



TRAIL MAINTENANCE PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2014



**NSA Trails Program Volunteer of the Year
Bob Whaley (MSO 56)**



Our Mission Statement

The National Smokejumper Association, through a cadre of volunteers and partnerships, is dedicated to preserving the history and lore of smokejumping, maintaining and restoring our nation's forest and grassland resources, and responding to special needs of smokejumpers and their families.

Our Values

Comradeship, Education, Pride in work well done, Loyalty.

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Volunteer of the Year

Bob Whaley has been a stalwart of the NSA Trails Program from the program's beginning in 1999. He was on one of the first two projects in the Bob Marshall and on the crew with Art Jukkala. After working trail all day and back in camp, Art died of a heart attack. Bob and EMT crewmember Joe Kroeber performed CPR but it proved unsuccessful. That afternoon the two of them hiked/ran 8 miles to the trail head, then drove back to the Monture Guard Station to coordinate the recovery. Early that morning Bob contacted a nearby helicopter logging operation. With Bob's easy going gift of gab and friendly way, he talked the pilot into flying his ship to attempt a recovery landing at the site. He flew with the pilot to direct him to the site which proved too small for the large UH-D Bell aircraft, so the pilot returned to base camp and rigged the chopper with a long line, radio, and litter. This was successful and they flew Art from the site back to Monture. Bob mentioned to the pilot about his experience flying choppers in the Marine Corps and the pilot asked him if he'd like to fly his buddy home for one last chopper ride. Of course Bob did and said he would never forget that honor and experience

Bob graduated from Carroll College, Helena, Montana in 1958 and went directly from college to the Marine Corps where he had what he considers a dream career of 21 years (you will need to ask him about that story sometime). He was accepted into their aviation program at NAS Pensacola. In his Marine Corps career Bob flew numerous models of fixed wing aircraft and choppers. He had three tours in Viet Nam, one in which he and his crew were shot down and made a crash landing on a beach on the South China Sea. All survived with back injuries. Upon retiring from the Marine Corps, Bob and his wife LaWana moved back home to Missoula. For 24 years Bob worked as a financial consultant and manager for several firms. Bob is very active in his former Marine Corps squad-

rons and served on the board of directors of the National Marine Corps Combat Helicopter Association for over 10 years.

Since 1999 Bob has been on at least one of the Trails Program projects every year and served as a Squad Leader on most of those projects. When Jon McBride died unexpectedly in June of 2010, it was Bob who stepped up to the plate and called an emergency meeting of the Squad Leaders and Advisors that Jon had previously organized. With Bob's leadership, and as he puts it, a hell of a lot of help, all 15 of the projects that Jon had planned 2010 came off without a hitch. Bob continues to be an integral member of the NSA Trails Team Program.

Thanks very much Bob, and thanks to you also LaWana for making him so available for the Trails Program!

Trails Program Administrative Report

Fred Cooper (NCSB '62)

By the numbers, we had 21 week-long projects plus a one-day project in 2014 with Smokejumpers and Associates contributing 187 Volunteer Weeks of boots on-the-ground. For the week-long projects there were a total of 174 individual volunteers; 147 of them Smokejumpers and 27 Associates. There were 11 Smokejumpers contributing 2 weeks each plus Stan Linnertz (MSO '61) and Jack Atkins (MSO '68) contributed 3 weeks each. Chuck Orona (Associate) cook provided by Johnson's Corner also contributed 3 weeks. The value of work accomplished, based on Forest Service calculations of Volunteer services, was approximately \$200,000. This includes work and travel time by the volunteers, plus administrative time by the Squad Leaders and the Trails Team Members.

A variety of types of projects were accomplished. We had 12 drive-to projects and 10 hike-in. There were 11 that were primarily working on facilities the others trails. The projects were in 12 different National Forests, 2 National Parks, and 8 different states.

We accept requests from Agencies for types of projects as well as from Smokejumpers for the types of projects they would like offered. In 2013 we had a request for a 1969 Missoula Rookies project. That happened and it was repeat success for 2014. This year we had a request for a "no-manner" -- an all women Smoke-jumper trails project. You can read all about the fun they had along with the impression they made on the Forest Service for the work they accomplished in their report. For next year, we have a request from the Missoula circa 1956 to 1959 Rookie group for an easy project in the shade. Dave Dayton (MSO '69) said he will do his best to accommodate. Gary Lawley (MSO '57) said that he has several who presently live in Alaska who would like an Alaskan project closer to their home. We will be giving Gary help in contacting the Agencies to see if they can use our services.

Editor's Note

Steve Carlson (IDC 62)

This marks the third year I have had the opportunity to put the National Smoke-jumper Association Annual Trail Crew Report together. It is an interesting task. It involves gathering some 20 plus reports (in a wide variety of formats including pen and paper), correcting some spelling and punctuation (as remembered from 11th grade English), pestering authors for pictures that show the project as well as a crew shot, then please, names to go with the pictures. I try to do minimal editing with only occasional rephrasing so that the meaning is clear on the first read, but still leaving the author's flavor for all to enjoy. The next task is to get them all into the same font and paragraph structure.

The last two years this report came out in February, this year it's November. Generally, the reports are well written and even have some humor thrown in. At this writing, however, I am still short two re-

ports (Bear Creek Cabin and Duncan Peak Lookout) and some reports came with no pictures, as you will see. Of the original 24 projects, two were cancelled.

You will notice as you read through these stories that there are two sets of folks who were (probably) not jumpers but even so are given high praise. They are the cooks and the packers. God bless them all! They make life a lot easier for the rest of us. Then there are those among us who do a lot of work in the off season. That would include the team that does what amounts to the management side of things, Bob Whaley, Dick Hulla, Chuck Fricke, Jeff Kinderman, Fred Cooper, Gene Hamner, Dave Dayton, and Bob McKean. If something there looks like fun to you, feel free to offer to help them out, there is plenty to do, and it is fun. Then there are the crew/ squad/ project leaders who head up each project, spending considerable time (and frequently money) getting food, tools, and facilities ready for us casuals who come waltzing in Sunday afternoon, thinking the task is just starting. Not true folks, it's been in the works for months! Give them a big "Thank You!" whenever you can. For more information about the Trails program, check out our website, www.nsatrails.com.

Smokejumper Base abbreviations

- Anchorage.....ANC
- Boise.....NIFC
- Cave Junction.....CJ
- Fairbanks.....FBX
- Grangeville.....GAG
- Idaho City.....IDC
- La Grande.....LGD
- McCall.....MYC
- Missoula.....MSO
- Redding.....RDD
- Redmond.....RAC
- West Yellowstone...WYS
- Winthrop.....NCSB

BWCA Report

Steve Henry (MSO 65)

We had a rather small crew for our Boundary Water Canoe Area (BWCA) project. There were three old smokejumpers, Ron Baylor (MSO 60) of Green Bay, Wisconsin, Jim Thompson (MSO 63) of Sand Point, Idaho, and myself, of Alexandria, Minnesota. We also had two associates, Travis Kemmerer, Ron's nephew and Greg Henry, my son.

We met at the Kawishiwi Ranger Station in Ely, Minnesota on the afternoon of Sunday, June 1st. After picking up our tools and canoes we proceeded to the launch site on Snowbank Lake. We managed to get to our campsite and set up before it rained heavily.

We had an interesting and challenging project. We cleared the hiking trail around Disappointment Lake, just east of Snowbank Lake. This trail con-

nects the trails that we cleared in 2012 and 2013. There were quite a lot of downed trees but we had a good cross-cut saw and an eager crew.

The mosquitos and wood ticks were present but not severe. There was some further rain but always at night so it didn't interfere with our trail work. We had long canoe paddles a couple of days but no significant winds. The BWCA has a rugged beauty and charm. It is also a very peaceful getaway.

Overall it was a very good week. Greg is a good cook and we ate well. It was an amiable hardworking crew. We apparently did well. They would like to have us back next year and the adjoining Ranger station has contacted me about a possible project. (Sorry, no pictures)

Kenck Cabin Project

Barry Hicks (MSO 64)

The project was organized by Norm Kamrud through the National Smokejumper Association Trails program. The cabin is in Rocky Mountain Ranger District of the Lewis & Clark NF.

Participating in the project this year were Norm Kamrud (MSO 64), project leader, George Johnson (MSO 77), George Weldon (MSO 75), Roy Hall (FS Retiree), Brad McBratney (GAC 82 and retiree in training) and Kibb Mills from the

Rocky Mtn. RD and myself. Mike "Pendleton" Munoz, District Ranger Rocky Mountain RD also spent a day working with us. It was nice to have the Ranger participate alongside us retirees.

Accomplishments included completion of the roof replacement, hazard tree removal, corral repair, trail maintenance and pile burning.

We were very impressed with the work ethic of the district employees.

Cliff Lake Trail #6035 Jeff Kinderman (MSO 75)

Cliff Lake is on the Madison Ranger District of the Beaverhead National Forest, about 40 miles south of Ennis, MT. Support and advice for this project came from Gordon Ash, Recreation Forester for the District.

We set up camp about 2 miles from the trailhead. Our gear was transported to the campsite via ATV's. Many thanks to the District crew for the support.

Our primary goal was to repair an existing puncheon (wooden walkway) and add 40 feet of new construction to the existing structure. Materials were a combination of purchased (decking) and cut on site (sill logs/stringers/curbing). The second priority was removing old barbed wire drift fence.

Puncheon construction occupied the crew for the bulk of the week. To utilize on site material we had to fall and skid logs from above the worksite. Joe

Chandler (MSO 71) oversaw the logging aspect with help from Bill Thomas (MSO 75), Jeff Nerison (MYC 77), Dan Hensley (MSO 57), Jack Atkins (MSO 68), Chuck Fricke (MSO 61) and Gary Lawley (MSO 57). Once the logs were rolled down-slope, Gordon and a co-worker from the Hebgen Lake District, plus 2 stalwart 4-legged mules skidded the timber to the site.

After a few trips to the puzzle palace, Rod McIver (MSO 64), Bill Kolar (MSO 59) and Jeff Kinderman (MSO 75) agreed on a construction plan. We encountered no major problems and by the weeks end everything, including fence removal, was completed. Most of the crew had never constructed puncheon and it was emblematic of how well smokejumpers work together.

Our thanks go to Jimmy Deeds (MSO 64) and Nancy McIver (associate) for their outstanding cooking.



