order for the park came on Friday, September 8, as the Kenow forest fire expanded to over 19,000 acres and advanced into Waterton. The smoke, which had been present all summer in Waterton due to forest fires elsewhere in B.C. and the United States, had by then become suffocatingly thick.

The management of the Prince of Wales Hotel had anticipated the evacuation and already said it was closing the hotel early for the season. Some 1,800 reservations were rebooked or rerouted.

That same day, the Calgary Fire Department announced it was sending 16 firefighters, two mechanics, two aerial trucks and an engine truck to Waterton. The volunteers were tasked with protecting the Prince of Wales Hotel, a national historic site, and its outbuildings: the powerhouse/laundry and staff dorms.

The Calgary team, along with Waterton firefighters and those from Coaldale and District Emergency Services, prepared the hotel site for the coming fire. They set preventative burns in the tall grass around the building. They also drenched the hotel in water and fire retardant.

The Kenow Fire made its run toward Waterton townsite the night of Sunday, September 10. It moved in parallel lines on either side of a mountain range, flowing southeast down the Cameron and Blakiston Creek valleys. The fire along Blakiston Creek spilled out onto the prairie and eventually outside of Waterton.

Parks Canada firefighters, supplemented by volunteers from departments across southern Alberta, worked through the night to protect residences and businesses in the Waterton Park townsite. There were 135 personnel on the ground, supplemented by nine air tankers and 14 helicopters.

The fire got “very close” to the Prince of Wales Hotel and its outbuildings, which firefighters kept doused with water and fire-retardant foam. The hotel’s location, surrounded by grassland instead of forest, helped keep it safe.

“It was rolling across the grass, but our crews stretched out hand lines and managed to block it off there and keep it back from the hotel,” Calgary fire district chief Jeff Primrose said.

Faced with relentless wind brought on by the blaze, the firefighters braved smoke, ash and a shower of embers, with some rolling up on the porch of the hotel. “It was the most intense fire I’ve ever been involved with,” Primrose said.

“The way they protected the hotel was outstanding,” said Ron Cadrette, vice-president and general manager of Glacier Park, Inc., which owns and operates the hotel. “I’m told there were embers the size of baseballs that were landing on the roof of the hotel.” At one point, the fire was 50 yards away.

Ultimately, the hotel was saved, as was townsite. Only the visitor center, slated for replacement, was lost. It’s estimated that as much as 30 per cent of Waterton burned in the Kenow wildfire. The damage toll is still being assessed.

While many reservations were cancelled due to the Kenow Fire, one of the most significant was the planned Peace Park gathering of Canadian and American Rotarians. It was only the second time since Rotary Clubs inspired the creation of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park in 1931 that the annual gathering has been cancelled. The first time was in 1944, due to the Second World War.

GPI’s Cadrette visited the Prince of Wales Hotel (where the Peace Park concept was initiated), on September 18 to assess its condition in the wake of the fire. He said he was “totally amazed” to see how close the blaze came to the hotel.

“As we drove into the park you could see how much vegetation had been destroyed by the fire,” Cadrette said. “We drove up the driveway to the Prince of Wales and you could see where the fire had scorched both sides of the drive. From the parking lot, from that famous vista, you could see just miles and miles of charred landscape.”

Cadrette and a team of engineers held their collective breath as they entered the hotel. “There was no significant smoke infiltration, which had been a big concern,” he said “And no sign of water intrusion. None of that.”

Glacier Park, Inc. took out an ad in the *Calgary Herald* newspaper several days later thanking the firefighters for their “brave and tireless efforts. We look forward to opening our doors next May for our 91<sup>st</sup> season.”

For a few days, that future was uncertain. It was a 90<sup>th</sup> year that will go down in the hotel’s history as remarkable.

As of October 3, the Kenow wildfire was classified as being under control and “being patrolled.” A Parks Canada news release indicated that snowfall in excess of eight inches on October 2 helped bring the fire to heel, although “smoke may be visible for several weeks and hot spots could continue to smoulder throughout the winter.”

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*Ultimately, the hotel was saved, as was townsite. Only the visitor center, slated for replacement, was lost. It’s estimated that as much as 30 per cent of Waterton burned in the Kenow wildfire.*

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# GLACIER'S MANY CHALETS

*Seven of the original nine groups now have been destroyed, in whole or in part.*

*By Ray Djuff (Prince of Wales 1973-75, '78)*

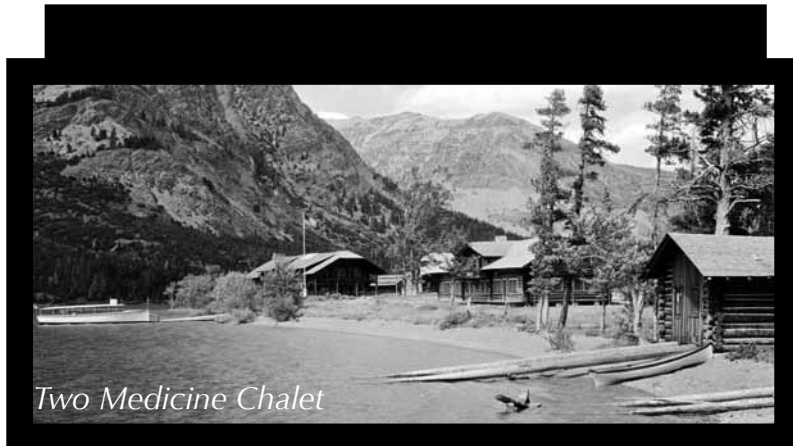
The fire that gutted the dormitory, or “hotel” building, at Sperry Chalet is a reminder that just five of the nine chalet colonies commissioned by the Great Northern Railway remain in the Glacier region. And only three of those camps, as they were called, were intact before the Sprague forest fire on August 31 burned the Sperry dorm. Just Granite Park Chalet and Belton Chalet are now complete and undisturbed.

Here's a short look at the nine Great Northern chalet colonies. Goathaunt Chalet is not included as it was not built by the Great Northern and never owned by it. While the colonies are now referred to in the singular (i.e., “Granite Park Chalet,” despite there being two buildings), I will use the original Great Northern terminology of “chalets,” plural.

**Two Medicine Chalets:** Two of the original six chalet buildings remain. The office/dining room/kitchen building, the largest on the site, is now referred to as a “Camp Store” and has been designated a national historic landmark. It was opened in 1914. Lesser known is the fact the residence for the crew that operates the *Sinopah* vessel on Two Medicine Lake is one of the original chalet cabins, completed in 1912. Since it was moved from its original site and renovated, it has not been earmarked for any special historic status. The other chalet buildings were razed in May 1956.

**Cut Bank Chalets:** Nothing remains of the four buildings which once made up this complex, opened in 1912. They were closed from 1933 to 1936, during the Great Depression, reopened for one year, 1937, and then boarded up and abandoned until they were dismantled by the Great Northern Railway during the winter of 1948-49.

**St. Mary Chalets:** Opened along with the other chalet colonies in 1912, St. Mary Chalets was an important link between Red bus traffic on Highway 89 and saddle horse tours passing through Going-to-the-Sun Chalets. The colony was closed in 1933 due to the Depression, but reopened as a private art school run by Winold Reiss from 1934 to 1937. It never reopened again and was razed by Hugh Black in the winter of 1942-43. All that remains today of the seven buildings at the site are remnants of



*(Photos from the Ray Djuff Collection.)*

concrete-stone foundation walls and piers from the boat dock.

**Gunsight Chalets:** The four log buildings comprising this complex opened in 1912, on the shore of Gunsight Lake. There were two 18-foot-square cabins, a kitchen/dining room and a two-storey dormitory building. Gunsight was a key stop on saddle horse trips to and from Sperry Chalets. An avalanche destroyed the chalets in March 1916 and they were not rebuilt by the Great Northern. Nothing remains at the site today.

**Going-to-the-Sun Chalets:** Sun Camp was opened in 1912, and was the biggest and busiest chalet group in Glacier, a key crossroads for saddle horse tours. The opening of Sun Road in 1933 and the establishment of Rising Sun Auto Cabins in 1940 foreshadowed the demise of Sun Camp. It was closed during the Second World War and never reopened. The 10 remaining buildings (one was destroyed years earlier in a fire) were razed in 1948. Old pipes from the chalet group are all that remain at Sun Point.

