



News from the Red Caboose

FALL 2013



Doris Whithorn, the Wan-I-Gan, and Trout Fishing

By Max Hjortsberg

My earliest associations fishing the Yellowstone River are my father and hamburgers at the Wan-I-Gan. The river, cool and bright



Doris Whithorn and a box of antlers that she made cribbage boards and other gift items from. She had many interests.

in the summer sun; the mud on the bank dark against the brilliant green of the sedges and willows; fundamental elements in the chemistry of world. Fishing revealed the enticing distractions of the realm that glimmered around the riverbank and led to a casting aside of my spinning rod for that world. Only later would I learn that trout fishing was a form of daydreaming. The hamburgers, well, I have always loved a good hamburger, and the Wan-I-Gan

served up some of the best.

I would eventually be coaxed back to the pursuit of trout when I would see my father land one upstream. More often than not, he would return from going upriver to find me messing around on the bank, dribbling mud into towers that reminded him of Gaudi, the Spanish architect. He took me to many spots on the river, but his favorite was where the river broke into several channels upstream of the Wan-I-Gan. The effect of spring water pouring out of the foothills of Emigrant Peak into the river was evident in both the influence it had on the fish that sought out its fresh water and the hillside above the river that had already slid down once, and always looked as though it will again at any moment.

It became my favorite spot because after the fishing was through we would go to the Wan-I-Gan for hamburgers and ice cream. And it was usually Doris who would be there to prepare and serve them to us. The Whithorns and the Wan-I-Gan are inseparable, even now, long after the shiny new Highway 89 moved to the west

side of the river, and after Bill and Doris sold the place and moved to Livingston to embark on their next legacy, the Yellowstone Gateway Museum and the history of Park County.

There is no doubt that Doris listened to countless fishing stories through the years. The Whithorns sold bait, flies, rods, and tackle at the Wan-I-Gan (remember their slogan: The Wan-I-Gan Has Everything), pointing people up and down river as they passed through. But Bill and Doris also traded in adventures on the water and entertained the tall tales that grow out of a sport that rewards not only the beauty of the prey, but its size as well.

In 1949, shortly after the



The Wan-I-Gan.

Whithorn family moved to the Wan-I-Gan and set up shop, Doris kept a lengthy diary of her initial (continued on page 10)

We have a lot going on!

By Paul Shea

Another successful summer for the museum. We have received compliments on our new exhibits—Modern-Day Flint Knapping and Honoring Park County Veterans. Planning is underway for the next three summers and we even have some ideas for 2017. Considering all that we do, it is good that we have reached the point that we can plan that far in advance. This allows more time for research and design, which makes for better exhibits.

We continue to organize the museum's various archives. Ellen Zazzarino is nearly finished with her work on the Doris Whithorn papers; she is also completing a finding aid that researchers can use. We are sorting and re-ordering file cabinets in the research room to make the archives more accessible. Bruce Graham continues to inventory our growing research library. Nikki Fox is inventorying and properly storing photographs that were on the large swing-panel displays in the former McGee Room; these photos will then be ready for research and use. After working on two new exhibits, Karen is busy accessioning and cataloguing new donations. Now we just have to find room for all the wonderful new artifacts.

Ruth Dargis has finished going through all of the 2010 field inventories that we did for the HVAC project. She is now updating our PastPerfect records with detailed descriptions and storage locations. She only has about 35,000 items to go. Roddy

Stanton is inventorying the City of Livingston maps that are part of an archival arrangement with the city. She also handles the initial records for all incoming donations.

Our other volunteers also have been a blessing this summer: manning the front desk, helping researchers, inventorying, cleaning, mowing the lawn, and getting the LaFrance fire truck running. We have 20 steady volunteers who have, so far, given us nearly 2,000 hours of volunteer time—the equivalent of one full-time person.



We also have an Experience Works person, Paul Deyerle, who has finished scanning deeds of gifts from the past 37 years into PDF files and then attaching them to their proper PastPerfect records.

Also in the works is an intern program. An anonymous donor has jump started the program's funding; we plan to use these funds to attract other donors. To date this fund has \$27,500. An investment program managed by the Friends will provide a stipend

for a summer college student researcher to work on projects relating to the connection between Park County and Yellowstone National Park.

Then there is the museum itself and its grounds. We are getting a much-needed new roof and had hoped to get it done this summer or fall, but a grant glitch at the state and federal levels is pushing the project to next spring. In the meantime, we have to do some patching to make it through the winter. In addition, the caboose needs a new roof coating and window caulking.

Future plans include making the museum fully accessible: an elevator, new entrance and bathrooms, and better parking. We have \$10,500 in seed money for this project and will continue to build this fund. These monies will be used as matching funds for grants that we will be seeking for this most important project.

Watch for programs, speakers, and parties this fall and winter! Check out the newsletter calendar and our website; follow us on Facebook or Twitter. Yes, we are including social media elements in our outreach programs. Stop by and see us: the museum is now a hot place to be in the winter and cool place to visit in the summer.