Standing L-R: Bill Kolar, Joe Chandler, Jeff Kinderman, Rod McIver, Gary Lawley, Bill Thomas
Sitting L-R: Dan Hensley, Jeff Nerison, Jack Atkins



Above L-R: Jeff Kinderman, Joe Chandler, Bill Kolar



NSA Dixie Project Wild Bill Yensen (MYC 53)

It all started on May 3rd when Stan Linnertz (MSO 61), Chuck Orona (Assoc.), and Stan's brother David (Assoc.), came in from Colorado. They put all the food away and got the bunk house ready for the rest of us. Doug Wamsley (MSO 65) and Jimmy Dollard (CJ 52) came that day and played a round of golf with Wild Bill. On Sunday the 4th we all showed up at the bunk house. Jim Rush (MYC 65) came in his little Toyota RV. Tom Wilks (GAC 87) had his son's little trailer. Tom's son lives in Cedar City. Then Jack Atkins (MSO 68) came in and finally Digger Daniels (MSO 61) rolled in with all of his tools. Chuck had his usual Sunday night supper of Pork Ribs which were delicious. We were treated to all of our food by the Johnson's Corner Truck Stop again for the fourth time.

Monday morning Justin Laycock (USFS) got us together for the safety meeting and the layout of our tasks. Three of us, Jimmie, David and I went

down to the Heritage center and started work on replacing the ancient deck. The rest of the crew went to the camp ground and started working on getting some concrete bases built for signs along the hiking trails. Will Gilbert (USFS) helped them out with a four wheeler to haul tools, water, and concrete. They built forms and put them in place and then poured concrete. By Friday we had those jobs done and then we painted our pole fences, gates, and cattle guards that we had built the previous two years with linseed oil. The weather was OK most of the time but Wednesday we had a storm that drove us inside the Fire House for our Barbecue that the Dixie Forest people put on for us. We even had one snow flurry but none stayed on the ground.

We all had a good time and look forward to next year. We are all proud of the work we did and we appreciate the hospitality of the Dixie Forest people.



Front L-R: Wild Bill Yensen, Jimmie Dollard, Doug Wamsley, Stan Linnertz, Tom Wilks.
Back L-R: Chuck Orona, Jim Rush, Digger Daniels, David Linnertz, Jack Atkins.

Huckleberry Lookout Don Whyde (MSO 66)

Crew members: Jack Sterling (MSO 66), Billings, MT, Bill Hesketh (Assoc.), Acworth, GA, Jack Sisco (MSO 60), Olympia, WA, Dennis Kissack (Assoc.), Frenchtown, MT, Don Whyde, Casper WY, Bob Beiermann (Assoc.), Big Piney WY, along with Jamie Schoen and JP Schubert-Bridger both Teton Forest employees.

Huckleberry Lookout occupies a rocky site on the southern end of Huckleberry ridge at 9,500 feet. It is a lonely site in the Teton Wilderness that possesses a commanding view. It has become a popular day hike from Flagg Ranch for backpackers willing to negotiate the tough climb. The Lookout was built in 1938 by the CCC and one can ponder about the process and the men who built it. 76 years later, another group of men from the NSA completed a stabilization project on the lookout that started in 2012. Perhaps 76 years hence, others will wonder about the men who worked to stabilize the lookout with no more than hand tools. Fitting isn't it?

Our charge this year was to remove the windows and remove and replace the rotten logs on the west wall of the upper level. There was some concern that we could not finish the project in the time we had. Jamie Schoen, the FS lead, worried about "what is the "go-no go" point where I shut this down so we can prepare and leave the structure in a stable condition if we cannot finish."

The crew hit the trail early on Monday. We reached our camp site about noon and the pack string arrived right on time. Bob Beiermann, a veterinarian from Big Piney, arrived about 1PM packing his gear and food all the way in! That feat impressed the crew! Jack Sterling

would later observe that "Bob sure knew how to hogtie a log!" After our camp was set up, we hiked the ½ mile to the Lookout and went to work. Jack Sterling, Bob Beiermann, Bill Hesketh, and Jamie Schoen made up the deck crew and Jack Sisco, JP Schubert, and Don Whyde made up the ground crew.

By 5 PM we had the entire window system removed and all the pieces marked. That put us about a half day ahead of schedule. Of course, removing the windows revealed other problems that needed to be repaired. The header plate above the windows had separated from the roof sill plate log and the roof on the west side had a U sag. We had noticed the window separation last year and had packed in 2 scissor jacks in case we needed them. What a smart move that was!

The next morning Hesketh, Sterling, and Beiermann cut two posts to length, placed the jacks on the posts beneath the header plate and jacked it up. They had that gap closed, the frame leveled, and secured with L clamps in no time. As an added bonus, most of the roof sag was eliminated as well. Sometimes luck is better than planning! By late afternoon all the logs were removed down to the footer log. We were committed then, there was no longer a "go-no go" decision to be made. We had to get it done. With that in mind, we headed back to camp for dinner and an evening of stories and libations.

The next morning the footer log had to be removed and replaced. It was below the floor level and was spiked into the logs that held up the floor. The deck crew coaxed it out with heavy tools, sweat, and "jumper sweet talk"! The new log had to

be cut and notched precisely because the fit was tight. The crew hoisted and removed that log three times before it finally slid into place with a most satisfying thump.

That afternoon, we enjoyed the company of some folks from Tennessee who rode horseback to the lookout. The look on their faces when the crew hoisted a 15 foot 10 inch diameter log over their heads and the deck crew pulled in into place was worth a million bucks! Later two reporters from the Jackson Hole News and Guide arrived, and then Rita Ayers and Angelica Cacho arrived from the Bridger Teton Public Affairs office. The occasion was the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act so Jamie Schoen showed the press around and explained what we were doing. It was the first time any of us had seen Jamie in uniform and he took a devilish ribbing about that.

After the footer was in place, it was a matter of the ground crew cutting the next log to length, notching it, shaping two sides and hoisting the log up to the deck crew. The deck crew lined each log with a sealant, placed a foam material atop the sealant, drilled holes and inserted the end bolts, then spiked the log into place. The last log was placed Thursday at mid-morning. It required a great deal of shaping work so the window plate would fit level and the window supports fit snugly. The windows were in place about 5 PM and the crew headed to camp. A quality job completed by a quality crew and we all knew it.

Ed: The story in the Jackson Hole newspaper can be found at: http://www.jhnewsandguide.com/news/environmental/fire-tower-revival/article_3ab8a24c-4bf5-5565-84b4-beee997ee4db.html



Top row Left to right: Dennis Kissack, Jack Sterling, Jack Sisco, Don Whyde
Bottom row Left to right: Bob Beiermann, Bill Hesketh, JP Schubert

Bob Beiermann on the top landing ground crew is Jack Sterling, Don Whyde, Jack Sisco, JP Schubert, Bill Hesketh, Jamie Schoen (From Jackson Hole News)



Jacking up the window sill plate: Jack Sterling, Bill Hesketh and Bob Beiermann



Art Jukkala Trail Fred Cooper (NCSB '62)

The NSA Trails Program has adopted Forest Service Trail #401 on the Seeley Lake Ranger District, Lolo National Forest. Location and topography of the trail can be obtained by doing a Google search for "Art Jukkala Trail." The trail is named after Art Jukkala who died of a heart attack on the trail in 1999 while serving as Squad Leader on one of the initial NSA Trails Program projects. Purpose of the "adoption" is to provide maintenance for the Forest Service on the 7-mile trail. It was last cleared in 2012 and it appears that clearing it every two years is necessary to maintain the tread, clearing of brush, and downfall. Helping members of the NSA Trails Program are members from the "Boys of

Wednesday" (BOW) weekly hiking group.

On September 8, the crew of 13 broke into two squads with one working on the lower half and the other working on the upper half of the trail. The lower half squad drew the longer straw and were done by 1600. The upper squad didn't get back to their rig till 1830 - good that we were still on daylight saving time. However, they did have more downfall and hiked a total of 12 miles round-trip. Primary work involved cutting about 70 downfall, clearing brush in several locations, and construction and maintenance of water bars. Forest Service representative was Chad Mullman, Trails Program Manager for the Seeley RD.



Back L-R: Fred Cooper (NCSB 62), Ivan Kays (BOW), Gary Wyermann (MSO 67), Vernon Maul (BOW), Gary Graham (BOW), Chuck Fricke (MSO 61), Roger Savage (MSO 57).
Front L-R: Roy Williams (MSO 60), Paul Lohen (BOW), Elan Gilbert (BOW), Joe Aquino (BOW), Jim Phillips (MSO 67), Jack Atkins (MSO 68). Photo by Tim Love, retiring District Ranger, Seeley Ranger District.

Big Sand Lake/Blodgett Pass Trail Bob Whaley (MSO 56)

The crew this year saw some of the usual "old" suspects with Jim Phillips (MSO 67), Bob Schumaker (MSO 59), JB Stone (MSO 56), Robert Cushing (MSO 59), and new additions to the Selway crowd, two NoDaks, Joe Kroeber (MSO 61), (who was on the NSA inaugural 1999 trail crew with me when we lost Art) and his partner in crime, Larry Ukestad (MSO 67), both very outstanding hands and great additions to the crew. Doug Olive from the Powell District augmented us and contributed mightily not only carrying his share of the work load and then some, but conducting extensive on the job X-cut saw training during the many challenges encountered in the most effective and safe way to get the job done. We all learned a lot and are better sawyers as a result.

This year's project was just about a mile above Big Sand Lake about 10 miles in from the Elk Summit Guard station heading toward Blodgett Pass. We were to attempt to clear the 5-6 miles of trail of significant blow-down that occurred this spring leading over to Montana, a job that Katie Knotek, our Clearwater-Nez Perce Forest Wilderness Ranger, said would be a challenge. That was an understatement!

Upon arrival in camp, a large beautiful grassy meadow, we were greeted by the very mournful howling of a wolf pack within about 100-150 yards of our camp to the south in the thick woods, very audible but totally hidden by the forest and making not only their presence known with disdain for our presence but our concern about theirs. They were not heard from again. We missed Jim Renshaw this year as he had back surgery earlier in the year, however he did come in for an early steak

night with his new friend Helen and daughter Gail. We always enjoy Gail and her photographic expertise and Helen fit in very well garnering a solid "thumbs up" by the crew. Fortune smiled on us once again with Larry Cooper assuming the packer lead in Jim's absence and head chef role with his excellent Dutch oven fare complimented with the most able assistance of Joe Robinson who is well known to us as not only a good packer and man in camp but a good hand on the trail as well. Jim Beal was also on board to lend a hand and a new addition in Ed Enniking, recruited by the Coopers to lend a hand this year and who fit in like he was an old hand at this (which he is) and though not quite sure how to fathom all the banter at first, adjusted very quickly.