**Many Glacier Chalets:** Built at the foot of Mount Altn in 1911, before Many Glacier Hotel was constructed, the location almost immediately doomed one of the original nine cabins. An avalanche came off Altn and flattened it. Following the opening of the hotel in 1915, the cabins eventually were

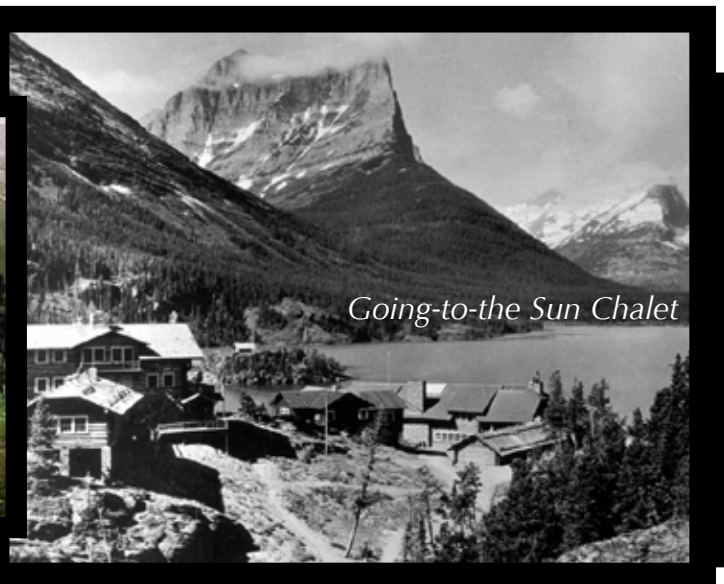
converted to staff accommodations. The Heavens Peak forest fire in August 1936 destroyed all but two of the buildings. The surviving pair, Chalets I and H, remain by Swiftcurrent Falls, on the entrance road to the hotel. One, Chalet H, is the residence for the hotel's winter caretaker, the other staff accommodations.

**Granite Park Chalets:** Opened on July 4, 1915, this complex consisted of a dormitory building and main office/dining room/kitchen/ hotel structure. It is one of only two high mountain chalet groups, Sperry being the other. It was operated by the Great Northern until 1954, when it was turned over to the National Park Service. Unlike Sperry, Granite survived a fire threat in 1936. The Heavens Peak blaze burned around the site, leaving the stone-and-wood structures unscathed. The buildings have been leased since 1955, operated, except for a short period, by the Luding family, which also operates Sperry Chalets. Granite Park was one of the sites of the "Night of the Grizzlies."

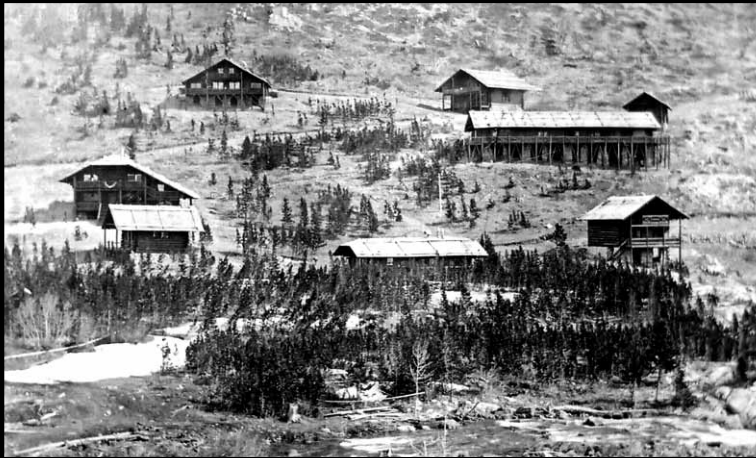
**Sperry Chalets:** This chalet group initially consisted of four buildings: two 18-foot square cabins built in 1911, an office/kitchen dining room opened in 1913, and a dormitory, or "hotel," with bedrooms for guests and staff, opened in 1914. The cabins quickly deteriorated

in the harsh winters and were removed. Sperry was the second of the railway's high mountain chalet colonies, distinguished by the use of local rock and wood in the construction. The Great Northern operated Sperry until 1953, when the complex was turned over to the NPS. The Luding family has had the leases to run the chalet group since 1954. The hotel building at Sperry was gutted August 31 in the Sprague forest fire, with the wood burned but stone walls still standing. There is an effort to see the dorm rebuilt.

**Belton Chalets:** This colony, in West Glacier, started as a single building opened in 1910 and was expanded, with two cabins and an artist's residence added in 1912, and a dormitory building opened in 1913. The artist's residence was used by John Fery for several summers. The colony operated intermittently until being sold by the railway in 1949. Service was again intermittent, with various owners, until 1997, when four of the five buildings (the artist's residence had earlier been sold separately), were acquired by Andy Baxter and Cas Still, who had them renovated to their former glory and reopened by 1999. They are now a popular attraction in West Glacier, operated seasonally. The artist's residence also remains, as a private dwelling.



# Ray Kinley's Memories of the Chalets



*Many Glacier Chalets*

*Ray Kinley first saw the Swiftcurrent Valley in 1913, two years prior to the building of Many Glacier Hotel. He returned in 1919 as a fishing guide, and then worked at the hotel from 1922 to 1977. Ray had vivid memories of the chalets, which were thriving in his first years in the Park.*

## **Chalet City**

Ray described the Many Glacier chalets as a "chalet city." Photographs surely give the impression of a townsite on the flanks of Mt. Altyn. Ray says that when Chalet C was destroyed by an avalanche of snow, it looked "as if a giant's foot had flattened it."

## **Puff and Blow**

The "Puff and Blow" was part of the Many Glacier chalet group, but wasn't rented and wasn't given a letter like the rental units. Originally, it was a studio for artists (it had a north window, to keep out shadows). Later it was used as a supply depot to load pack trains bound for Granite Park Chalet and also as a dance hall for the hotel staff. The "Puff and Blow" was destroyed by arson. Ray says that "a moron" annoyed women, who refused to dance with him, and that he burned the dance hall down in revenge.

## **The Good Ship St. Mary**

Ray recalled "the good ship St. Mary" ferrying guests from St. Mary Chalets to Going-to-the-Sun Chalets on Sun Point. At the Sun Point dock, they were met by a porter who hauled their luggage to the chalets on a little two-wheeled cart drawn by a St. Bernard dog.

Ray recalled the extensive stonework at Going-to-the-Sun Chalets, Granite Park Chalets and Sperry Chalets. The other chalets were built mostly of wood. He described the Cut Bank Chalets as "a barn," and it certainly looks that way in photographs! (Note the log-and-stone framing along the roof at Cut Bank and other chalets, to keep the roofs from being blown away by high winds.)



