



PONY TRACKS

Newsletter of the Northwest Montana Posse of Westerners

Vol. 9, No. 6

Kalispell, Montana

July 11, 2022

Richard A. Hull, Ye Editor, e-mail: richardahull@charter.net

JULY MEETING

Monday, July 18, 2022

Topic: "A Return to the Big Skies"
(Part 3 of a multiple-part series
on Montana Aviation.)

Presenter: Museum of Mountain Flying,
Missoula, Montana

Where: Northwest Montana History Museum,
in the second floor historic classroom,
124 Second Avenue East, Kalispell, MT.

Time: Gab 'n' Greet, raffle and book signings
start at 6:00 pm.
No dinner offered, but there are
downtown restaurants within
walking distance.

Historic Presentation: Program begins at 7:00
pm. No reservations are required, but
seating will be limited; so come early.
Call (406)-309-0938 with any
questions.

Posse members may join the program through
Zoom at the following address:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86047010281?
pwd=NmdockhrYkpyNWFSV1RGbmxXNDNPZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86047010281?pwd=NmdockhrYkpyNWFSV1RGbmxXNDNPZz09)

Meeting ID: 860 4701 0281

Passcode: 750322

E-mail Tim Christenson at
tim.chris@yahoo.com for more help.

ABOUT THE PRESENTATION



Photo courtesy of Northwest Montana History Museum

The story of northwest Montana's unique
role in the history of wilderness and back-
country flying continues this month with a
further presentation by the Museum of
Mountain Flying in Missoula.

The presentation will be provided by the
staff and associates of the museum. This
program will be about tough pilots, tough
planes, and tough flying.

The museum was built at the location of the
Johnson Flying Service in Missoula. Its current
collection includes vintage aircraft as well as
historical documents and photographs, relates the
region's mountain flying history.

Operating between the 1920s and the 1970s,
the Johnson Flying Service served as the
cornerstone of the Montana aviation industry for
over 50 years. The museum was constructed to
preserve the many achievements of the
trailblazing company

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More than 25 authentic aircraft are exhibited on the museum's hangar floor. The oldest plane is a DeHavilland DH.60GMW Gypsy Moth N617V, a British two-seat training and touring aircraft that was first developed in the 1920s

The most famous airplane is the Douglas DC-3 "Miss Montana". Formerly used to drop smoke jumpers, it was restored by museum volunteers and took place in the 75th anniversary of D-Day in 2019 in England and France.



C-47 on display at the Museum of Mountain Flying
Photo by Rick Hull

Beginning with this early model, visitors to the museum can explore the development of Montana's aviation crafts, innovations and additions in preparation for WWII, and further expansion into the commercial versions of today. Each aircraft featured on the showroom floor was a cornerstone of Montana's airborne development, and, each has a story waiting to be explored



Photo courtesy of Northwest Montana History Museum



FROM THE SHERIFF'S SADDLEBAG

By Edward "Eddy" Byrne

July is my favorite month to get out and enjoy our great state. Not only to celebrate Independence Day, but to get out and visit myriad of historical sites and spending time in the outdoors.

In the northwest corner of Montana options are limited only to one's imagination and abilities. Be it rafting, boating, hiking, camping, or taking a day trip to visit and explore a regional museum or historical sight.

My favorites include the Heritage Museum in Libby, The Paradise Center in Paradise that showcases the premier Glacier Lake Missoula display, and of course a drive up to Essex to spend a couple hours (or days) at Izaak Walton Inn exploring the grounds and surrounding sites.

This month the beauty and grandeur of this special place is on full display as Going to the Sun Road opens; the Jewel Basin and Wilderness areas become more accessible as the snow recedes and high alpine roads are cleared opening up access to trails and fields of wildflowers are in full bloom and wildlife is abundant.

I strongly encourage each of you to revisit one of your favorite spots and then explore somewhere or something you have never spent time at in the greater Flathead and the surrounding areas this month.

The weather is perfect, special / annual events are taking place nearly every day and weekend.

Bottom line: July is my unofficial month to enjoy Big Sky Country and all it offers. I hope to see you all next week at our monthly meeting.



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GENERAL MEETING INFORMATION

NMPW 's meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of the month, except the months of December and January.

This month's meeting is at the Northwest Montana History Museum at 124 Second Avenue East, Kalispell, Montana.

Meetings begin with a Grab 'n' Greet session from 6 pm. to 7 pm. for chance to get acquainted. Historical attire is encouraged, but not required.

Local history authors will have their books for sale, and will be available for signing.

The presentation on local or Western Montana history starts at 7 pm.

The program is free for members and youths 16 and under. Non-members pay \$5.

Historic books will be raffled off as a fund raiser.

All meetings will be broadcast on-line via Zoom for our Out-of-County Corresponding and Brigade members and the members who cannot physically or choose not to attend the meetings.



FUTURE PROGRAMS

August: Monday, Aug. 15, 2022

"Go West Young Man: The Story of Montana's Paris Gibson"

by **Bill Dakin** of Bigfork, Montana

September: Monday, Sept. 19, 2022

"History of the USFS Smokejumpers"
by Fred Cooper of Missoula, Montana.

October: Monday, November 21, 2022

"Civilian Conservation Corps in Glacier National Park" by David Butler of Santa Fe, New Mexico

FROM YE EDITOR'S DESK

Fort Connah Rendezvous

Article and photos by Rick Hull

After cancellations because of COVID, the annual rendezvous at Fort Connah was held June 19.



The former Hudson's Bay Company trading post is located between six miles south of St. Ignatius on the Flathead Reservation. Built in 1847, it was restored by local volunteers, and is now billed as the oldest existing building in Montana.