In past years Katie told us we'd probably not be able to finish the job and in 2 of the past 5 years we did and came out a day early. As was mentioned before, this year she was correct advising that "this year you will have your hands full". From our campsite we worked the many jackpots of blow-down spruce and fir which were created by what must have been a wind of nearly microburst proportions, stacked like pickup sticks, high and often. I've always said, leave something on the table for the next guy and we certainly did. We got about 3 miles cleared of 89 trees, some of the diameter of 28" and ran out of time within 1.5 to 2 miles of the pass. Joe and Ed ventured ahead on horseback as far as the trail permitted and then afoot along with several of the crew and reported another 25-30 trees down. Our estimate at that time was about another 2 days would do it along with a ton of brushing along nearly the whole trail.

On one occasion Bob Cushing was making his way under one of the blow-downs and inadvertently brushed a very active and upset nest of hornets, sustaining their wrath and 4 stings along the way. Fortunately they must have good immunities down in Texas as he suffered no ill effects. That night around the campfire we deliberated as to how we were to manage a strategy for the assault the next morning. Joe Kroeber was packing a canister of bear spray that was to be our weapon of choice. Since that morning was wet and cool, we hustled up the 2 or so miles to the target area, thinking the weather would favor us. I approached the nest to test the activity level to find that they must not sleep nor be bothered by cool damp mornings as they were VERY active. As I turned in a hasty retreat I was met by Doc Phillips, advancing completely covered from head to toe, mosquito netting over his head with gloves covering his cuffs, bear spray extended, eyes barely visible under the netting but fierce and determined. He stood there, toe to stingers, unleashing blasts from the canister 1 shot, 2 shots then several more before quickly determining that a mosquito net does not defend against choking bear spray and stumbling away, choking, coughing and sneezing, he rapidly departed the area of conflict while the rest of the on looking crew began to feel and suffer the same effects. After the spray wore off a short time later, back Doc ventured, Pulaski in hand, for his second assault. He chopped off the retaining branch and with a mighty heave dispatched the troublesome nest far from harm's way. Mission accomplished.

Another interesting experience and one I had not encountered in my 16 years on these ventures was eliminating a very large spruce over the trail with a huge root ball just a bit downhill with

about a 15 foot diameter. We thought it would be a routine cut. Schumaker said "I wonder if the root ball will pull this up?" to which I expressed my doubts but just as the cut was finished guess what. The spruce began a slow then accelerating rise, springing to a lofty height of at least 20 feet or more with a beautiful cut right at the top. Never doubt a man with a degree in nuclear engineering! When the crew behind bumped through they said "OK, just how in the hell did you guys pull that one off?"

Last year Jim Lee (MSO 77), entrusted his wonderful small one man X-cut to me after the project and wanted to have Dick Hulla (MSO 64), work his magic on it. After a period of time the saw was returned to me very well sharpened. Jim was contacted for its return and said for us to use it again since he was unable to participate this year. I told him I was uneasy borrowing equipment and he said it was not meant to be sitting in his garage in Deer Lodge. His offer was gladly accepted and was that saw ever a life-saver, employed on numerous undercuts that would have been nearly impossible to get with the big boys. So the saw was with us....most of the time. It seems that on the way in it departed one of the packs and was MIA upon arrival in camp. After all the travails in getting it back I was, to say the least....a tad concerned. The second morning, Larry and Ed returned to the trail head to retrieve a few more items that were needed and also round up two of Ed's horses that decided they preferred the environs of the truck and trailhead rather than the lushness of the meadow. Returning that evening, they had recaptured the wandering critters and found Jim's saw. Whew! As a side bar to the odyssey of the saw, Doug Olive was greatly impressed with the excellent job Dick had done on the saw exclaiming,

“I need to meet this fellow because it’s one of the finest sharpening jobs I’ve ever seen”. Doug is not easily impressed, being an excellent saw man himself. Good job Dick.

As tradition would have it, stories regaling past exploits abounded around the campfire after a hard day at the “office”, some possibly embellished by the offering of such libations as Famous Grouse, Wild Turkey, Tangle Ridge, Jamison’s Irish Whiskey and Beak’s homebrew rhubarb moonshine sinus opener. During one of these sessions as we were gathering up our camp chairs, Doc Phillips approached my area with what he said was his and which I protested, “negative it was my extra one brought for JB” at which time he opened it up to display the very nicely attached piece of Marine dessert camo with BOSS MAN beautifully embroidered on it. It seems that JB and wife Tommie had them made up for this occasion. What a nice surprise since JB laid that moniker on me some years ago on one of our more challenging “good deals” likening me to the sadistic prison farm guard down South that Paul Newman in Cool Hand

Luke condescendingly called “Boss Man”. Thanks JB and Tommie.

Upon arrival at the trail head on the way in we were met by the Cooper crew, (one of the best in all the North Idaho area) including Larry’s wife Linda who is so valuable to this whole operation with her continued correspondence in helping with coordinating and setting these projects up. It also provided the opportunity for Tommie Stone and my wife LaWana to accompany us to the trail head and meet Linda for the first time. They all enjoyed it immensely.

At the conclusion of the week and reaching the trail head we always anticipate the greetings by our loyal Red’s Bar crew of Jerry Power and Mark Stergios, there to ply us with cold beer and Pepsies. Not to be outdone this year however by the added attraction of Eskimo Pies ice cream treats graciously provided by our USFS leader Katie Knotek. Thanks also Katie for the nice steel cups you provided to the crew. Thanks everyone for your long travels to join us in one of the most interesting and productive projects that I’ve had the pleasure of leading. It was fun.

See ‘ya down the trail.



Standing L-R: Doug Olive, USFS, Larry Ukestad, J.B Stone, Bob Whaley, Bob Cushing
Sitting L-R: Joe Kroeber, Bob Schumaker, Joe Robertson, BCH; Jim Phillips, Larry Cooper, BCH; Ed Enneking, BCH; Jim Renshaw, BCH.

Cache Creek Cabin Don Whyde (MSO 66)

Our NSA Crew was Jack Atkins (MSO 68), Bozeman MT, Doug Wamsley (MSO 65), Denver CO, Richard Trinity (MSO 66), Red Oak IA, Gene Hamner (MSO 67), Lodi CA, Don Whyde, Casper WY, and Gabe Gassman, Park Ranger, YNP.

In a remote northeast corner of Yellowstone Park sits a cabin that is used by Park Rangers on backcountry patrol. The cabin needed a new roof. That was our task for the week. The crew was supplemented with 2 Park Rangers. Both were exceptional to work with.

Monday morning was a "drive in the Park" to the trailhead. Our caravan was held up several times by buffalo (a lot of Buffalo) in Lamar Valley. The Packers and Park Rangers were waiting for us when we arrived. After introductions, the crew dropped their gear, helped pack up, and parked our cars at Pebble Creek campground. The first order of business was to cross Soda Butte Creek. That creek was running high, fast, and looked a mite treacherous. So, shuck the boots, don the river waders and sally forth. Rain was the order of day during our hike, add in the sweat, we were mostly soggy by the time we arrived at Cache Creek Cabin. We sorted our gear and set up a Kelty Shelter that Rich Trinity had brought along. That shelter was golden. It was a dry spot during the day and kept the rain off in the evening.

Gabe Gassman started shucking shakes straightaway and Gene Hamner joined the fray. Man, they made the shakes fly! Chili for dinner, good stories, good beer, Wamsley produced his classic wine glass and opened up the wine box. It was a good evening.

The shakes were removed early Tuesday morning and Atkins, Hamner,

and Wamsley started removing the roof decking. Trinity and Whyde began a search for and falling snags that would be used to replace five roof purlins that were busted. By noon it was raining vigorously and had that look of "here to stay." It was a bad time for a cabin with a partial roof. The inside of the cabin was thoroughly washed down and it was evident that we would have to cover the roof with something to keep the rain out. That problem was solved with a large tarp and some mantis that the packers left.

About 9:30 AM, a park ranger had stopped in at Pebble Creek Campground and noticed that Doug Wamsley's car was running and two windows were rolled down. Doug saddled up, hiked all the way out to the trailhead, secured his car, and hiked back to the cabin. Quite a feat! The only thing he could figure is that he must have pushed the start and window buttons on the key fob after he parked his car.

Lucky for us the purlins that had to be replaced were grouped at the back end of the cabin so part of the crew began laying new 2x6 decking at the front Wednesday morning. Replacing the purlins was easy but getting the thickness right so the decking would lay level was a bit of a problem. The decking was in 6 ft. lengths but the boards didn't necessarily fit the purlins just right so there was a lot of measuring and cutting that had to be done. The crew had several starts and stops with the decking but once a process was in place it went on quickly. About 6 PM we ran out of 2x6 decking. We had dinner on the run and the crew finished the job that evening by doubling up on the old decking. It was dark when we finished.

About 6 PM a bear came in for a looksee. Curious mostly, but it probably smelled chow as well. The Rangers wasted no time in putting it on the run. Never saw it again. Usually when one knows that a bear is around it makes for light sleeping. We were all so tired that we paid that bear no mind at all. Well, maybe a mite!

Had the vapor barrier in place early on Thursday morning and started laying the metal sheets. Those 4 ft. by 10 ft. sheets went on fast and looked good. For sure we would be done by early afternoon. It was raining by noon and walking on a waterproof barrier and steel sheets was downright dangerous. By 3 PM, we were down to the last sheet. Problem - there was no last sheet. We were short 1 sheet and everyone was pissed about that especially after running short on the deck material the day before. Gassman made some quick measurements and figured out that by removing 3 previous sheets and decreasing the sheet overlap we could gain about 10 inches. Then we would remove the last sheet on the opposite side that had an overlap of 14 inches, cut off those 14

inches and there would be enough to finish. Cutting a 10 foot steel sheet lengthwise is not easy. Hamner cut that sheet with a hammer and hatchet and the cut was slick. Damndest thing! All the sheets were back in place and there was just enough. I don't know how Gassman calculated that so quickly but he damn sure was right! We started the apex and front and back gables around 5 PM and the job was finished near dark. That roof looked good, at least what we could see of it.

The sun was shining bright Friday morning and that new roof looked fine. It was a most satisfying morning taking in what we had accomplished. We packed up the gear and helped the Packers load up. Hit the trail about noon and by 1 PM it was raining. It seemed fitting - Walk in with the rain and out with the rain. It was good to be heading home.

Gene Hamner said it best "Rain or shine, we were all willing to stick it out, put in the long hours to get the project done. Good project, great crew, and a great Park Ranger to work with."

See you on the Trail.