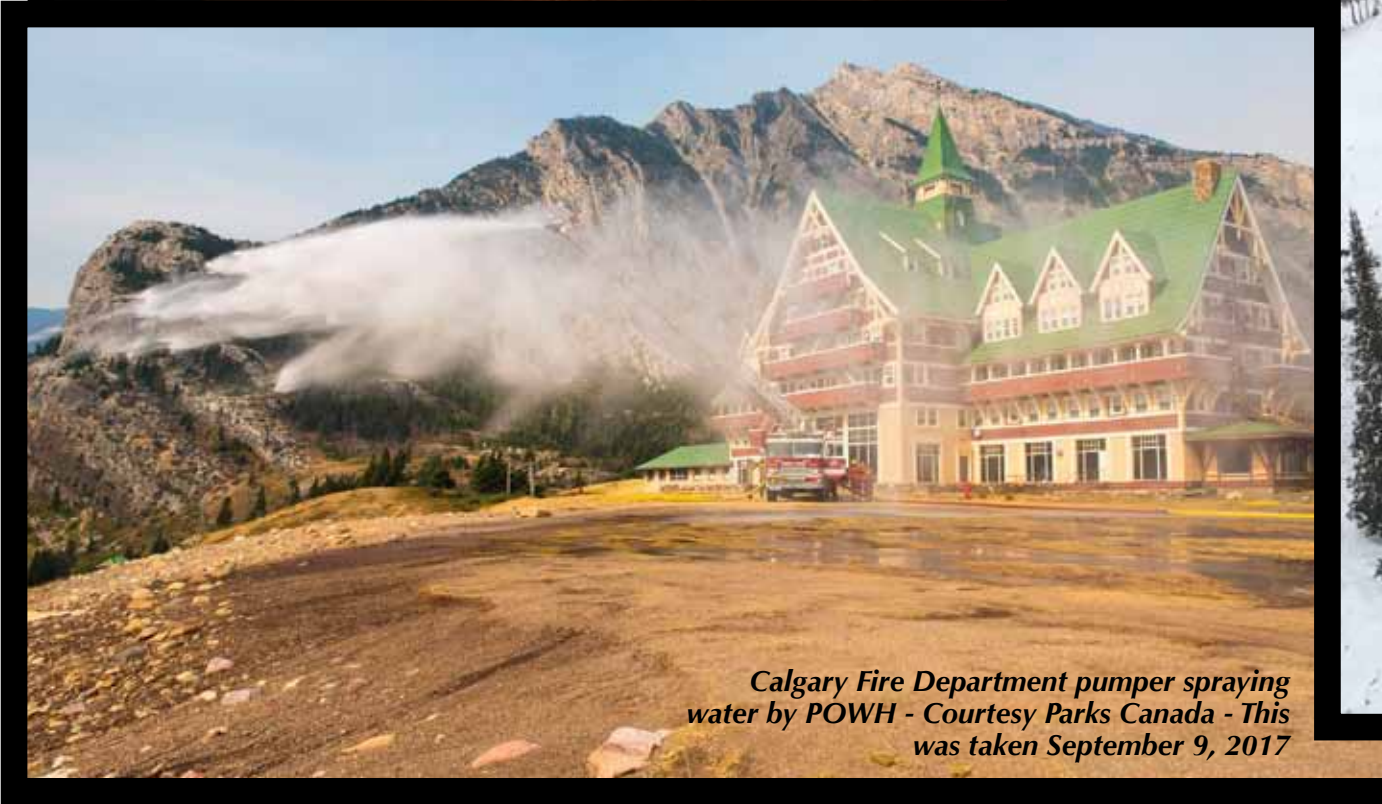
*Saint Mary Chalet*

Ray lamented the razing of Going-to-the-Sun Chalets, St. Mary Chalets, and Cut Bank Chalets in the 1940s. He acknowledged that the buildings had deteriorated through harsh weather and disuse during World War Two, but thought that they could have been preserved. He grumbled at the policies of Jack Emmert, Glacier's postwar superintendent, complaining that "every chance he got, he pounced on something to make it primitive!"





*POWH water tower and flames - Courtesy Coaldale and District Emergency Services - this photo was taken 11:15 p.m. on September 11, 2017. It gives you some idea how intense and widespread the blaze was.*



*Calgary Fire Department pumper spraying water by POWH - Courtesy Parks Canada - This was taken September 9, 2017*





*(Photo Rolf Larson.)*



*Sperry Chalet after the fire. Supports are already in place to support walls in preparation for reconstruction. (All Sperry photos courtesy of the National Park Service.)*



*Photo of the Sperry Chalet 2017 crew.*

# Camping at Granite Park in '67

## *A week before the Night of the Grizzlies*

*By Joe Blair (Glacier Park Lodge 1966-67, '72)*

Four employees from Glacier Park Lodge – Jay Brain, Jere Clancy, John Evans, and I – spent the night camping near Granite Park Chalet one week before the attack. As far as I can tell, we camped very close to the spot where Julie Helgeson and Roy Ducat camped one week later.

Two of us visited at the chalet until nearly dark. I remember singing songs with the ranger-led group that was spending the night at the chalet (“Kumbaya,” “Michael Row the Boat Ashore,” etc.). Just before we left, one of the staff pointed toward our campsite a quarter mile or so below and told the folks, “That’s usually where the grizzlies go on their way to the dump.” As we walked down to our camp I remember making a lot of noise in case there were bears around.

John kept the fire going all night. I told him at the reunion in 2013 that he may have saved our lives by doing so. John responded, “The reason I kept the fire going was that I was freezing! I remember waking every hour on the hour to stoke the fire to keep warm.”

Julie was a friend and the roommate of the girl I dated that summer. The mood was somber around the lodge. Most of us departed for home within a few weeks and didn’t do any more long overnight hikes or camping.

*By Jay Brain (Glacier Park Lodge 1966-69)*

When we arrived at the chalet we spent a little time on the porch. A young elk came up to the porch (the closest I had ever been to an elk). We were told by the chalet employees to head down the hill and find a spot to camp. Bears at or around the chalet were never mentioned nor was anything said about food or garbage being placed outside to draw bears for the chalet guests to see up close.

As I remember, there were no specific campsites. You just picked a spot and settled in. We laid out sleeping bags and we had a fire that we sat around for quite a while.

I woke up in the very early morning facing Heaven’s Peak. The sun was hitting the top of the peak and the moon was showing in the sky. It was so beautiful and so peaceful! I lay there just relishing the view and thinking that God had made Glacier exceptional and how lucky I was to be there. The hike out was a continuation of Glacier’s beauty. We had a fantastic time and were blissfully ignorant of many things.

I was the Chief Room Clerk that year at the front desk. I think I went on duty at 5 or 6 am. A call came in early in the morning about the attack at Granite Park. There was not much information in that first call other than that a bear had attacked someone. I knew that Julie and Roy were there camping.

I can’t remember if the next call was an update on the chalet attack or if it was about the attack at Trout Lake. I knew that Denise Huckle (one of my room clerks) was camping there that night with her friends. Again, there was no definite information about who was attacked or if there was a fatality. During the day, we received more and more information on both attacks, and none of the news was good.

We finally got the names of the two girls who were mauled and killed. We employees were in shock. These were our coworkers and friends. The mood was very somber. Talk was subdued and I remember no laughter. There were many tears shed at the memorial service for Julie at Glacier Park Lodge.

# The Night of the Grizzlies

## 50 years after the attacks of August 1967

By John Hagen (MGH 1970-80)

Everything is clear in hindsight. I see this frequently as a lawyer, assessing accidents of all sorts. We see with great clarity the miscalculations other people make – underestimating risk, setting wrong priorities, putting things off till another day.

So it is in reflection on the fiftieth anniversary of the deaths of two young women in Glacier Park. Rereading Jack Olsen's famous book about the tragedy, *The Night of the Grizzlies*, one ponders anew the long succession of misjudgments that were made. Some were inexcusable. Others are clear enough in hindsight, though not clear to the overworked actors in Glacier at the time.

For 57 years after it was founded in 1910, Glacier had no verified case of a human killed by a grizzly. There were, however, mysterious vanishings – the Whitehead brothers (en route from Granite Park to Lake McDonald) in 1926, Dr. F.H. Lumley (hiking from Goat Haunt to Waterton) in 1934, and David Wilson (en route to Going-to-the-Sun Mountain) in 1962.

Bear management in the early years was lax. Garbage systematically was dumped in the Park. An old-timer who transported garbage to a dump near Lake Sherburne once told me, "We'd shoot firecrackers off before unloading. Otherwise the bears would come and give us a hand." Rangers would shoot bears with charges of rock salt if they came looking for food in camps.

Bear encounters on the trails were rare. In the Park's early decades, backcountry travel was conducted mostly on horseback. The cavalcades were large and noisy, and the bears avoided them.

The first recorded bear attack in Glacier was in 1939. John Daubney, a Many Glacier employee (later the mayor of St. Paul) was mauled while hiking the Piegan Pass trail. (Daubney recalled the attack in an early edition of *The Inside Trail*.)

In the 1950s and '60s, the advent of lightweight footgear and camping gear promoted more hiking in

vice was stretched thin. Two days before the Night of the Grizzlies, the Kalispell *Daily Interlake* published a front-page story on "the Trout Lake Grizzly" and its aggressiveness toward people. Mel Ruder went to Park Headquarters with the *Daily Interlake* in hand, and urged executives to act, but they were preoccupied with a lightning storm that had just started

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*In the 1950s and '60s, the advent of lightweight footgear and camping gear promoted more hiking in the Park. Bear encounters markedly increased.*

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the Park. Bear encounters markedly increased. In 1956, a camper was bitten at Stoney Indian Pass. Nine more attacks followed in the next decade, including the grievous mauling of "Smitty" Parratt, the ten-year-old son of a ranger, near Otokomi Lake in 1960.

Then came the fateful summer of 1967. Olsen tells the story vividly in his book. It attracted great notice when it was serialized in *Sports Illustrated* magazine in 1969. (I read those articles just before my first summer working in Glacier, and I didn't bring a sleeping bag, thinking no prudent person would camp there.)