As always, if you would like more information on ways to donate to the Yellowstone Gateway Museum projects please contact me at 406-222-4184 or pshea@parkcounty.org. We really need and appreciate your help!

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We are Grateful to our Current Volunteers:

Ray Alt
Mary Jane Ammerman
Judy Bonnell
Carol Carver
Cheryl Chmielewski
Daniel Davidson
Nikki Fox

Georgia Hall
Anita Livermore
Carlene Newhall
Dona Poeschl
Susan Sewell
Ellen Zazzarino
and our board members!



Nikki Fox taking care of photographs

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Museum

118 W. Chinook Street
Livingston, MT 59047
406-222-4184
museum@parkcounty.org
yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org



Pat Miller and Margery Graham and their
Military exhibit reception table

**Do you have skills that
could help your museum?**

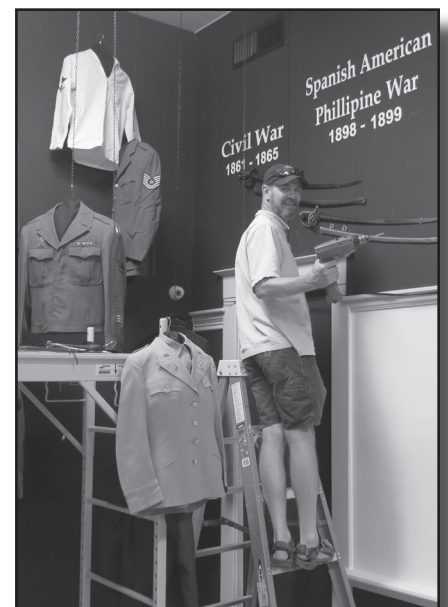
*We need organizers, lifters,
exhibit researchers, decorators,
program helpers, and more!*



Judy Bonnell compiled military data using
the new Index (see page 6) of the "Big
Blue Book" while manning the front desk



Ruth Dargis working on
collections database



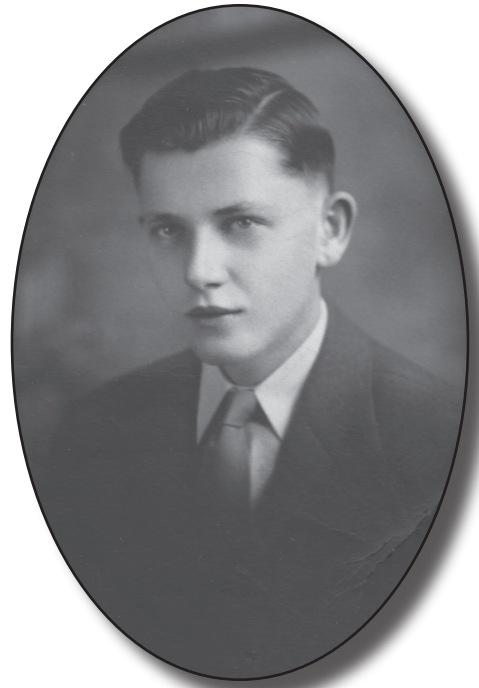
Norm Miller installing military exhibit

The Grigsby Family's Livingston Businesses

By Dona Grigsby Poeschl

The story of Grigsby Shoe Store begins in Missouri. When my great-grandfather, Edward M. Grigsby, decided to relocate out West in 1900, he and the store came to Montana. Edward M. had other business partners both in Missouri and Livingston, and the store was located in several buildings over time due to fire and other reasons. The store I remember as a child was on Callender Street in the A.W. Miles Building.

My grandfather Vic and father Don ran the store together after my dad returned from military service. I also worked there when I was old enough (about twelve) during the summer, and helped set up racks for the big sales. I grew up in a household with a modest lifestyle—we didn't always have a lot of money, but my family *always* had nice shoes. Sadly, due to economic reasons, the store closed in 1973.



Don Grigsby

My father worked for a local real estate company after the close of the shoe store until his death in 1982.

Another business that my family

ran was the Grigsby Studio, a photography studio. Before I started volunteering at the YGM, I had thought that Edward M. was my great-uncle and that he ran the Grigsby Studio. But when I was shown around the research room and looked at archived business records, I discovered that Edward M. was actually my great-grandfather and that the studio was owned by my great-uncle, Victor M. Grigsby. Victor M. and his wife, Annie, did not have children of their own, which is why my grandfather Vic was named after him. Records at the museum also revealed to me that the studio opened in 1910 and closed in 1945. Great-uncle Vic died in 1952, before I was born.

The only other bit of information I know is that the studio was located across the street from the post office.