The Cabin with original roof.



Gene Hamner shucking shakes



Setting perlings-
Gabe Gassman
(top), Jack At-
kins on the lad-
der, Don Whyde
on the
ground

The Cache Creek
Cabin with a new roof.



Crew L to R: Don Whyde, Rich Trin-
ity, Gene Hamner, Doug Wamsley,
Gabe Gassman
(NPS), and Jack Atkins.

Center Creek Trail “No-Manner” Project Robin Embry (GAC 85)

As Kim Maynard said, the collection was not your everyday crew, even for smokejumpers... The age range was late twenties to early sixties, from four different bases, some were retired, some not. Our crew was short one leg and long one wee human (one of the crew was 4 months pregnant-only time will tell if our project was a true no-manner or not). Crewmembers were: Kim Maynard (MSO 82), Wendy Kamm (MSO 82), Leslie Anderson (MSO 84), Robin Embry (GAC 85), Kelly Esterbrook (RAC 86), Irene Saphra (RAC 86), Sarah Altemus (MSO 01), Jodi Stone (MSO 02), Sarah Brown (RAC 03), and backcountry contessa, cook extraordinaire, Annette Dusseau.

We all showed up a bit short on the project details, but Maynard had led us to believe we would be strolling along Lolo NF’s finest backcountry, slowing every now and again to dig our compact yet hardy little chainsaws or brush nippers out of our overstuffed lunch sacks to clear away some small branch or twig that might detract from a particularly noteworthy or scenic future Facebook post... Probably we’d be whistling some happy tune when we weren’t embellishing on an old jump story along the way. Workdays would be short, meals and happy hours would be long - no shit, ladies, you should sign up!

So it was with some consternation that we watched Chad Mullman, our Forest Service “handler,” start to add a rather large collection of digging tools onto our already massive pile of food, “bar oil,” camping gear, and work equipment at the Monture Guard Station our first morning. We felt compelled to ask him if he didn’t think he was going a bit “overboard” with the digging tools? This

is when we learned the true nature of our mission, which was to complete a trail reroute connecting the Monture Head trail #27 with Center Creek Trail #463. Apparently Monture Creek had washed away the lower portion of the Center Creek Trail, making it impossible to ford with stock. We were to put in a reroute (about 400 yards) to reconnect those two trails. If we finished that, (very doubtful) we would clear out the remaining 2.5 miles of the Center Creek trail, which runs through an old burn, and is heavily laden with blowdown.

I’m sure we weren’t the only ones surprised at this turn of events, as the Montana Backcountry Horsemen were already scratching their heads at our pile of gear before Chad’s addition, and perhaps wondering how they were going to get our huge pile of “stuff” up eight miles of trail. Oh, nine? It’s eleven and a half then??? Those within earshot of this news turned to look at Maynard, who seemed to be studying a particularly fascinating point in the far distance, and not to be bothered with inane conversation.

We headed up the trail in typical smokejumper fashion, carrying most of the hand tools with us. There was so much good conversation and catching up to do on the way in that we barely noticed the hike, and arrived at our home above Monture Falls with plenty of time to set up camp and chill toes and beers in the cool waters of Monture Creek.

Day two got off to a slow start as Chad patiently tried to get the herd all moving in the same direction. The reroute and most of the trail system was in an extensive old burn - a sea of snags, reprod, and jim-jammed logs as far as the eye could see. It was less than a quarter

mile, but with the amount of cutting to be done and dirt to be moved on the steep side slope, it was hard to imagine our project as something that might actually get accomplished in just 3 short days.

To Chad's credit, I'm sure we *appeared* to be a motley crew of unorganized and disjointed energy, - nine people going in six different directions with four chainsaws and nine differing ideas on how to start the task at hand. Chad had never supervised jumpers before, so his world-weary expression and the slumped set of his shoulders that first morning were totally understandable. In just a few hours though, our jumper shit-show had transformed itself magically into an efficient, well-oiled, trail cuttin' *MACHINE*. We ended the first day with just a short section left to saw and we trooped back to camp, tired, but not too tired to celebrate with the usual libations.

Day three saw the end of the heavy saw work and we all got a lesson in building tread from scratch. Chad was adamant he didn't want any part of our world-famous "jumper line" and took a few precious minutes reinforcing this idea of "specs" with a cold stare at each of us. We got lucky with the digging though, and aside from the sheer volume of dirt to be moved, a few big rocks and obstinate stumps, it was "easy diggins" for a jumper crew. By mid-day Chad had lost his gloomy demeanor and was practically levitating while he monitored progress and gave us tips on how to make our trail "flowy" and at the same time be sturdy enough to hold a 2,000 lb. animal and endure the test of time.

Production increased as the crew sensed we might drive the "golden spike" by the end of the day, and talk turned to what we would do with day four if we finished. Chad was so relieved to see his vision taking form that he didn't even

care what we did next. We could hike, fish, day drink in camp - whatever... We had our own vision of course, that lovely one Maynard had spooled out for us to get us all on the project in the first place.

So it was that on day four we found ourselves with overstuffed lunch sacks, chainsaws, NO nippers, and heading up the now accessible Center Creek trail. Maynard told us to track the number of logs that we cut for the smokejumper report but that became the joke of the day. It was somewhere between 567 and 839, depending on who was doing the math. (Gacsuckers quit counting at 20, because they ran out of fingers and toes.) We made it a mile and half before Jodi Stone's tuneless whistling and the lack of an overtime authorization turned us all back towards camp and the final beer and bullshit session of the project. The presiding sentiment was that it was just like any other smokejumper gig, only all the voices you heard were female.

Like smokejumper gigs anywhere, none of the work would have been possible without the unsung heroes of this story, the Montana Backcountry Horsemen who took on a huge task in packing us in and out of Monture Creek and we can't thank them enough for their hard-work and effort. Annette Dusseau, while a rookie "camp cook," proved herself to be master of the culinary arts and a wonderful asset to have on the crew. We would not have gotten very far without all the hours of planning and preparation she did to provide us with over-the-top gourmet meals and plenty of snacks to keep our engines going. Lastly we would like to thank the very patient Chad Mullman, Trails Manager on the Seeley Lake District, for setting us up with a great project and having faith we would find "the flowiness" when he cut us loose at the end.



Typical Evening in Camp: Back L-R: Wendy Kamm, Kelly Esterbrook, Robin Embry, Sarah Brown, Phoenix, Margarita Phillips, Jodi Stone, Sarah Altemus, Kim Maynard. Front L-R: Annette Dusseau, Jesse Thomas, Irene Saphra, Leslie Anderson



Embry knocks Jodi Stone out of the way to pose with saw in the jim-jam after Stone does all the cuttin'...



Jodi Stone's Backcountry Birthday



Kelly Esterbrook massages her feet while Wendy Kamm wonders about that "one more chain..."



After the Golden Spike: L-R: Wendy Kamm, Sarah Altemus, Chad Mullman, Jodi Stone, Irene Saphra, Sarah Brown, Leslie Anderson, Kelly Esterbrook, Front: Kim Maynard, Robin Embry

Middle Fork Peak Trail Perry Whittaker (MSO '71)

The project was located on the Salmon/Challis National Forest in the southern end of the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness (FCRNRW). The campsite is located in the headwaters of Camp Creek in Section 30, T. 19 N., R. 16 E., B.M. approximately fifty-one air miles west of Salmon, Idaho and four air miles east of the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. Our camp was just outside the FCRNRW, although the trail work lies within it. Sunday July 13 was spent driving to the campsite and then setting up camp for the week. We had a great camp site with ample cold water.

The crew consisted of nine NSA retired smokejumpers consisting of Allen Biller (FBX '81), Tom Boatner (FBX '80), Bruce Ford (MSO '75), Jim Phillips (MSO '67), Mike Poetzsch (RDD '79), Jim Snapp (MSO '65), Bill Werhane (MSO '66), Leonard Wehking (FBX '85), and Perry Whittaker, (MSO '71) who acted as squad leader. This was a strong crew with 123 years of smokejumper experience and 103 NSA trail projects under their belts.

Gourmet meals were prepared by Suzanne Poetzsch, (Cook/Medic) an excellent Dutch oven chef. The crew thoroughly enjoyed the meals during the week. Suzanne again went above and beyond the call of duty, we were blessed to have her on the crew. Every meal was a culinary delight; we looked forward with anticipation to the next meal to see what she had prepared for us. We ate like kings and know we could not have had a better cook! I'm sure no one lost weight while on the project. The project involved an estimated eleven miles of trail maintenance on the trails around Middle Fork Peak Lookout i.e. Middle Fork Peak Trail No. 43, 47, 177 and the

Lower Yellowjacket Creek Trail No. 50. A lot of the trail work was between 8,000 and 9,100 feet above sea level. July 14 and 15 was spent working an estimated 3.5 to 4 miles of the Middle Fork Peak Trail No. 43 south of the lookout. This work included removal of down trees from the trail using crosscut saws; falling pack bumper trees; removing saplings and seedlings within the trail corridor; removal of brush and rock from the trail; removal of overhead branches within 10 feet of trail surface; together with some tread work on some of the steeper parts of the trail. We had magnificent views from the upper elevation ridgelines looking westerly into the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. After the second day of hiking from the end of the trail back up to the Lookout to pick up vehicles the comment was made that Whittaker looked like he had been treated with a strong dose of *Roundup*.

July 16 the crew split into two groups with one working down Trail No. 47 in the Warm Springs drainage from the ridge trail towards the Middle Fork of the Salmon River. The other crew worked Trail No. 43 from north of the lookout along the main ridge for a distance of approximately five miles towards Hoodoo Meadows.

July 17 the crew worked Trail No. 43 from near the Lookout southerly down to a saddle. This was a rocky section of trail where a lot of work was done widening and leveling sections of the trail. A couple rock check dams were constructed to build up and level out the tread surface in places where the trail was sloughing badly. In the afternoon we worked Trail No. 177 from the saddle down to the camp site with Harrison completing addit-

ioinal tread work moving rocks, cutting brush, cleaning water bars, constructing eight water bars by felling trees to cut and peel logs 6-7 feet long that were then installed in the trail to assist with the diversion of water off of the trail. We also constructed three check dams by installing logs perpendicular to the trail.

July 18 was spent finishing up some water bars near camp and then driving down to work on the Lower Yellow-jacket Trail No. 50. This included tread work, a lot of brush clearing and sawing of a couple logs from the trail.

Our crew bonded well and we had a great time telling and listening to stories about one another and other old smoke-jumpers. The stories around the evening camp fire were plentiful and most interesting, some of which I thought had a “can you top this aspect”! Kudos to the crew who accomplished the trail work without any significant injury.

