

## Board Members

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Happy October, MCPA Members and Friends.

Fall 2020 has certainly arrived; our last volunteer work party of the season will be on Saturday October 17 – Meet us at Barlow pass by/at 9:00AM to plan the day. We'll watch the weather in the days leading up to Saturday, and if the forecast shows horridly inclement weather, we may postpone the work party. Check the website [www.mcpa.us](http://www.mcpa.us) the day before for a final decision. We may also plan for a November work party if the weather cooperates – again watch the website for updated information. Should there be a November work party, it will be on November 21 (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday).

Even with several COVID restrictions to work around, our volunteers made significant progress in maintaining the townsite and trails this year. Due to restrictions on forest land, much time was spent improving the old county road & trail into the townsite, clearing several miles of encroaching brush growth from the roadway. This often-needed work was accomplished with the requisite "Social Distancing" adhered to and following all USFS guidelines.

Some may remember at our August work party, our volunteers were greeted by a photography crew from the online website DPREVIEW.COM. A local Seattle photographer and his crew spent the weekend in Monte Cristo learning about the history and photographing the sites and scenery, and admiring the new Canon EOS R5 camera. You can see their review, photos and a video at <http://tinyurl.com/MonteDPReview>. Thanks to Ted Taft, Jane Duffy and Skookum for accompanying the photography crew and sharing your knowledge of the town, and thanks to the photographer Sam Horine for choosing the Monte Cristo area as a photography subject. Should you be interested in the Canon R5, Amazon has them for \$3899...although fully outfitted you're probably looking more in the \$7000+ range.

Our work with the Forest Service regarding future management of the area and the CERCLA road has been hampered by both COVID and the unprecedented forest fires in Oregon and California; much of the local district staff has been busy and out of the area supporting the containment of these fires. We will keep you posted on any progress and/or decisions as we proceed.

As always, thanks for your support of the MCPA and your volunteer hours and skills. It is rewarding to know that Monte Cristo is recognized as the best preserved 1900's mining townsite in Washington.

And Happy Halloween if we don't see you before then!

Mike Kahler  
MCPA President

## Historical Essay

Here is the next to the last part of Jerry Rosman's account of his family's ordeal trying to escape the increasing avalanche danger developing at their Monte Cristo Resort lodge home in January 1982. For two days they had failed to break out through wet snow up to thirty feet deep. Exhausted, they finally radioed for help and were told by authorities to await daylight.

'Sunday morning was a bummer. Our spirits were lower than whale ordure.

For two days we tried to make a trail out from Monte Cristo to Deer Creek 12 miles away. We had a 3 mile trail to show for it.

Lack of sleep, physical exertion, tension and anxiety were beginning to show in all of us -- even the children. Heather whined and clutched at her mother's legs. Jeremy put his arms around my neck and said, "Daddy, we just gotta get us an avalanche stopper!" There were tears in his eyes.

Eileen was bearing up well, but her concern for the kids and worry over the wall of ice behind the house added some lines to her face, and a few decibels to her voice.

Jim Kyes is one of the strongest men I've ever known, and even he was worn out. Hours of snowshoeing, shoveling, and jerking around a 300 lb. snowmobile are bound to show.

As for me I was worried about two silver dollar sized spots on my cheekbones. They were the only two places on my body that *didn't* hurt, and for the life of me I couldn't figure out why!

There was tension other places too. My son Mark, and daughter Liza (now Mrs. Jim Kyes) had been waiting by a phone in Robe Valley for two days, ready to meet us at Deer Creek, and drive us out.

Our regular radio contacts with Larry and Sharon Puntney were being monitored by other members of the GTE Amateur Radio Repeater group, and they were apprehensive, too.

So, we started off Superbowl Sunday, January 24, with a negative note, and our first radio contact that morning made it worse.

The Department of Emergency Services (DES) explained it this way:

"We have talked it over with the powers that be, and heads of government, and we don't feel you are in a life-threatening situation. We can't help you."

It would be in bad taste to repeat my reply. I can only say I used a variety of theological terms, not

necessarily expressed in a theological manner. I also suggested where they could go. I was sure they were well suited for the heat -- and the company.

No one flew over to check our situation. No one came in to see. Yet, in their infinite wisdom, from the sanctity of their carpeted offices, they knew we weren't in trouble!

We've lived in Monte Cristo for six years. We've helped dozens of hikers, climbers and tourists out of trouble, but never asked for help for our family. We try to solve our own problems. This time we couldn't, and there was no help for us.

Unknown to us, DES's radio message motivated others into action.

Larry and Sharon Puntney drove to Robe Valley with portable radios so Liza and Mark could follow our progress. Larry also made arrangements with a private helicopter operator to fly us out.

Ken Reickers of Robe Valley contacted the Sheriff's Search and Rescue group. His call was the first they had heard of our situation. DES had not contacted them. They started arrangements to fly in a small helicopter to evacuate Eileen and the children. Jim and I decided to give it another try and do everything possible to get out ourselves. We didn't want to be accused of crying, "Wolf!"

I radioed to hold off flying anything in until -- and only if -- we couldn't make it ourselves. I learned later this caused some confusion. One helicopter was already in the air, and was called back.

Stiff and sore, we snowmobiled toward Deer Creek, repaired a washed out section on the landslide that cut our road off in 1980, and moved on.

As we reached the Devil's Elbow, we spotted three large slides covering the road for more than 300 feet. This was the biggest yet!

We took our shovels and started ramping onto the slides and surveying a trail over them.

It began to warm up again. The danger of more avalanches increased. I had to stop shoveling, my back gave out again. We still didn't know what obstacles lay ahead in the 8 miles to Deer Creek.

I decided to go back to the Lodge, let everyone know the situation, and at least evacuate Eileen and the children. Jim, still angry at the DES decision, wanted to stay and work on the slide. He and I would still have to get out, even if we had to snowshoe the 12 miles." (To be continued.)

## MCPA Membership Form

Membership Year: \_\_\_\_\_ (membership runs Jan to Dec)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Area(s) of Interest / Skills: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please select only 1 box below:**

**\$25.00 - Annual Membership** (Mail this Form and \$25 to MCPA)

---- or ----

**\$50.00 - Annual Membership + A New Barlow Pass Gate Key \***  
(\* keys from 2010 to now are still valid)

- Download "MCPA Waiver/Release" form at [www.mcpc.us](http://www.mcpc.us) (MEMBERSHIP)
- Sign and Notarize the "MCPA Waiver/Release" form
- Mail the Notarized Form, this Form, and \$50 to MCPA
- A new gate key will be mailed to the above address

## MCPA Donation Form (Non-Profit 501(c)(3) EIN: 911230143)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

**MCPA Donation** - I wish to donate the following amount:

\$25     \$50     \$100     \$200     \$500     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**MCPA Interpretive Center Donation** - I wish to donate the following amount:

\$25     \$50     \$100     \$200     \$500     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Monte Cristo Historic Pictures Order Form

Pictures of Monte Cristo up to 100+ years ago. Pictures will be emailed (~24 MB in size).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**\$20.00 – Electronic Pictures of Historic Monte Cristo**

Mail Form To: **MCPA**  
**P.O. Box 471**  
**Everett, WA 98206**

email questions to:  
[hartz4@gmail.com](mailto:hartz4@gmail.com)



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PO Box 471  
Everett, WA 98206  
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«FirstName» «LastName»  
«Address1»  
«City», «State» «PostalCode»