Gary Steele demonstrates the atlatl, which increases the distance a spear can be thrown.

There were numerous living history events at the rendezvous, including the use of longbows, black powder rifles, and wool spinning.

Visitors were transported by horse and wagon down to the historic compound.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Members aware of events not listed here are encouraged to contact Ye Editor with the particulars at richardahull@charter.net

- Ninepipes Museum, located between Ronan and St. Ignatius, is celebrating its founders, Bud and Laurel Cheff, on July 17 from 2- 5 p.m.

Bud was honored with the 2021 Montana Heritage Keepers Award at the 48th annual Montana History Conference. It is the highest award made by the Montana Historical Society.

He was chosen for his work in establishing and operating the Ninepipes Museum.

There will be fiddle music, a live auction, drinks and hors d'oeuvres. Cost is \$30. Email info@ninepipesmuseum.org or call 406-644-3435 or to purchase tickets.

TRIVIA QUESTION

The effort to outwit Google has been too successful, and no one tried to answer the question about why early explorers like Alexander McKenzie and David Thompson had to be experts in astronomy.

The short answer it was the only, at the time, to calculate longitude.

Determining latitude is relatively simple. The angle between the horizon and the noon-day sun is measured with a sextant. A table in the Nautical Almanac adjusts for seasonal differences, and shows the number of degrees above the equator.

Determining longitude is even easier. Just record the sun's shadow is the shortest. Compare this local time of noon with the current time in Greenwich, England, and add 15 degrees for each hour of difference.

Except for one problem – no clock was accurate enough. Instead surveyors had to make complex calculations based on the orbit

of the moon, or even Jupiter's moons, to reveal Greenwich time.

By the time of Lewis & Clark, portable clocks called chronometers were accurate enough to provide the necessary reference time.

This Month's Trivia Question

Let try a question about mountain flying.

One surprise about learning to fly is how dangerous clouds are. Flying into a ordinary fluffy cloud will unleash a combination of vertigo and centrifugal force that will trick an inexperienced pilot into a fatal dive.

Internal winds in thunderstorm can rip off wings, or throw hailstones into adjoining clear skies.

Ridge lines can create "mountain waves" that extend for miles downwind.

The question is: what alien-invoking cloud shape is a warning sign of these dangerous waves?

Submit your answer to Ye Editor at richardahull@charter.net and we will print the names of all those who get it right.

Join the Posse Team

Volunteers are needed to continue the Posse's more than six years of history programs.

- Clerk of the Posse (Secretary-Treasurer)
- Deputy Sheriff for Membership
- Book Wrangler to maintain the Posse library and book raffles
- Assistant Zoom Master to assist and backup the Zoom Master
- Board Members
- Assistant Editor to assist the editor in writing and publicizing Posse newsletters.
- Webmaster for Posse website
- Archivist

Please join our Posse team as we rebuild our organization. Contact Eddy Byrne at 406-871-6001 or edwardjbyrne860@gmail.com to volunteer.

Visit our website: northwestmontanaposseofwesterners.wordpress.com

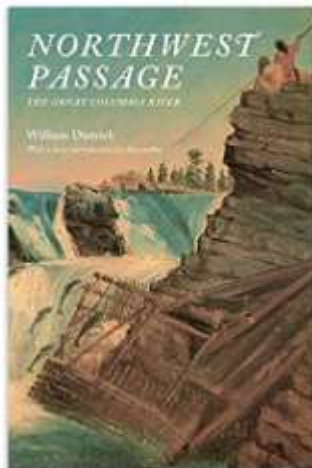


FROM THE BOOK SHELF

By Rick Hull

I recently stumbled on an excellent book that covers many Posse topics, including Glacier Lake Missoula, Lewis & Clark, and Indian uprisings .

Northwest Passage, The Great Columbia River, by William Dietrich talks about the complicated history of this river. The Columbia starts in western Canada, passing less than a mile from the Kootenai River, though the two do not connect again for 700 miles.



The Columbia is unusual among American rivers. It winds through eastern Washington, a virtual desert. It is often 1,000 feet below the surrounding terrain, and its only city of any size is Portland. Before it was controlled by dams, it could rise and fall 50 feet in a season. It was interrupted by waterfalls and rapids that made river transportation a struggle.

Now the river is a nearly continuous chain of dams and reservoirs. One result is the former desert is now a rich agricultural area known for its wheat, apples and potatoes.

Dietrich is not only an entertaining writer, but he has an even-handed approach about the early settlers, the concerns of the local tribes, and the many decisions that shaped the current status of the river.

The book is currently in its second edition, and is available used for as little as \$5.75. My copy is 448 pages, and I found myself booking many of those pages when I ran across an explanatory fact or detail.

NEW MEMBERS

The following new member recently joined the Posse:

Denise Seehusen,
Kalispell, Montana

We are again deeply saddened to report that long-time Posse member Allen "Doc" Harkins, 82, passed away in the Haven Hospice in Gainesville, Florida.

Last fall we received reports that "Doc" was in an automobile accident while visiting his son's family in Florida.

A full Masonic outdoor service is planned from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. July 23 at Fairview Cemetery in Columbia Falls.

Posse Gold Stars

Recognizing those members and friends whose generosity has assisted the Posse in so many ways:

Parkland Books,
Raffle donations

Blacktail Mountain Books,
Raffle donations

Northwest Montana
Historical Museum,
Meeting room

Tim Christenson,
Zoom annual
subscription

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Copy intended for this newsletter should be sent to the Editor at the e-mail address below.
Copy must be in the Editor's in-box on or before the first of the month in order to make that
month's issue. Copy received after that date will be held over until the subsequent issue.

The next issue of Pony Tracks will be issued August 8, 2022 (or thereabouts)

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