Many thanks go to Geoff Fast and Harrison “Harry” Stone, Wilderness Rangers, on the Salmon/Challis who worked with us daily providing guidance in regards to what they wanted and providing the crew with a good experience.

In summary, we cleared and improved an estimated eleven miles of trail. This included cutting of approximately 200 trees from the trails, removing approximately 90 trees from the trail by hand, installation of eight water bars using green trees, installation of three log check dams and a couple rock walls were installed to raise and level the trail grade, removal of many branches from trees and brush along the trail, removal of large rocks, removal of seedlings and saplings adjacent to the trail, and widening and leveling tread for approximately 0.5 mile. Since all trails were within the FCRNRW all saw work was done with crosscut saws or smaller hand saws.

In camp L-R: Jim Snapp, Bruce Ford, Geoff Fast (USFS), Jim Phillips, Tom Boatner, Mike Poetzsch, and Allen Biller



Back L-R: Tom Boatner, Jim Snapp, Bill Werhane, Suzanne Poetzsch (cook), Mike Poetzsch
Front L-R: Perry Whittaker, Bruce Ford, Jim Phillips, Leonard Wehking, and Allen Biller

Monongahela Project

John McDaniel (CJ '57)

The trail project on the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia as originally planned was to reroof a lookout cabin near the Blue Bend Recreational Area. The crew would consist of eight jumpers and one associate. The project would last one week. The crew would stay and eat at a local 4H camp.

When the project began we immediately lost two jumpers due to family issues and medical problems. The crew consisted of Jack Atkins (MSO '68), Al Brodersen (Assoc.), Hank Brodersen (MSO '54), Rick Blackwood (CJ '79), Dan Mitchell (RAC '78), Denis Symes (MYC '63), and me.

We were also informed at the last minute that a rehab group from Colorado would do the building and that we could overhaul a beach area on Anthony Creek that had suffered flood damage. This project would consist of recovering

flag stone from the creek and placing them on the beach and secure them with cement. This project, after a survey of the work, would take most if not all of the week. There were other projects (trail work and bridge maintenance) if we had time.

The beach work took the whole week and was completed, but under trying conditions of heat and humidity. We also suffered less than optimum attention by the Forest Service with few visits, if any, by supervisory personnel. Nevertheless, we got it done to FS satisfaction.

This was my last Trail Project. After ten years I have turned future projects over to Denis Symes who will coordinate other efforts on the Jefferson and George Washington National Forests.



Admiring Handiwork (L-R): Denis Symes , Hank Brodersen, and Al Brodersen



The Crew L-R: Jack Atkins, Al Brodersen, Hank Brodersen, Rick Blackwood, Dan Mitchell, Denis Symes, John McDaniel



With shovels L-R: Dan Mitchell and Rick Blackwood

Setting Flagstone L-R: Denis Symes and Hank Brodersen



Pentagon Station

Robin Hamilton (MSO 69)

Assignment: Pentagon Station
Oil and stain cabin
Stain barn
Fix door handle
Dig pit for new outhouse
Construct new outhouse
Destruct old outhouse
Fill old pit and level ground

adequate and the nails cheap and prone to bending so there was opportunity for colorful jumper language. The pit diggers, however, did not slow down and reached six and a half feet by 10 a.m. Since the new building was not ready, Mike decided to crib in the new hole and finished that by lunch.

Crew: Fred Axelrod, Keith Beartusk, Dave Dayton, Leo Griego, Robin Hamilton, Mark Johnson, Mike Owen, John Stewart, all from the MSO Class of 1969.

While the construction continued, staining the barn and oiling the cabin started. The crew celebrated a good day of work with steak, mashed potatoes with gravy, and a fresh purple slaw salad, followed by white cake with chocolate frosting. Derek, the assistant wilderness ranger, arrived with a two man trail crew and liked what he saw. A couple of the guys were disappointed to learn that there was no fishing because of the falls three miles down the river. Mike had thought he was losing his touch.

After a ten-mile hike to the Pentagon Station on Monday the 14th of July, the crew cooled off with the glacier cold water of Spotted River, still full from run-off from the peaks of the continental divide: Hahn Peak, Three Sisters, Redhead Peak, Table Mountain, and Pentagon Mountain.

Next the crew began to assess the magnitude of the task while we waited for the packers to arrive with our gear and the food. The ranger didn't send supervision with us so we searched for digging tools and painting equipment.

On Wednesday the new outhouse was finished except for the roof, the old hole filled, and the ground leveled. The cabin was stained and oiled, the barn stained, and the new building stained. Lots were drawn to see who had the honor of first use. The Ranger returned from trail work amazed to see everything done. We asked what else we could do and he said that the corral could use some work. Dinner was French Cassoulet with garlic bread and tossed green salad, followed by chocolate brownies.

A six-and-a-half foot hole in rocky ground looked difficult, so while Chef Robin stored the food and started dinner, the crew started digging and by dinner had a two-foot start. Dinner was spaghetti with red sauce, garlic bread, and tossed green salad with homemade vinaigrette.

Breakfast on Tuesday featured sausages and scrambled eggs with green pepper and onion. Dave, John, and Mark attacked the puzzle of the new outhouse while the rest of the crew worked on the new pit. The instructions for the new structure did not include dimensions so there was a mistake that took an hour to remedy. The drilled holes were also in-

Thursday morning the crew set five new posts on the corral, remounted most of the rails on the correct side of the posts, and was finished by noon. We ended the day by swimming, talking, watching John make a commemorative sign for the new building and mopping the cabin for the first time of the year. Dinner was Robin's southwest chili with cornbread and honey.

We had all saved one beer to go with the chili. Sitting around the fire after dinner the last of the spirits came out to be consumed before the hike out. Mark again facilitated a session of sharing not usually done by macho smokejumpers. At 10:30 p.m. we were awakened by the packer banging on the door, asking us to call Spotted Bear and tell them he had arrived. Dayton was pleased because that meant that they would pack our gear out in time for us to drive to Missoula in daylight. Dayton said that we were leaving at 8:00 a.m. and would meet him at the trailhead.

In the morning the crew packed and cleaned up, hitting the trail at 8:03. They hiked slowly, having to stop often to pick huckleberries. They had been ex-

pecting the pack train to pass them but when they arrived at the trail head at 1:00 the packers had not arrived. Luckily there was a great patch of huckleberries near the trailhead and they picked for two hours waiting for the packers. At 4:00 a forestry aid drove up and said they had just got word that the packer had only left an hour ago. So we drove down to Spotted Bear, cleaned up, had dinner, then back up to the trail head at 7:30. The packer was there without gear, totally drunk. He was lucky to escape unharmed. We had to drive until 1:00 am so we could put two of our guys on the plane at 6:00 am.

The Ranger said he'd love to have us back and we could name our spot.



L-R standing: Mike Owen, Robin Hamilton, Leo Griego, Mark Johnson, Dave Dayton, Fred Axelrod.
Kneeling: Keith Beartusk, John Stewart.



Top: Fence as we found it.

Above: Fence as we left it.



Far Left: Dave Dayton building the outhouse.

Left: Mark Johnson making final test.

Rocky Mountain National Park Doug Wamsley (MSO 65)

This was our second year of doing a Colorado project in Rocky Mountain NP. Our project in 2013 was considered a success by the crew and the vote was to seek another for 2014.

Planning began in February when Warren Pierce (CJ 64), Bob Doran (Assoc) and I met with Kevin Sowiak, Eastside Trails Supervisor and the park Volunteer Coordinator, Lindsey Lewis. They gave us a warm welcome back and assured us they had several worthwhile projects and a camping arrangement we would enjoy (and, they came through!)

The crew began to gather at the Moraine Park Campground on Sunday, June 8. By evening most had arrived. Chuck Orona (Assoc) our chef and veteran of many trail projects, and Stan Linnertz (MSO 61) served an outstanding meet and greet dinner. Once again, our food and our chef were provided by the Johnson's Corner complex on I-25 near Loveland, Colorado. It is a pretty safe bet that no one lost much weight on the project.

The crew was Tom Butler (MSO 61), Bob Doran (Associate/chief photographer/ex-ribey goon), Jim Klever (Assoc), Luke Lemke (MSO 69), assistant squad leader Warren Pierce (CJ 64), Ron Siple (MYC 53), Steve Vittum (MSO 71), Bill Ruskin (CJ 58), Gary Stitzinger (MSO 65), Carlos "Chuck" Orona our Johnson's Corner *Chef de Cuisine* and Stanley Linnertz our senior statesman, *sous chef* and principal after-dinner speaker. Joe Lord (MSO 56) arrived a day late with a fantastic excuse that his dog had treed a bear in his front yard! All agreed it was the best "the dog ate my homework" story we had heard. Yours truly was the squad leader by virtue of the fact that everyone else

had turned the job down.

The project kicked off Monday with the arrival of Zephyr McConnell, our NPS leader from last year. Despite a recent promotion she agreed to come out with us once again. We were all grateful. There was one hitch; the planned project, a rebuild of a bridge over the Big Thompson River, had to be postponed. The water was far too high and fast for a safe project. Not to worry—Zephyr just moved us five hundred yards down the Fern Lake Trail to a section of trail that had been washed out as a result of a landslide last summer. The new plan was to build a series of raised boxes, much like the turnpikes we have constructed on other projects. These were to be spaced four feet apart and joined by large buried stepping stones. The spacing would allow runoff water to cross the trail without washing out the tread. And, the good news was that the landslide had left a goodly supply of sand and small rock nearby that could be used as filler for our raised sections. And when we had a shortage of filler rock, Luke Lemke grabbed a four pound double jack and began making small rocks out of big ones. Dozens of curious hikers were informed that while Luke learned this skill in prison, he now did it just for fun.

The timbers needed to construct the raised trail sections were packed in by the park's pack string. The packers were cheerfully efficient. The timbers needed sizing and angle cuts to fit each location. Since we were in a wilderness area this was done with cross cut saws. Several young hikers got a chance to be on one end of the saw along with an assurance that there would be a spot for them in a future jumper rookie class.

On many projects a crew will see

few, if any, hikers during an entire week. On the Fern Lake Trail we had hundreds of hikers! They were friendly, cooperative and nearly all thanked us for the work we were doing.

Our evenings would be best described as great food and adult beverages and silk stories, a few might have

even been true.

On behalf of the entire crew I would once again like to express our appreciation to Chauncey and Christie Taylor and all of the people at Johnson's Corner who do so much to make this, and other projects possible.