Olsen's account of the Trout Lake bear is the most confounding part of the book. For many weeks, this aberrant animal acted aggressively toward people. It raided inholders' lots at Kelly's Camp on Lake McDonald, raided the backcountry campground at Trout Lake, and repeatedly stalked and shadowed people. Rangers failed to intervene.

Everything is clear in hindsight, and one understands that the Park Ser-

vice was stretched thin. 1967 was a bad fire summer.

In previous weeks, however, rangers had seemed insouciant when people had complained about the bear. Olsen reports rangers saying, "That bear's been chasing people all summer," and "You shouldn't be having any more trouble. Your bear's at Trout Lake, tearing up camps." The Trout Lake campsite looked to one hiker like "a battlefield strewn with K rations. Tin cans had been bitten in half and packs shredded and a pair of blue jeans ripped into tatters and cans of corn and spaghetti punctured and drained."

Meanwhile, at Granite Park, by long custom, garbage was being dumped in a gully fifty yards from the chalet. Bears came every evening to feed on the garbage, to the delight of the chalet guests. An employee would cry, "They're here! They're here!" and guests would pour out to watch the "bear show." Sometimes bears would fight over the garbage, to applause and cheers from the guests.

The bears would come and go by a trail that led downhill to the Granite

Park campground, a few hundred yards away. The chalet manager and rangers who came to the chalet were uneasy about the situation. Olsen asserts that “most of the rangers had filed protests, written or verbal, at one time or another, to one executive or another,” without effect.

Park executives, in fact, had ordered an incinerator installed at the chalet, but someone had ordered the wrong size. It was too small to burn the kitchen scraps, so the staff took to dumping them in the gully, as they had in years before.

Olsen depicts a situation which had acquired its own momentum – the “bear show” at Granite Park was well-known; visitors expected to see it; Park executives had tried to deal with it; everyone was busy with other things; everyone had plausible deniability. And the Night of the Grizzlies ensued.

Olsen tells the story in heartbreaking fashion. The deaths of Julie Helgeson at Granite Park and of Michelle Koons at Trout Lake are two of the saddest episodes I’ve seen described. Most Glacier alumni find them so, the more poignantly, since Julie worked in the laundry at Glacier Park Lodge and Michelle in the gift shop at Lake McDonald.

One reads the accounts and ponders how things might have ended up differently. Had the campers at Trout Lake stayed awake and kept the fire burning after the bear first appeared at 3 AM, instead of going back to sleep! Had the rescue party at the Granite Park campground gone searching at once for Julie, instead of retreating to the chalet! But the situation was chaotic and full of danger and uncertainty. Everything is clear in hindsight.

The Night of the Grizzlies didn’t bring immediate large-scale reforms. Stephen Herrero’s *Bear Attacks: Their Causes and Avoidance* states that Herrero saw 22 grizzlies feeding at a dump in Yellowstone Park in 1968 – a year after the tragedy in Glacier! Yellowstone had a long history of “feeding shows,” like the one at Granite Park. They came to an end after *Sports Illustrated* serialized Olsen’s book and attracted national attention.

The book’s appearance did spur reforms. The practice of dumping garbage was ended. Bearproof garbage containers were placed in front-country campgrounds, and elevated food racks and separated cooking and sleeping areas were made standard in backcountry campgrounds. Trails and campgrounds were closed when bears were found to be frequenting an area.

Aggressive measures were taken to deal with bears habituated to people. Bears

1976. Kim Eberly and Jane Ammerman (Lake McDonald employees) on Divide Creek in 1980. Laurence Gordon at Lake Elizabeth in 1980. Charles Gibbs in the Elk Mountain area in 1987. Gary Goeden (a Swiftcurrent employee) near Natahki Lake in 1987. John Petronyi near Granite Park Chalet in 1992. Craig Dahl (a gearjammer) on Appistoki Creek in 1998. Matt Truszkowski, a truckdriver for Glacier Park, Inc., also vanished on Mt. Sinopah in 1997, and likely was a victim of “Chocolate Legs,” the grizzly that later killed Craig Dahl.

Thanks be to God, Glacier has had no further grizzly fatalities for 19 years. There have been relatively few maulings. The development of bear repellent – high-pressured red pepper spray – dramatically has influenced the dynamics of hiking in Glacier.

One reflects on those changed dynamics when rereading Herrero’s

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*Bear Attacks*. It was published in 1985, before the development of the spray. Herrero states: “Since climbing a tree offers reasonable protection from grizzly bears, I keep a sort of inventory of available trees

were trapped and transported, shot at with non-lethal ammunition (rubber bullets, beanbags, cracker rounds), and driven away with Karelian bear dogs (which use their agility to get behind a bear and snap at its heels).

These measures were helpful, but by no means completely effective. Despite all protective efforts, grizzly attacks continued. At least eight people were killed by grizzlies in Glacier after 1967.

Park veterans remember all those tragedies. Mary Pat Mahoney in the Swiftcurrent campground in

while I am hiking ... How far away is the nearest tree of acceptable height? ... Do you have enough distance to beat the bear to the tree if necessary and then get your feet up beyond a bear’s reach?”

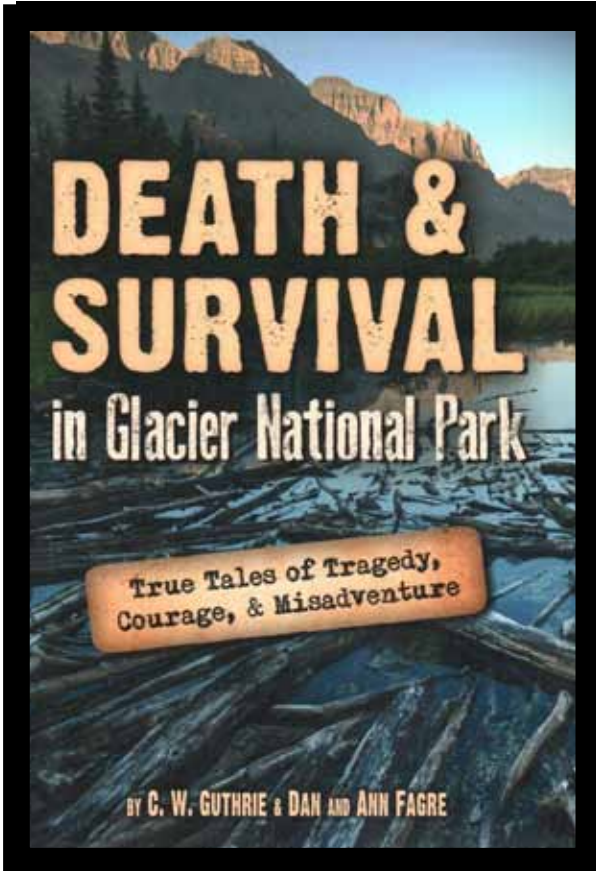
Those of us who hiked in Glacier before the bear spray era vividly remember scanning trees as Herrero describes. Especially after the Night of the Grizzlies, we all felt a lively sense of danger. We all had heard stories of people (often close friends)

*(Continued on page 20)*



# Death & Survival in Glacier National Park

By C.W. Guthrie & Dan and Ann Fagre



*Reviewed by Mac Willemssen, (Swiftcurrent 1967, Many Glacier 1968-79)*

This book is a must-read for all of us who love Glacier National Park and have enjoyed the adventures associated with hiking, climbing and exploring. The three authors are intimately acquainted with Glacier. Dan and Ann Fagre have spent years working in the Park as rangers. Dan is currently employed by the United States Geological Survey.

*Death & Survival* chronicles all the deaths which have occurred in Glacier since its founding in 1910 (through 2016). Sadly, the book; like technology and other ever-changing things; became somewhat out of date as soon as it was published this past spring. Early this summer, a fatal accident occurred along Going-to-the-Sun Road at Haystack Creek. A gentleman walking by the creek on the mountain side of the road slipped, fell into the creek, was swept by the current through the culvert under the road and then was killed by the big drop-off on the other side.

Not all the book is doom and gloom. There are tales of survival, rescues and

heroism to inspire readers. I particularly enjoyed reading about the tenacity and skill involved in Ted Porter's self-rescue after falling into a crevasse on Jackson Glacier. Despite breaking his back, Ted was able to climb out of the crevasse and crawl back to the Gunsight Lake campground three miles away. Campers there were able to summon rangers and Ted was helicoptered to the hospital in Kalispell.