L-R: Luke Lemke, Gary Stitzinger, Doug Wamsley



Stan Linnertz proudly showing off his salad.



Back L-R: Bob Doran, Luke Lemke, Tom Butler, Chuck Orona, Jim Klever, Warren Pierce, Steve Vittum, Bill Ruskin, Gary Stitzinger
Front L-R: Ron Siple, Stan Linnertz, Joe Lord, Doug Wamsley, Zephyr McConnell

Spyglass Lookout

Bob Denner (Assoc.)

(With a little help from Terry and Carl)

Here are a couple of firsts: Bob Denner (Associate), the forester at Priest River Experimental Forest for whom jumper crews had worked on volunteer projects every summer since 2010, had finally run out of tasks there. Obviously, he enjoys working with jumpers, because he took annual leave to join us on the Idaho Panhandle National Forests' Magee Project.

A second first (really, that makes sense if you think about it) is that a private organization, Lutherhaven, purchased all the food for our nine-man crew.

Lutherhaven is a religious organization that, several years ago, bought the Forest Service's Shoshone Work Camp on the North Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River. Each summer high school youth from across the nation spend a week or more at the facility, working as volunteers on Forest Service projects and helping indigent people who live in the vicinity. Since Lutherhaven buys food for the kids, they volunteered to provide it also for us big kids.

Twelve jumpers had signed up for our crew, but, for various reasons, three dropped out the week before the project began. Since the food had already been purchased, we had a-plenty for our chief cook Jimmie Deeds (MSO 64) and his understudy Allen Isaacson (MSO 63) to exercise their considerable Dutch oven culinary skills.

We drove to Magee, a hundred-year-old facility that had lost its ranger station pedigree in 1973, on a Sunday and staked out our camp that afternoon. Two crewmen, Bob Smee (MSO 68) and Carl Gidlund (MSO 58) bunked in the warehouse, Isaacson and Terry Egan

(CJ 65) lolled in the comfort of their travel trailers, Dave Blakely (MSO 57) called his pickup camper home for the week, while Deeds, Denner, Dan Hensley and Gary Lawley (both MSO 57) "luxuriated" in their pup tents.

Work began the following day with introductions to Fred Simmet, a FS employee who knew what had to be done, and Ralph Krueger, the Lutherhaven employee who shepherds camp kids and, incidentally, kept adding tasks to our to-do list.

That Monday, several of the crew drove the seven miles up to Spyglass, the 84-year-old lookout which was to be the focus of our efforts for the week. The ground-level building had been moved to its current location sometime before we arrived.

It was apparent that Lutherhaven was not quite ready for the NSA crew so they returned to Magee and gathered the tools they thought would be needed. Denner became the designated driver for the lookout crew since his was the only pickup that wasn't attached to a trailer or crowned with a camper.

Back at Magee, Blakely and Gidlund, under the guidance of Simmet, started planning how to build eight massive six and eight-foot shiplap shutters (actually four sets of half-shutters), following the original Spyglass Lookout plans dated 1930. Those plans called for "clinch nailing", a traditional woodworking skill that none of us had heard of before. It was a technique, we were told, that was necessary to ensure historical verisimilitude.

Krueger had told us in advance that he would purchase special clinch nails for

the project, but before we began, he said he hadn't bought them since they were too expensive. So while the work slowed as Blakely and Simmet tried to figure out how to clinch with standard nails, Gidlund scraped the inside of an outhouse at Magee preparatory to painting, a task later accomplished by Isaacson.

After the scraping, Blakely and Simmet were still scratching their heads over the ancient plans, so Gidlund began splitting firewood, another task on our to-do list.

Tuesday morning the lookout crew — Denner, Egan, Lawley, Hensley, and Smee — started late (again) while waiting for Krueger to arrive with the latest dope on the tasks ahead and a truckload of Lutherhaven youngsters who were also to work at the lookout.

The crew's first order of business was to finish tacking felt around the building and trim the shiplap roof sheathing. Whoever had put them up didn't trim the boards at the gable ends to the same length. Smee was gracious enough to get on the roof (a 5:7 pitch) to snap a chalk line and make the cut. The team also completed cutting and nailing in fascia boards for the southern peak.

As the sun beat down on the snow and ice shield roofing barrier, it started to soften and Smee was effectively stuck to the roof, no safety harness required. The crew then had to replace a length of snow and ice shield from the north side of the roof that had blown off and probably landed in Montana.

That was enough for one day and the roof gang left for Magee mid-afternoon. While disappointed that they didn't get more work done, leaving early provided more time for food, beverages, stories, and insults.

By Wednesday the weather was getting uncomfortably warm, so the crew

ate breakfast at 5:30. They decided that they weren't going to wait for Lutherhaven personnel and headed to the lookout just after 6. They were tasked that day with installing 30-pound tarpaper over the snow and ice shield.

That sounded like overkill but those were the marching orders so that was the first project. They'd been given a green box labeled harness and rope but the safety harness was a youth size. Since Smee lost his youth years ago, he ended up wrapping himself in a 10-gauge extension cord while Hensley hung onto the other end. As the tarpaper went on the roof, a couple crewmen cut waferboard to complete the sheathing on the cabin walls and covered all with tarpaper.

With the roof finally ready for shingles four got started laying the first course, three thick, on the north and south sides working from scaffolding and ladders. They actually managed to put down about five courses on each side. Then Krueger arrived and told them to cut a hole in the roof and loft ceiling for a chimney.

Back at Magee, work proceeded on the shutters with Isaacson, Gidlund and Blakely working under the direction of Simmet. First, prime the shiplap, cut it to size, and then staple it together. Next, drill holes for the clinch nailing, then drive the ersatz clinch nails through, turn over the shutter, bend the nails to a tunnel-like shape with pliers, then hammer the nails down so they clench the wood. Finally, turn over the shutter once again to re-hammer the nail heads that protruded.

Thursday was a day of mass production (finally!) on the lookout roof as properly sized safety harnesses were provided and two designated roofers pounded nails. Lawley had traded places with Blakely, who had been on the shutter manufacturing crew at Magee. Once

Blakely got on the roof he wouldn't get off.

At least Smee knew when he had had enough and let Egan and Hensley take their turns. While this was going on, Krueger showed up with his entourage of youngsters and pointed out that the west gable end needed tar paper and sheathing (more work!). Two of the crew got that done while Krueger located the spot where the chimney pipe would go.

The roofers cut the hole but when they checked the size and fit of the roof flashing, they found that some shingles had to be removed. To compound their misery, they checked the flashing before it was permanently installed and found the pitch didn't match the roof and Krueger would have to exchange it for the right pitch if he wanted the pipe to be plumb. They ended the day with the roof on the south side completely shingled and a small portion of the north side done. All told, about 60 percent of the shingling was completed.

Lawley, on vacation from the Spyglass Lookout roof, joined the shutter team at Magee and with four — Simmet, Isaacson, Gidlund and Lawley — hammering (and bending and hammering and bending) — the eight shutters were finally built.

Throughout the project, the jumper team was helped by young men and women from Lutherhaven who primed shiplap for the interior and exterior walls,



Jimmy Deeds making sure it's ready.

improved the trail to the lookout's privy and nailed the lookout's floor. They also assisted the jumper team in site maintenance.

Friday morning, the completed shutters and siding were loaded onto a tandem axle trailer, to be parked at the lookout awaiting the next crew. Several went along for the ride. Halfway there, the trailer got a flat tire. Once the flat was removed, they found that the rim of the spare did not match the bolt pattern on the hub so the flat tire was remounted on the trailer.

That was no easy task since the hub was free-wheeling. One guy would hold the hub while another matched up the rim and a third would bolt it together (how many jumpers does it take to change a flat tire?). The last four miles to the lookout were painfully slow, but all made it alive, parked the listing trailer, draped tarps on the shutters and shiplap, cleaned up the site and headed back to Magee.

There Denner, Gidlund and Isaacson continued chopping and piling firewood until the team packed up and headed out Friday afternoon, some for home, several for the next NSA project.

It was an enjoyable project, albeit frustrating since it went by fits and starts. However, morale remained high and the team bonded so well that all the members pledged to reunite for future projects.



The crew teams up to set the table.



On the roof: Dave Blakely (L) and Terry Egan



Bob Smee and Bob Denner trimming the roof.



L-R: Allen Isaacson, Dan Hensley, Jimmie Deeds, Carl Gidlund, Bob Smee, Bob Denner, Gary Lawley, Dave Blakely, Terry Egan

Yellowstone Nature Connection Bob Smee (MSO 68)

On Sunday May 18, 2014, for the third year, a NSA crew gathered at West Yellowstone to do a week of construction on the historic ranger's residence of the Yellowstone Nature Connection (YNC). The old log building is used to house volunteers who come to help YNC conduct their Jr. Smokejumper Program, which is an educational program for the many hundreds of kids that visit the YNC complex each summer. The crew consisted of Geno Bassette (MSO 80), Tom Lindskog (MSO 75), Teddy Rieger (MSO 51), Hans Trankle (MSO 51) and cook Tom Blunn (Assoc.).

The building is the Madison Ranger Station in West Yellowstone and was the first ranger station on the old Madison National Forest before it was changed to the Gallatin National Forest. It was probably built in the early 20's. It stayed in its original location and the town was expanded over the years around it. We acquired the 4 buildings in 2010 through an agreement with the town, the historic district, and the FS. We then relocated the buildings to their current location. We have had several jumper projects work on the West Yellowstone buildings in the past several years including the past two years of trail projects. We mainly wanted to provide a drive to project for jumpers who could no longer do long hikes but still wanted to be involved.

The goal was to get the new basement walls ready for painting and to remediate some water leakage that occurred in the basement over the winter. The crew hit it hard with the help and guidance of YNC President Mark Petroni and Board

Member Barry Hicks (MSO 64).

After unloading and positioning numerous cases of floor and wall tile, commercial carpet tile, pre-hung doors, and other materials, the crew finished the remnants of framing and sheet-rocking that remained from last summer.

Then the big job of taping the dry-wall joints and applying three coats of plaster to all the seams and corner metal, with sanding and cleanup in between.

On the exterior of the house we installed a waterproof membrane below the soil which sloped away from the building foundation and ended about four feet out. This is to divert all rainwater and snow melt away from the basement foundation allowing it to percolate through the porous soil. Additional soil was hauled and placed over the fabric contouring away and compacted with a vibrating compactor.

Floor tile was laid in the laundry and portions of the two bathrooms and covered with construction paper to protect it throughout the remaining construction. The basement fire-door was hung and masked along with the windows, shower stalls, and fixtures in preparation for wall texture and paint. The walls were all spray textured and by the end of the week were ready to be painted.

I think everyone involved was pleased to do such meaningful work that will last many years, and I think very proud of the quality of craftsmanship that was produced. Further, we experienced deep satisfaction in helping further the mission to two meaningful nonprofit organizations.

Next year we hope to undertake two week-long projects for the YNC, to complete their complex of buildings that will provide an exceptional educational

program for youth and a very meaningful volunteer opportunity for NSA members for many years to come.



Two of the four buildings on site. The nearest is the visitor center with displays and merchandise. The other is a storage facility. Not pictured is the house being remodeled for volunteers to stay in and a warehouse.

Sunbeam Hot Springs & Sunbeam Dam
Two Sites, Two Tales
Bob Donnelley (MYC 52, Gary Cardoza (MSO 74)
Compiled by Steve Carlson (IDC 62)

Once again we “called for papers” from the ten our participants, counting the cook, on the early Stanley, ID project. The two responses are below. We had only one Trail Crew rookie on the project, Gary Cardoza (MSO 74). Tom Kovalicky (MSO 61) once again played squad leader. The other members were Robin Embry (GAC 85), Bob Donnelley (MYC 52), (Wild) Bill Yensen (MYC 53), George Cross (MSO 74), Doug (Digger) Daniels (MSO 61), Roy Korkalo (MSO 61), and myself. We had the pleasure of breaking in Katy Nelson, who has spent several years as a Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA) Wilderness Ranger, as the new “coordinator of volunteers”. She replaced Deb Peters, who after many years of putting up with us, has gone on to other tasks with the Forest Service. Katy always gave us weird looks when we told her “Deb never made us do that”, or “Deb always did that for us”.

Bob Donnelley: Five days makes a work week for nine retired smokejumpers and one charming project team leader, Katy Nelson, representing the SNRA in Stanley. Team ages range from Robin Embry (GAC 85), mid-fifties and is the first women to retire as a smokejumper after 30 years of service with the Forest Service, up to five in their 70’s and finally, three in their 80’s.

The “team of ten” members are thankful for the project sponsor, the Sawtooth Society, who provides financial support. They also select our projects from a suggested list in the area. Their generous support makes our team’s work week a productive and fun working project. If you have the opportunity to thank

them, please do.

The 2014 project was to renovate two recreation sites. Our first burst of energy was spent giving the Sunbeam Hot Springs recreation site a tune up. A major part of the project was repairing the two stone stairways that lead from the parking lot to the bath house, and other masonry repairs. Another big part of the project was painting the wood frames around window openings and doorways in the bath House. Robin and Katy, our two high energy women team members, spent two and one-half days painting the roof. The rest room building received the same tune up, plus a new ventilation chimney, thanks to Gary. Now both buildings look like new.

We heard many compliments on our efforts by visitors to the site. One family stopped to tell us they have used the hot springs for forty three years. Their comment was “the hot springs have never looked this good, thank you”.

A second effort by the team of ten moved to the Sunbeam Dam rest area and interpretive site. We replaced many of the log rail fence poles and updated the masonry work. Lastly, we cleaned, weeded, and polished up the entire rest area. We didn’t have time to complete the job, but Ron Stoleson’s crew came in the following week and finished it.

We again thank the generosity of Hans and Terry Carstensen for the use of their Crooked Creek Lodge where we slept, ate, rehydrated, recreated, and socialized. Shelly Dumas, our awesome cook, once again provided excellent on time meals.

We are all looking forward to next summer. The highlight of 2015 will be celebrating the final project for our long time team member, George Cross. He will retire from Trail Crew at the young age of 90. He still outworks us all. What a guy!

Stop by the Sunbeam area and observe our quality work. See you all in 2015.

Gary Cardoza: I had thought about volunteering to the Smokejumper trail crew projects for years but never got it done, until an ex-jumper I met in Missoula happened to be camping across from my wife and me at the 2013 reunion in Missoula. We had gone to MSO for two reasons, to attend the Jumper reunion and for my wife (Heidi) to run the MSO Marathon. The short version is after talking with other jumpers and a nudge from my camping jumper friend, my wife said it was time.

I started by applying for several crews and was lucky enough to get selected by the crew working at Stanley ID. I packed up my gear, and was on my way. What an adventure. It Was Great. The old war stories never stopped throughout the day and night, and the work was more fun than work. Working with the FS again brought back many memories of the 30+ years in my Wild Land Fire career with the FS and BLM. Seeing the crew work like they had been together for years was great.

We worked on several projects dealing with the rehab of an old hot springs warming hut/changing hut, updated painting, rock work, roof repair, and replaced wood railings. It really felt good to look at our combined finished projects to see a beautiful historic site brought back to life. Several times we had local residents and vacationers from all over the country stop and tell us how great it looked, thanking us for our time

and work. No thanks needed, it all came together in personal thanks from within ourselves knowing that we were giving back to such a beautiful spot in our nation, enabling the history to continue on for everyone to enjoy.

By the end of our project week I had gained 5 pounds eating my way through some of the best back country home cooking ever. We listened to many stories that I had no idea had or would ever have happened, and made some friends that I look forward to seeing again next year.

I want to thank the crew for taking me on as their rookie, making me feel that I was a part of their past several years of project work. I have read many stories from the Early Days in the Forest Service volumes 1, 2, and 3 publications. Those men set the course for which many men and women chose to follow. In many ways, with the many different lives, personalities, good and bad times, the Smokejumpers and their legacy are continuing to push that course forward protecting and improving the land and keeping alive the historic course of the US Forest Service from its beginning.

PS: Early Days in The Forest Service makes for some great reading. They were a tough breed back in those days.





Gary and Digger doing a little masonry repair.



Robin and Katy showing off their climbing skills.



The Bathhouse as seen from the road, with the crew hard at work below.



L-R: Tom making sure Gary and Bob get it done right.



L-R: Doug (Digger) Daniels, Roy Korkalo, Bob Donnelley, Gary Car-doza, Tom Kovalicky, Steve Carlson, FS guy, Robin Embry, George Cross, (Wild) Bill Yensen, Katy Nelson

Sunbeam Dam and Indian Rapids

Roland Pera (MSO 56)

(With little help from Digger)

Our Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA) project began on Sunday afternoon, July 6. The campground which was to be our home for a week is located about 15 miles mostly east of Stanley. The town has a population of only 63, but in the summer it is abuzz with activity. Simply because we had a paved road to the Flat Rock Campground where we stayed, do not assume that this was a cushy project.

A little about the area - the SNRA is comprised of approximately 756,000 acres of pristine forest land which includes the rugged Sawtooth Mountains, many trails, and the mighty Salmon River. Isn't it the dream of every hardened fisherman to fish the Salmon River? The area was set aside in 1972 and the agency immediately began buying Partial-Interests in the lands to control development. This was a gigantic task that is now mostly completed. This assures the citizens of our country that the area will look the same as it looks today a hundred years from now. Compare that with the destruction of the once pristine Bitterroot Valley from the 1950's to the present.

Our crew consisted of seven jumpers and two associates. The average age of our group was 75.7 years. This would help explain why this gang of nine did not hear very well. A hearing aid salesperson would have been thrilled to have access to these nine curmudgeons. Collectively we traveled approximately 9500 miles round trip to do this project.

Our leader was Roland (Ron) Stoleson (MSO 56). A little about Ron- he lives in Ogden, UT, was a forest supervisor in Region Four for 9 years, is an im-

peccable dresser (he started on Monday morning with a pair of almost new, Tundra, pressed pants). Next I will mention Larry Nelsen (Nelly) (MSO 56), resides in Missoula, is a jack-of-all-trades (added masonry to his long list), and jumped for 20 plus years. Larry, a hopelessly addicted fisherman, tossed his line in the water each evening but did not have much luck. Bill Murphy (MSO 56) (there were four of us on the crew who trained in MSO that year), was a career F.S. guy, lives in Dillon, apparently likes West Yellowstone because he sure makes a lot of trips there. He took up ski patrolling and football refereeing after he retired.

Continuing with the crew - Doug Daniels (MSO 61), better known as "Digger" is a born talker, lives in Belgrade (MT, not Yugoslavia), and was a civil engineer. He and our other civil engineer were called into action several times to fix our cook stove. An interesting sidelight, he has driven to Alaska six or seven times. Bill Yensen (MYL 53) (aka "Wild Bill"), has a considerable talent of engraving knives, was a teacher, and lives in St George, UT and McCall, ID. He was one of our stone masons. One of our two cooks was Stan Linnertz (MSO 61) who now lives in Berthoud, CO, was formerly a radio broadcaster for the "Big Red" football games of Nebraska. He also brought all the food and the kitchen equipment 800 miles from CO. Stan always keeps a story ready to pull out of his top drawer.

Rounding out the crew, we now focus on Gary Hendrix (Assoc.) from Helena MT, who was our second civil engineer. He was perhaps the only one that did not interrupt the group to tell a story (the rea-

son there were so many interruptions was that too many of the guys could not hear well enough to know that someone else was talking). He has been on this crew for a number of years. Fred Patten (Assoc.), our other cook, was on his first NSA project. He was a career forty-year F.S. dude and currently hails from the Denver area. Did I mention that the cooks did a superb job? He and Stan are to be also publicly thanked for making many trips into town to procure ice for our all-important happy hours. Lastly, this writer (Roland Pera) was the 4th of our bunch to train in MSO in 1956. I am from the Kansas City area, a KU Jayhawk fan, was a stockbroker, and I hope to put to good use my newly-acquired skill of painting outdoor toilets.

We were at the Sunbeam Dam Overlook for a good part of the time, some of us longer than others. We also worked at the Indian Rapids overlook, and I believe the other site had a name like 'Coyote Hole'. It overlooked a place where miners excavated a shaft back into the gravel deposits that had been placed by the river in ancient glacial melting times. We were able to place a couple of good "brands" in the fresh concrete with a

Smokejumper logo iron. It will be interesting to see how they turn out next year.

Our work was mostly two-fold - replacing the wooden logs on fences that help keep the visitors from walking down the steep banks to the Salmon River at the overlooks and repairing the stone posts holding the logs, hence the need for the "cracker jack" team of masons to place their well-honed skills into action. Finally, let us not forget scraping and painting the outhouse.

Working with us from the SNRA was Nara Brunson, a spunky gal in her early 30's. She has also been a restaurant cook. She brought us cookies and other pastries. Nara is a nice person and a good worker. Also visiting us one night for dinner was Deb Peters of US Forest Service ilk. She is also a nice gal, possesses considerable conversational skills, and was well-known to our crew members that had previously worked in the Sawtooth NRA. She also endeared herself to the group by bringing ice-cold cantaloupe and watermelon one day.