My interest in the Ted Porter narrative comes not only from his heroism and bravery, but also because of a "small world" fact: Ted's father, David Porter, is my friend and was my roommate at Many Glacier Hotel in 1968 and 1969. We have taken many hikes together, along with doing various climbs in Glacier. One of the hikes was in 1977, when Ted was not even one year old and I did my turn at carrying the Gerry

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*Not all the book is doom and gloom. There are tales of survival, rescues and heroism to inspire readers. I particularly enjoyed reading about the tenacity and skill involved in Ted Porter's self-rescue after falling into a crevasse on Jackson Glacier.*

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baby backpack on the Highline with Ted as the passenger. Our family, before Ted's accident, climbed Grinnell Point with Ted and David, trying to follow the Old Miner's Trail which has now virtually disappeared. The book vividly describes the survival instinct and skill of this amazing young man.

Deaths occur for all sorts of reasons in Glacier. Many are a result of the inexorable force of gravity, whether involving falls of humans or falls of rocks onto

humans. Many others are the result of drowning in the fast moving and cold streams of Glacier. Other deaths have occurred because vehicles have left the road and the combined effects of gravity and steep cliffs have delivered the butcher's bill.

Most people, when they think of deaths in Glacier, think in terms of grizzly bear attacks. Luckily, most grizzly-human encounters have not resulted in deaths. The ones that do, however, make for sensational reading and remind us that as humans in Glacier, we are in the middle of the food chain, not on the top. I worked in Glacier the summer of 1967. As such, the events of the Night of the Grizzlies are on my mind whenever I am in the Park's backcountry. I have been lucky; others not so much because of any number of variables described in the book.

The book tells of the heroic and skilled responses of rangers, helicopter pilots

and medical personnel in effecting remarkable rescues resulting in the survival of gravely injured people. Over the years private helicopters have performed amazing missions of rescue. The book ends with the inspiring story of Two Bear Air, the rescue organization started by Flathead County. Two Bear Air now has a state-of-the-art helicopter equipped with infrared cameras, a moveable searchlight, a 3-D mapping system and hoist system to lower rescuers and retrieve victims without landing.

## Death and Survival (continued from page 19)

Anyone who ventures into the back country of Glacier has respect for the rangers of the National Park Service and all they do to make us all safer. As the book clearly points out, over the 107 years of the Park's existence the rangers have saved countless people who have come into harm's way. I have vivid memories of watching rangers roll a big

one-wheeled rescue cart up the Swift-current Pass trail to the Devil's Elbow to retrieve and bring back an unfortunate hiker who was hit in the head by a falling rock. The skill, strength and conditioning of those responding rangers made me feel proud to be a citizen of a country where such individuals would

come to my aid if I needed it.

In summary, *Death & Survival in Glacier National Park* is a 299-page reminder of the informal code of the earliest rangers in describing their duties: "Protect the people from the Park, the Park from the people and the people from each other".

## ... 50 years after (Continued from page 18)

who successfully had swarmed up trees to escape aggressive bears.

Nowadays climbing trees doesn't enter your mind, with bear spray holstered on your belt. You no longer take a mental inventory of trees close enough to reach and tall enough to escape a bear. Instead you focus on considerations of wind and visibility and time to draw the spray.

A Glacier bear ranger once said that "bears know the difference between rangers and regular people. They know the difference between rangers with guns and rangers without guns." Undoubtedly bears, for the most part, have learned to be wary of pepper spray as well, and to avoid people more than they were apt to a few decades ago.

But vigilance and periodic yells are still essential to hiking in Glacier. A

grizzly startled at close range, and especially a sow with cubs, is profoundly dangerous regardless of spray. It's crucial constantly to scan the terrain and to yell before rounding corners, topping rises, and entering avalanche chutes and other areas of brush.

Clean camps and eradication of garbage also are timeless lessons of 1967. Bears habituated to human food are lethally dangerous to people and of course to themselves.

Half a century later, we grieve the loss of Michelle and Julie and the other victims of bear attacks in Glacier. We give thanks for bear spray and for management practices that make the Park more safe. And we recognize that vigilance always is vital when we visit Glacier's backcountry, with its formidable bears.

*A Glacier bear ranger once said that "bears know the difference between rangers and regular people. They know the difference between rangers with guns and rangers without guns." Undoubtedly bears ... have learned to be wary of pepper spray as well, and to avoid people more than they were apt to a few decades ago.*

(Photo from the Ray Djuff collection.)



The Loop Trail Closure Sign

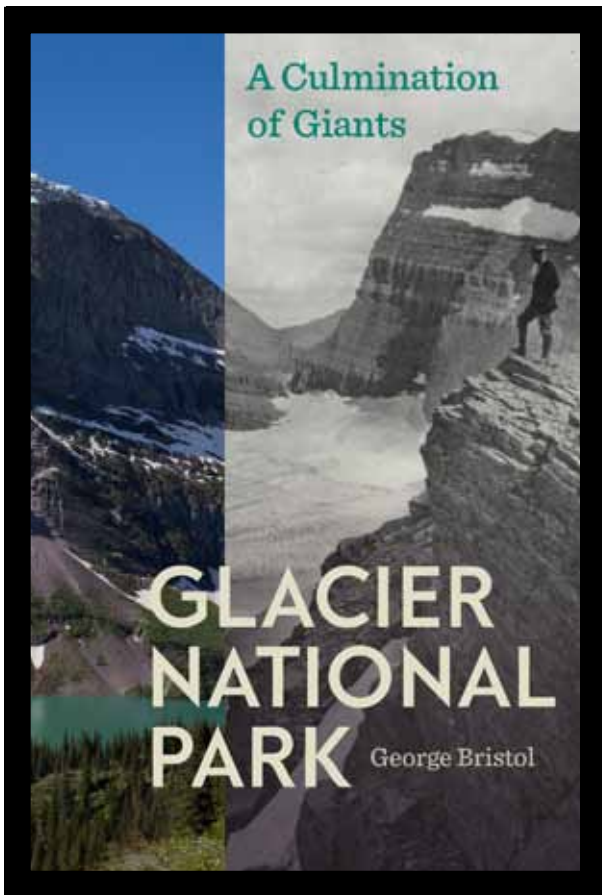


Granite Park Garbage Dump



In the two incidents, Michele Koons and Julie Hegeson were killed. Ray Ducat was seriously injured





## Book Review

# Glacier National Park, A Culmination of Giants

By George Bristol

*Reviewed by Tessie Bundick, (Many Glacier 1972-73, '76-80)*

Texan George Bristol accepted a trail crew job in 1961 in Glacier National Park, Montana. This young man was hired on for the next summer also and these two seasonal employments set a course for his life. For Mr.

lessly to help make Texas state parks better places to recreate.

However, he never forgot Glacier and vacationed there often. He even became part owner of the Grouse Mountain Lodge in Whitefish, Montana. *Glacier National Park, A Culmination of Giants* (University of Nevada Press) is Mr. Bristol's great

love letter to this magnificent natural wonder.

The first "giant" was Mother Nature herself. The author discusses the action in and around a shallow sea that covered what is now Glacier (and thousands of other square miles). These waters pulled sand

ed grinding on these mountains and glaciers formed and did their sculpting work as they moved slowly down these immense inclines. And the glorious sights that thrill us today in this dramatic landscape are the results of all of great nature's handiwork.

The Blackfeet Nation (or South Piegan), the powerful native Americans who are mostly associated with Glacier Park, were also noted as a giant in Mr. Bristol's treatise for what they did NOT do to this magical place. They dominated the area for centuries and did not despoil the area while guarding the mountains and passes to ward off invading tribes and to protect their bison hunting grounds located on the prairies leading up to the "Backbone of the World".

The encroachment of other native tribes, however, paled in comparison to that of the European invasion. In 1886 or 87, trains were making their way across the plains and the third giant, James J. Hill of the Great Northern Railway, found the best route from St. Paul to Seattle. His railroad skirted what was to become Glacier Park. In the meantime, prophets like Frederick Law Olmstead, the designer of New York's Central Park, visited the area that was to become Yosemite Park in California in 1864. He developed a plan for parks in America devoted to the benefits that these special places would bestow on all citizens who

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*George Bristol extols the splendid attractions of Glacier National Park with unbridled enthusiasm.*

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Bristol, like many of us, fell in love with this northern Rocky Mountain paradise and much to our benefit, he never got over it.