It was a good week - we hope we helped spruce up a small area in a large beautiful area of Idaho.



Wild Bill prepping the masonry for the rails.



Digger using his chainsaw planner to prep the rails. Larry putting in rails in the background.



L-R: Bill, Ron, & Nara preparing the rails.



The Finished rail work.



Above: Larry on the roof.

Right: Larry doing rock and mortar work.



Standing L-R: Ron Stoleson, Fred Patten, Larry Nelson, Stan Linnertz, Bill Murphy
 Kneeling L-R: Gary Hendrix, (Wild) Bill Yensen, Doug (Digger) Daniels, Roland Pera

Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness Bob Aldrich (Assoc.)

2014 brought a different crew but the same happy results after a week of hard work and reconnecting at Wilderness Canoe Base, located five miles from the Canadian border at the end of the Gunflint Trail, sixty miles north and west of Grand Marais, Minnesota.

We spent the week in a combination of work at the Canoe Base and the National Forest Service Campground, aptly named Trail's End. The Gunflint Trail is a two-way, paved road, cutting through the eastern end of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, the most heavily used wilderness area in America. The campground, located on the edge of the BWCAW, receives the same heavy use, and required some TLC.

The work crew was able to rehabilitate and reconstruct several staircases, replacing log headers and establishing water bar runoff areas. This simple sentence encompasses many hours of work, and many, many stairs. In addition, boardwalks were replaced and trails cleared and maintained. Special mention should be made to Chuck "Lopper" Sheley (CJ 59), without whom every trail in the BWCAW would descend into the Heart of Darkness. Chuck was aided in his tireless efforts by Don Havel (FBX 66), another happy Lopper.

Simultaneously, the Blueberry Trail at the Chik Wauk lodge received a long length of boardwalk, finishing the work we had begun the year prior, maintaining and improving a trail that runs north along the Seagull River, heading up toward the Canadian border.

Tuesday brought cloudy weather and cooler temperatures. Undeterred, the Smokejumpers proceeded to dismantle and deconstruct an old and now un-

needed building, the temporary first aid station at the Canoe Base. Attentive students of history will note that the Smokejumpers made this task necessary through their efforts the year before, having erected a timber frame structure that would ultimately become Cradle Knoll, the first-aid, nursing station, and infirmary for Wilderness Canoe Base. The original Cradle Knoll was burned in the fire of 2007, along with nearly forty structures at the Canoe Base. Putting up a new Cradle Knoll in 2013-2014 is a significant step in the rehabilitation of lost buildings.

But all of this meant that the temporary structure needed to go, and go it did. It was not without some resistance on the building's part, or at least its builders: there were at least five different types of wood screws used, all of which were guided by the fundamental principle: why use one screw when three will do?

The Smokejumpers would not be denied. We were tasked with taking down the building, and down it went. At the end of the day, the debris was gone, the salvageable studs and joists were neatly descrewed and de-nailed, and the job site was pristine.

The next three days were spent in a large reconstruction of log headers in a staircase at the Canoe Base, coupled with winterizing the main lodge. Suffice to say that the former was a vintage project of the north woods: backbreaking labor, simple tools, moving earth and muscling around 6x6 timbers, and a job that will last for many, many years. The thousands of campers and staff who will ascend and descend those stairs will give no thought to the sweat that created them, which is only fitting: it is not the work that matters, but that which it enables, for teenagers to

experience the same miracle of the Northwoods that makes all of us return year after year.

For those who may not have followed the history of this service project, let it be said that no one, no matter their effort, could lose weight when confronted with Jim Cherry's (MSO 57) honey, pork chops, sirloin steaks, or tomatoes the size of basketballs. Those folks from Iowa, they know how to eat. Those meals made the whole week possible.

We thank the Canoe Base staff for putting us up in style, and look forward to new projects in 2015.

In addition to those mentioned above the total crew consisted of John Twiss (RAC 67), Ron Thoreson (CJ 60), Jerry John (CJ 62) and associates Judy Cherry, KG Sheley, Jackie Twiss, Marv Lindseth, Brian Willhite, Larry Spragle, Don Rudrud, Dave Readinger and the author of this report, Bob Aldrich.



Dis-assembly of the temporary medical center



New plank walkway L-R: Rudrud, Willhite, Lindseth, John, Aldrich



Front L-R: Marv Lindseth, Bob Aldrich, Jim Cherry, Judy Cherry, Jackie Twiss, Brian Willhite, KG Sheley, Chuck Sheley
Rear L-R: Dave Readinger, Don Havel, Ron Thoreson, Larry Spragle, Jerry John, Don Rudrud, John Twiss.



Fire wise clearing
L-R: Thoreson, Sheley, Readinger, Sheley, Havel

Pintler Lake and May Creek Projects

Dick Hulla (MSO 75)

May Creek Project

The Project consisted of constructing a prefabricated bridge across May Creek approximately 20 miles West of Wisdom, Montana on the Beaverhead-Deer Lodge National Forest. John Ericson, Outdoor Recreation Planner for the Forest was the liaison on the Project and was a pleasure with whom to work.

Dick Hulla (MSO 75), Gary Baker (MSO 67), Ralph Mellin (MSO 60), and Chuck Hull (MSO 67), retired smokejumpers, made up the team along with Phyllis Geddes, camp cook. Additional support was made available through AmeriCorps NCCC with four individuals (Austin, Daniel, Justin, and Chelsea) who provided excellent help.

The initial site prep was extensive as it required removing a large area of willows and preparing a stable foundation for the bridge sills at the proper elevations on both sides of the creek. Moving the three 34 foot glued-laminated timbers across May Creek involved brute force along with a winch system. Once the timbers were in

place, the deck planks, curbs, and backing planks were installed through team work and organization.

The Project was successfully completed in a bit less than three days, and the inspection by the Forest Engineer was complimentary.

Pintler Lake Project

The smokejumper crew, along with John Ericson, spent two days constructing a "worm" fence around the Pintler Lake Campground. Some lodgepole logs had been pre-cut and others were cut, prepped and hauled to the fence site by the crew.

Additional help was provided by Matt and Adam who were camping with their families and pitched in to help maneuver timbers and spike them in place. After signing volunteer FS documents, these two husky guys helped a lot.

These two projects were enjoyable as the crew worked well together, the project was well organized, the weather was great, and the location was in a beautiful part of Montana in the Big Hole Valley.

Siskiyou Smokejumper Base Museum Tommy Albert (CJ 64)

Who would have ever thought a bunch of rag-tag jumpers could pull this off? But after 10 years of blood, sweat, and laughs, the base has never looked as good. It is now restored to its early 50's appearance with all the buildings shingled. The interiors have been refurbished and work continues on the displays. This will be a never ending project but we have come a long, long way.

Though we have a limited budget without the means to formally advertise, word of mouth and the signs posted on Highway 199 keep our visitor numbers increasing each year. We have had over 2200 people tour the base this year. Our visitors come from all over the country including some from Australia, Europe, and Asia. The unique story of smokejumping captivates the visitors and all have positive comments after their tour. Our volunteer tour guides say the enthusiasm of the guests creates a wonderful interplay of dialogue making it a pleasure to lead the tours. Again, all of us know the story of smokejumping is a fascinating one, especially to those who have never even heard of a "smokejumper." You are invited to volunteer as a tour guide. It is a fun experience. Information on doing so is on our website:

www.siskiyouSmokejumperMuseum.org.

This past year saw many improvements and projects completed or initiated. One of the major accomplishments was restoring the original Base Manager's residence that was constructed in 1948. Cliff Marshall (CJ 46), the second Base Manager lived in the residence followed by Jim Allen (NCSB 46), then Al Boucher (CJ 49). Later, married couples resided there during the summer and jumpers and pilots stayed there during

the winter months.

The residence took a lot of work as it was pretty well run down, both exterior and interior. We had a lot of dry rot from the leaking exterior walls and windows; the plumbing was in shambles, the rugs and some flooring needed replacement, etc. The only good thing about the residence is the jumpers had insulated it prior to the base closing. Now the residence is a warm, comfortable home. The interior is freshly painted and a new wood burning stove was installed. The exterior has a new vapor barrier on the outside covered completely with wood shingles, again restoring it to its original appearance.

Dave Laws (RAC 66) got tired of the big city and now resides in the residence. He is a godsend to the base as he is not only one of the primary tour guides, he maintains the grounds which have never looked this good.

We have started on the training area by erecting the old historic shock tower. This was a major project. First we had to locate the tower as it had been removed from the base and disassembled. Many of the components had been modified or lost. Then we had to go through the process of obtaining permission to reconstruct it on the base as the land belongs to the county and there were liability issues we had to overcome. To do so, we had to present professional engineering plans. We had to completely rebuild the top of the shock tower as that was one of the parts missing. There are still some finishing touches to perform but the main tower is standing tall on the Gobi.

North Cascades Smokejumper Base, Redmond Smokejumper Base, Redding Smokejumper Base, and McCall Smokejumper Base have all assisted with

materials to improve displays and we have a loan of old radios from the Missoula Smokejumper Museum to display in the admin office. Their support is very much appreciated.

The Twin Beech project is not progressing as we had hoped. Our problem is obtaining an on-site hanger to paint the plane. There are some facilities but the cost to rent them is prohibitive at this point. We are delaying assembly of the plane because painting is easier and cheaper unassembled. Harold Hartman is working on some grants to get the project back on track.

We are enjoying a very successful, and ongoing, fund raising campaign that has not only brought in some much needed funds but has proven to be an interesting display and a popular part of the tours. It is the permanent posting of names over the ready room racks of those who jumped out of Cave Junction and a special area for those who boosted at CJ. If you jumped or boosted at CJ, you are invited to have your name permanently inscribed on the rack. It requires a \$100

tax deductible donation to the museum. Send a check made out to the Siskiyou Smokejumper Museum to: Garry Peters, 168 Anchor Rock Ln., Eastsound, WA 98245.

Come visit if you get the chance. We know you will enjoy the experience and undoubtedly it will bring back some wonderful memories of times past. In addition, our Museum Store has some fascinating items that you will be interested in for yourself or as a gift.

Ed: I received a list of the participants when this report was ready for publication. There isn't room to list all the participants, but there were 29 jumpers on the list, 20 associates, and 3 with first names only, which I expect are associates. Quite an effort by these folks.



The Twin Beech on the tarmac with a fire on the mountain.

The restored residence, looking really sharp!



Jumpsuits hanging in the ready room.