He went on to an illustrious career in politics, both in Texas and on the national level, and in business. He served on the National Park Foundation Board, raising corporate funds to aid Americans find better connections to their parks. He worked tire-

and stone down to form sediments into hardened layers to be seen today in Glacier's mountains, especially those above the timberline. Eventually, after 700 million years, the earth stirred, a plate collision ensued and these sediment layers rose up through the surface thrusting themselves over newer formations.

These geological striations climbed ever higher and then various ice ages, warming spells, wind and water start-



travelled to them. He also insisted that these lands be preserved for future generations.

Another very important figure in the history of our parks is John Muir who advocated exhaustively in the conservation movement. He was, in turn, very influential on that great lover of nature and promoter of the wonders of the natural landscapes of the Unit-

to start organizing this new and exciting venture. He used his own wealth to build roads and influence people. He utilized women's clubs and other enthusiasts to get natural areas named as national parks and, in Glacier, and he planted the idea for the building of the magnificent Going to the Sun Highway which bisected the continental divide. It

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*His well-researched book recognizes that the preservation of this great mountainous land did not just happen.*

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ed States, President Teddy Roosevelt. Other significant leaders in the thrust to preserve scenic splendors in our country were George Bird Grinnell, who was a major figure in promoting the preservation of the area to be-

was Mather who was very instrumental in establishing the National Park Service on August 25, 1916.

A government program that had an enormous influence on the fortunes of Glacier Park was the Civilian

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*Many people worked very hard, many times with formidable obstacles, so that we can truly revel in the awe-inspiring magnificence today.*

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come Glacier, and Louis Warren Hill, son of James J. Hill. Hill took over the Great Northern and was instrumental in getting Glacier named as a national park in 1910. He built grand hotels in the new American playground and spent thousands shoring up the infrastructure.

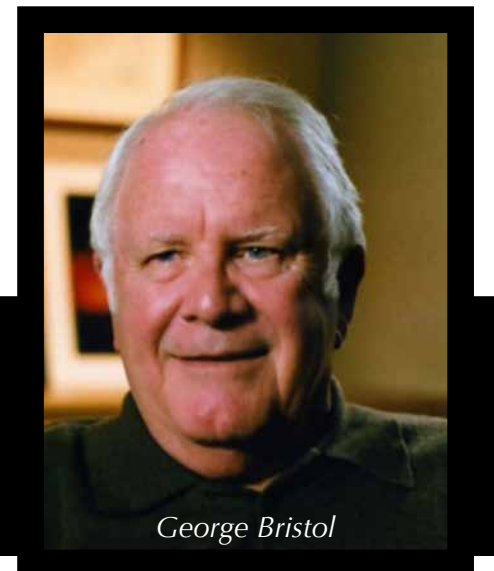
One of the most important movers and shakers of the national park movement was Stephen Mather. In 1914, he was placed in a position by Interior Secretary Franklin Lane

Conservation Corps, and to a lesser extent the Civilian Public Service movement. The CCC was promoted and endorsed by President Franklin Roosevelt. Between 1933 and 1942, 3 million young men were recruited to work in the great outdoors in America. In Glacier, they fought fires, built roads, cleared brush, constructed buildings and did many other worthwhile tasks that had a lasting influence. These wonderful youths were truly giants in the history of the Park.

National Park Service Director Conrad Wirth's vision took the national parks into the modern era. His Mission 66 ten year plan called for new roads and repairs, water and sewage upgrades, new and expanded campgrounds, trails, bathrooms and visitor centers and on and on, to be completed in 1966 in anticipation of a rush of tourists travelling on President Eisenhower's new interstate highway system.

George Bristol extols the splendid attractions of Glacier National Park with unbridled enthusiasm. His well-researched book recognizes that the preservation of this great mountainous land did not just happen. Many people worked very hard, many times with formidable obstacles, so that we can truly revel in the awe-inspiring magnificence today. His book honors these brave and visionary "giants", these men and women, as much as it honors our precious Glacier Park.

The book ends with a very interesting report of the visit of Franklin Roosevelt to Glacier on August 11, 1934, complete with a copy of his speech, delivered from the Park, praising the grandeur of his surroundings and of all national parks of America.



George Bristol

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*[Bristol's] book honors these brave and visionary "giants", these men and women, as much as it honors our precious Glacier Park.*

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# GPF's Employee Orientation Project

## *Talks and handbooks are presented at Park lodges*

Last year, the Glacier Park Foundation (GPF) began giving historical orientations to lodge employees in Glacier and Waterton National Parks. The program was undertaken in partnership with Glacier Park, Inc. (GPI) and Xanterra, the companies which operate the lodges.

GPF provides a handbook on the history of each lodge to all employees. It also sponsors a historian's talk to the staff at each lodge at the start of the summer.

In 2016, GPF gave handbooks and presentations to the employees at the Prince of Wales Hotel and at Glacier Park Lodge. This summer, handbooks and presentations were added for Lake McDonald Lodge, St. Mary Lodge, and Many Glacier Hotel. (The handbooks are posted on GPF's web site, [www.glacierparkfoundation.org](http://www.glacierparkfoundation.org)).

Mark Hufstetler and Ray Djuff, professional historians and directors of GPF, gave the talks at the lodges. They also both visited Many Glacier Hotel just prior to the season to assess renovation work there. Mark and Ray provided this account of their talks and of the renovation.

### **Glacier Park Lodge** *(By Ray Djuff)*

The orientation presentation to the staff on the evening of June 3 went well. I had a good one-on-one session with the bellmen and front-end staff the following day. A few of the staff had arrived just the previous day. They hadn't yet toured the building or seen the rooms, so I did a quick walk-about with them.

One surprise for me was their interest in the Blackfeet. I spent more time than I had anticipated explaining various aspects of Blackfeet lore – the tribes on both sides of the border, some of their customs, their work at the hotel, and so on. Learning that the statue in the lobby was based on a real person (Two Guns White Calf) fascinated them. I left the front desk manager with a three-inch novelty copy of a buffalo nickel (which was claimed to be the likeness of Two Guns) so that they could use it as an instructional item with visitors.

### **Lake McDonald Lodge** *(By Mark Hufstetler)*

The Lake McDonald Lodge orientation went well! I think all involved considered it a success. Attendance was strong. Nearly all the distributed handbooks were retained by their recipients. I think that is a good sign. There were good questions during the presentation, and I had some excellent conversations afterwards with individual employees.

I also attended part of the National Park Service orientation that evening, and was pleased when the ranger who led it gave an extended and very strong public shout-out to GPF's Lake McDonald Lodge history program and overall history work. I enjoyed good side conversations with location manager Bob Abrams and with Xanterra's General Manager for Glacier, Marc Ducharme.

### **Many Glacier Hotel** *(By Ray Djuff)*

When I visited Many Glacier Hotel for the orientations, the hotel was buzzing with activity, finishing up

renovation details. As a result, we started the presentation a tad earlier than anticipated, starting about 3:30 p.m. rather than 4 p.m. as planned. It was staged in the dining room, as the St. Moritz Room is no more and the Lucerne Room was in the midst of last-minute renovations.

Staff I talked to after the presentation told me my talk was enlightening. I started with the "alligator in the Annex" story (see the entry for 1970 in the handbook on GPF's web site!). It surprised everyone as none had heard it before. I'm sure that it will be repeated frequently to hotel visitors.

As has been the case at all the properties, I was warmly welcomed at Many Glacier by returning location manager Eric Kendall and his second, Angel Esperanueva. Note that Eric is the son of "Jammer Joe" Kendall (after whom the coffee shop at Lake McDonald is named), so he has long history in the park.

### **Prince of Wales** *(By Ray Djuff)*

The session at the Prince of Wales Hotel went well. Senior staff, including GPI's General Manager Ron Cadrette and location manager Chris Caulfield, welcomed me back and were ready for my revised presentation. I think they were pleasantly surprised by some new information that wasn't included in last year's talk, mostly stories about VIP visitors.

GPI has spent a load of money at the hotel, on new balconies with taller railings, new lobby carpeting, all-new lobby furniture, and all-new furniture and beds in the rooms. In the kitchen, all the wall surfaces have

been covered in stainless steel and equipment has been put on rollers so that it can be moved to be cleaned.

On a very positive note, the food in the staff cafeteria is so much better than back in my day! The cafeteria, by the way, is now referred to as the EDR (employee dining room).

Following my presentation and a piece by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, we had a minor emergency. A maintenance man went to tighten a leaking fitting in the women's bathroom, on the second floor, but inadvertently caused the pipe to break. This resulted in water flooding the bathroom, then oozing through the floor into the gift shop and into the basement, where it puddled about an inch or so deep.

While initial efforts were being made to control the flooding, a GPI trainer

and I went into the gift shop to move as much product as we could out of the way. It was raining from all sorts of openings (electrical fixtures) in the ceiling, and we put buckets down to catch some of the water.

A shutoff valve was found and the flood was stopped, but the water kept dripping for an hour. There was a lot of fuss and some temporary mopping-up to be done. We all retired about 10 p.m. and left further cleanup until the next day. Most of the staff had left before the disaster struck, and there was no desire to haul people back at that hour to tackle the mess.

### **St. Mary Lodge** *(By Ray Djuff)*

I was welcomed by veteran manager Helen Roberts. This was the first chance I've had to make a detailed

exploration of the St. Mary grounds. It was quite exciting. The main building is an impressive complex. It was enlightening to see all the nooks and crannies, the "behind-the-scenes" locations, and the basement guest rooms.

I offered a copy of *Glacier from the Inside Out* as a sort of raffle prize in the course of my talk. This is something that Diane Sine does to maintain interest in Park Service presentations. Diane holds draws throughout her talks, and offers prizes to the first person to correctly answer questions, such as how many glaciers there are in the park. (Note: The answer is 26, up one from last year. New satellite imagery has shown that what had been thought to be just rocks beside one ice mass in fact was hiding additional ice, increasing the total to 25 acres, which qualifies it as a glacier.)

## **Historians' Review of the Many Glacier Renovation**

Mark Hufstetler visited Many Glacier Hotel shortly after the lodge was opened in early June. He assessed the remodeled lobby and the new staircase. He

states, "In short, I was extremely impressed. The staircase itself is beautiful, and an example of outstanding craftsmanship in its own right. The construction workers were there when I visited, doing some final cleanup before opening the staircase "to the public".

Mark also was impressed by the appearance and feel of the Many Glacier lobby after the gift shop's removal. He states, "It really feels

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*Mark [Hufstetler] ... was impressed by the appearance and feel of the Many Glacier lobby after the gift shop's removal. He states, "It really feels like a different space, now ... larger and more grand, lighter and more visually connected to the hotel's setting."*

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like a different space, now ... larger and more grand, lighter and more visually connected to the hotel's setting. It really made me realize what a travesty it was to impose that gift shop into the lobby space 60 years ago. The southern end of the lobby is a great place to sit and relax, now, away from most foot traffic and with lots of light and views out towards the lake and mountains."

Mark observes, "The new overhead lobby lights are really interesting, and at least in some ways they're gorgeous. They do evoke the lanterns that were historically in the space, though rather imperfectly, I think. These are brighter and probably much more visually prominent. Visually, they're going to be the first things many people notice when they enter the lobby space, and they almost overshadow the more durable architectural features of the lobby, which I think is a little unfortunate."



Mark also remarks that the St. Moritz Room has also been thoroughly transformed, to the point where it was hard for him to recall exactly how it looked before the renovation work. "All in all, it looks quite nice; the new gift shop and Heidi's spaces are very pleasant places and the open area will be a very nice place to sip one's morning coffee. It's a functional and attractive accommodation for the many day visitors who stop at the hotel, but don't have reservations there. Now a large demographic, day visitors as a group almost didn't exist when the hotel was designed."

Mark continues, "I confess I don't recall exactly what the as-built layout of the lake-level space was, but a minor issue is that one of the new staircases ends not all that far from a blank wall,

requiring a sharp U-turn unless one is heading for the new restrooms. I also think it would have been appropriate for the project to have included a feature

of some sort at the location of the original fountain (between the two spiral flights of stairs), though I can understand the reasoning for not doing that.

"All in all, though, I'm really impressed with the work, both in concept and in execution. The work restored important aspects of the architect's original design vision for the lobby. It made both the lobby and the lake level more appealing and user-friendly spaces, as well. With the completion of this project, the hotel as a whole probably looks and functions better now than it has for many decades, and that's a great thing!"

Ray Djuff also assessed the renovation. He said of the staircase, "It is a beautiful structure, which I believe, adds markedly to the look of the lobby. Seeing it in place, you realize how much the gift shop intruded into the lobby of the hotel and cut off views of the mountains and lake to the south. The lobby feels a lot brighter and airy with the gift shop gone and the blocked windows revealed. The staircase is as impressive as I'd imagined."

Ray adds, "The new lanterns have been hung in the lobby. They look great, a modern touch with a nod to the original Oriental lanterns that once hung in there. The original orange lobby floor was evident. It's neat to see these things, having previously only read about them."

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*"The staircase project may not convince people who doubted its value, but I think they will still be awed by how it enhances the look of the lobby," Ray stated .... "In fact, I'd say there'll be more seating than before, with impressive views previously blocked by the gift shop."*

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"The gift shop has also been moved to the former St. Moritz Room and is more upscale in look than before," Ray continued. "While space is about equal to or a bit smaller than what had been, the layout and displays are better (to my eye)."

"Heidi's," Ray notes, "has been uprooted from near the doors to the lake and moved to a newly enclosed space by the lower level fireplace. It's much brighter than before, with better lighting, and has a wider variety of products available.

"About 20 feet of the length of the Lucerne Room has been taken for

new washrooms. As a result, the stage in the Lucerne Room has been removed and there's now a sheetrock wall at that end of the room. The loss of that 'front' space means that there is no obvious 'front' to the room anymore. It is not clear to what purpose the room will be put in the future.

"I was meeting with Diane Sine of the Park Service and some employees when Glacier National Park Lodges' president Marc Ducharme stopped by to say hello. He offered to show us some of the remodeled rooms in the hotel. He showed us an upscale room, with a higher quality bed, higher thread count linens, iPod charger/clock/speaker, all new bedroom furniture (era appropriate) and a redone bathroom. Wow, what a change from decades ago! He also showed us a standard room.

"Besides all new carpeting throughout the building, all the rooms got new furnishings, mattresses and bathrooms that have been remodeled and updated.

I walked through the Annex, and the place, while still needing the attention of housekeeping and minor maintenance tweaks to complete the renovations, looks good. Also, all the lobby furniture is new."

Ray concludes, "The staircase project may not convince people who doubted its value, but I think they will still be awed by how it enhances the look of the lobby. With the relocation of the gift shop, the amount of lobby space is not impinged at all. In fact, I'd say there'll be more seating than before, with impressive views previously blocked by the gift shop."

## A Many Glacier Carol:

# The Twelve Days of Waiting

A whimsical aspect of employment in Glacier Park is hearing novel remarks from the public. Many Glacier waitress Jody Fales compiled a list of questions and comments uttered in the dining room in 1979. She put them to the tune of "The Twelve Days of Christmas." Here are the first and the final stanzas:

On the 1st day of Waiting, my tables said to me:  
"When do the Glaciers go by?"

On the 2nd day of Waiting, my tables said to me:  
"Are you all voice majors?"  
AND ... "When do the Glaciers go by?"

On the 3rd day of Waiting, my tables said to me:  
"When do the bears come down?"  
"Are you all voice majors?"  
AND ... "When do the Glaciers go by?"

On the 12th day of Waiting, my tables said to me:  
"We're all on a tour!" [1]  
"What does that flag mean?" [2]  
"Can we sit by the ocean?" [3]  
"What's the antipasto?"  
"Is the trout fresh?"  
"Are you all Mormons?" [4]  
"Do you go to the same school?"  
"Do you work here?"  
"What's the white stuff on the mountains?"  
"When do the bears come down?"  
"Are you all voice majors?"  
AND ... "When do the Glaciers go by?"

- 1 This declaration (sung brightly!) was not music to the ears of waiters and waitresses, since the automatic tour gratuity was substantially less than the average individual tip.
- 2 This very reasonable inquiry referred to the large Swiss flag which was displayed on the front of the dining room's fireplace chimney. The Swiss cross is Many Glacier's insignia, reflecting its Alpine setting and its chalet-style architecture.
- 3 Swiftcurrent Lake, not easily mistaken for an ocean, with its dimensions of roughly a half-mile long and a quarter-mile wide.
- 4 This rather frequent inquiry was inspired by the cleancut appearance of the hotel staff. Glacier's lodges had a conservative haircut code, which made its employees appear distinctive in the hirsute 1970s.

(Illustration by John Hagen)



# Memories of the Bellhops' Chalet

By Dick Schwab (*Many Glacier Hotel 1947-52*)

The choicest place to live for any Park employee was the famous or infamous Bellhops' Chalet, and many of my best memories of Glacier are centered there. This was also called "Chalet I" and was one of the two chalets that had survived the terrible 1936 forest fire referred to earlier that had come roaring over from the west side of the Continental Divide and down the valley, nearly taking out the hotel.

Chalet I is magnificently situated on a rocky outcropping just above Swiftcurrent Falls. The muffled roar of the falls beside the Chalet was pleasing to hear day and night. It was very practical as well, for we could make as much noise as we wished to without disturbing anyone. Needless to say, there were many, many parties before the fireplace there, and we often packed in a remarkable number of our

fellow employees.

There was a brisk walk to and from the Chalet to the hotel, along the road bordering Swiftcurrent Lake. It was a most enjoyable walk during the fine days, and sometimes it was exciting during the terrible storms and winds sweeping out from the Swiftcurrent Valley to the west.

During the worst of these gales white-capped waves would wash up close to the road and howling winds would throw bursts of heavy spray over it, on the bridge over the falls especially. Sometimes it was like what I imagined being on the deck of a ship in heavy weather at sea must have been.

I have always liked the violent weather in Glacier, however frightening it can be. And so I generally enjoyed those windy dashes down the road, especially at night when you could see the warm light of a window in the Chalet, as you braced yourself against the fierce gales and the ghostly white bursts of spray.

Often we would stop at the dormitory showers on the way back, since there was no shower in the Chalet. Frequently at the end of a shift we were soaked through with sweat because of the intense physical exertion of hauling load after load of heavy bags up several flights of stairs for considerable periods at a time. There were no elevators for taking guests and their luggage to their rooms.

Our light tan uniforms were sometimes saturated, and our white shirts always were. At this time the nylon washable shirts had just come on the market, although they were primitive and turned quite yellow after a month of nearly daily wear. Still, they were washable, and some of us simply wore them into the showers, washed them while they were still on us, took them off, rinsed them, wrung them out, and then carried them flapping in the wind on a wire hanger to the Chalet. There they dried and were tolerably clean for the next day's exertions.

## I Will Take Many Glacier to my Grave

By Dan Manka (*Many Glacier 1975*)

In 1975, I had the wonderful experience of working as a second cook in the kitchen at Many Glacier Hotel. I will never forget that opportunity. I enjoyed it so much. I usually tell others "I will take that experience to my grave". When I am old and feeble, when I lie in a hospital bed, when I am only slightly responsive in a nursing home, if one of my dear daughters would speak to me about Swiftcurrent Lake, the Garden Wall, Ian Tippet, John Hagen, George Bird Grinnell, or the Ptarmigan Wall, I am sure that I will smile as I rest my head on my pillow.

When I sit on my front porch in the dark or when I sit in the rocker in my kitchen, there are many times that my banjo, fiddle, or accordion begin to talk. The Many Glacier anthem begins, "Hail to thee, O Many Glacier, in the mountains tall . . ." and my wife and all

four of my daughters know that even in the dark, or with my eyes closed, or even when I am too tired late in the evening to rise up and go to bed, Dad is remembering (with tears) fond times as one who lived and worked at Many.

My girls know that Dad cannot sing that Many Glacier song without crying. There were too many good times there. Too many mountains, lakes, glaciers, lodges, trails, and animals to think about to get through those few short lines about our special valley.

I like to tell folks that Many Glacier has a "world class view." One cannot fit it all in just one camera shot, even with a fish-eye lens. What a thrill to be completely surrounded by mountains one mile tall and know that you are only 12 miles from the flat prairies!

When I was just 16, I had the privilege to work "Atop The Blue Ridge" on

Loft Mountain in Shenandoah National Park. I worked as a cook in Yellowstone for three wonderful summers, but I never have told anyone that I will take Shenandoah or the experience of living and working in Yellowstone to my grave. On the other hand, I do not know how many times I have said that about Many Glacier.

Yes, girls, Dad is thinking about "Gould, and Allen, and Mount Wilbur" as they "stand in majesty." Oh, how the writer of that anthem was correct when he concluded, "In our hearts, O Many Glacier, you will always be!" So true. It's so true. I will never forget.

I remember receiving that envelope with a picture of Mount Gould and the large words, "Glorious Glacier" from Ian Tippet. If the view of these mountains that God made for us here is superb, what will Heaven be like?



# A Shutterbug at Logan Pass

By Mike Buck (*Glacier Park Lodge; Gearjammer (1960-67; 2001-2007)*)

It was a picture-perfect afternoon in late July, 2003. I was on my layover at Logan Pass, with a nearly-full load of tourist “dudes.” We were headed eastbound, on the afternoon portion of the Glacier Park Lodge “Circle Tour,” having begun our trip at the eastern entrance hours before.

entrances, directing the automobile drivers to continue their journey, as no space was available except for the red buses. The driveways were clogged with vehicles, their drivers hoping that someone would shortly vacate a spot. One gal bounded out of a family auto like a gazelle, to aggressively claim a shortly-to-be-vacated location for *her* tribe. The sun was out, the birds were chirping, the

Hot on its tail was a tourist, screaming, “Stop! Stop! I want to take your picture! I want to take your picture!” The goat would occasionally pause and stare at the dude, undoubtedly thinking, “My mother told me there would be days like this!”

The goat would then continue on, with the anxious tourist in hot pursuit. Soon the tourist cornered the animal at the far east end of the parking lot’s driving lane. The dude was now being observed by countless people, as he sought to position the creature. He wanted the sun’s rays to strike the goat at just the proper angle. It seemed that the goat wanted only to display its southern exposure, while the tourist sought a different perspective.

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*A mountain goat sauntered past, not less than ten feet in front of me. Hot on its tail was a tourist, screaming, “Stop! Stop! I want to take your picture! I want to take your picture!”*

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Following our scheduled lunch break at Lake McDonald Lodge, we had ascended the 7 percent grade on Going-to-the-Sun Road. We had left the heat of the valley floor. We had traveled through the Garden Wall/Heaven’s Peak Tunnel, stopped at the Bird Woman Overlook, held our breath when viewing the Triple Arch Bridge that we would cross over, been awed by the Weeping Wall, and viewed the “human goats” hundreds of feet above the roadway on the Highline Trail Overlook. We

restroom-waits were short, passports were being stamped in the interpretative center, water fountains were being slurped over, and the visitors were inhaling the glories of Glacier Park. What, I thought, could top that?

I had tidied up my bus, discarded any refuse, and rearranged the blankets (which were being used as seat-insulators, since the top was open). I now took my customary position on the front bumper, keeping a watch-

The snap-shooting dude became so focused on his quest that he failed to realize that *he*, more than the goat, was the center of attention. More photographs were being taken of him than of the goat itself! I think that he also did not realize that the animal could have grown aggravated enough to conclude the episode with a Biggest Billy Goat Gruff-style charge.

All ended well, however. The goat shortly jumped the stone barrier and headed off toward Mount Pollock. The tourist dude happily got his picture. My passengers re-boarded the bus and we departed for more stops on our trip. Best of all, I didn’t forget anybody! For the rest of the tour, my passengers shared their memories of that snap-shooting dude and the uncooperative goat.

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*The goat would occasionally pause and stare at the dude, undoubtedly thinking, “My mother told me there would be days like this!”*

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were now being air-conditioned by the gentle breezes at the 6,700-foot elevation at Logan Pass.

The parking lot was packed with tourists. There were rangers at the

ful eye on belongings and ready to answer visitor inquiries.

Not a minute had passed when a mountain goat sauntered past, not less than ten feet in front of me.

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*View of Prince of Wales Hotel as the Kenow Fire raced toward the Waterton Townsite and Prince of Wales Hotel, on the night of September 12, 2017. (Photo courtesy of Parks Canada.)*

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An annual membership in the Foundation costs \$10. A "Friend of the Park" membership costs \$25 annually, cumulating to a Lifetime membership in five installments. A Lifetime membership paid in one installment costs \$100.

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*(Panorama by Christine Baker)*