Editor's Note: This is a great example of the museum's archives and library at work! Bruce Graham noticed that two ads of the November 7, 1941 issue of the Geyser (Park County High School newspaper) were for businesses operated by the Grigsby family. Bruce asked Dona Grigsby Poeschl, one of our volunteers, to write this article. We haven't been able to find any photographs of either Grigsby store so if you have any photos that can help paint the picture of this longtime family presence in downtown Livingston, please contact me at kreinhart@park county.org or 406-222-4184.

A few ads from the November 7, 1941 issue of the Geyser.

Plan now to give your friend a
Hand Tinted Miniature
for Christmas

GRIGSBY'S STUDIO

Kimball Hankies—
Seen in
Madomiselle
10c, 29c, 59c

Simon's

We Can Remove Those Spots
from Your Clothes

STAR CLEANERS

100%
All
Wool
Mittens

by KAYSER
\$1.00

A. W. MILES DRY GOODS

McGEE STUDIO
Modern Portraits

YOUNG MEN'S HAIRCUTTING
A Specialty
PARK BARBER SHOP

PUBLIC DRUG
FOUNTAIN — GIFTS
COSMETICS
Don Cowles — Virgil Bradford

FOR HOT MEALS
COME TO
JEFF'S CAFE

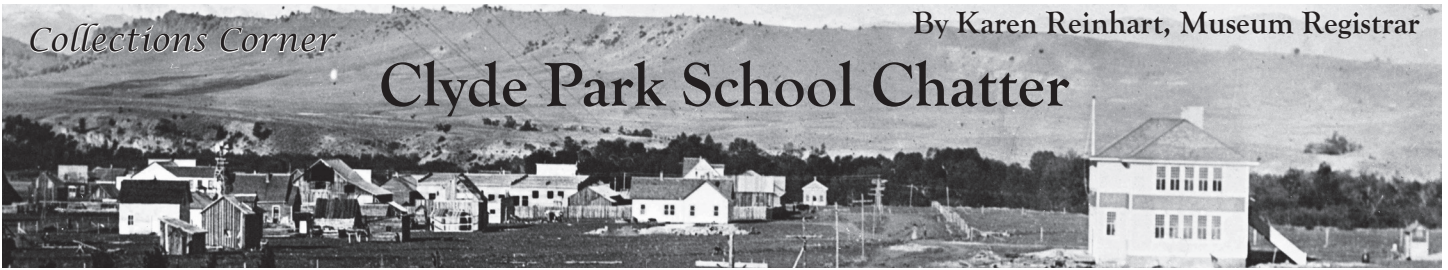
See Your Dentist Twice a Year
BUT
See Your Barber Every Week!
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Always—
The Most
Desirable in
Footwear
at
Grigsby's

**GATEWAY and
OLD FAITHFUL
Flour**
Silver Tip Poultry Feed
Livingston Milling
Company
Distributors of
Oliver Farm Equipment

**GIVE YOUR
CLOTHES
That Flashy
Appearance**

Clyde Park School Chatter



We recently received a donation of two Clyde Park High School yearbooks from Annabell Jacobsen Fredericks of Clyde Park. One was a 1941 edition of *The Westerner*; the pages reveal that she was the Associate Editor that year. Here's an entertaining excerpt from that yearbook:

1941 Class History

There have been six great events in the history of this world. The first was the appearance of Adam and Eve. The second was the rise of King Tut. The third was the death of Julius Caesar. The fourth was the crossing of the Atlantic by Columbus. The fifth was the reign of Jack Dempsey. And the sixth was the entrance of the Class of 1941 into Clyde Park High School.

Of these the first five were of minor importance. Adam and Eve, I believe, are now dead. King Tut is in a museum. Julius has been eclipsed by Mussolini. Columbus has moved to Ohio. And Jack Dempsey is just a faded cauliflower. But the class of 1941 not only is history, but is still making history.

Annabell also donated a copy of *The Crest*, the yearbook from 1931. And though the cover was creative—depicting a ship on the crest of a wave in a labor-intensive hand-cut stencil—it was somewhat dilapidated. But, as the old saying goes, “never judge a book by its cover.” Inside, there were original black and white photographs of the Clyde Park School’s classes, faculty, and more. And they were in relatively good shape. These photographs are now scanned and available for researchers, along with the names of everyone pictured.



Above: 1931 Clyde Park High School graduating class. Standing: Robert Holliday. Seated, L to R: Robert Julian, Leona Peters, Ernest Queen, Thelma Frederick, Roberta Kissinger, Oba Logan, Marjorie Jeffries.



Above: 1931 Clyde Park girl's basketball team. Back Row: Alice Thompson, Marjorie Jeffries, Miss Chilcote (coach), Leona Peters, Marjorie Jeffries. Front Row: Dorothy Wanke, Mamie Frederick, Roberta Kissinger, Mamie Queen, Buelah Bliler.



Left: 1931 Clyde Park School trustees. L to R: Alfred Fisher, T.W. Drynan, J.S. Hargrove, S.T. Queen.

Reprint of *History of Park County, Montana 1984* and an **Index** now available!

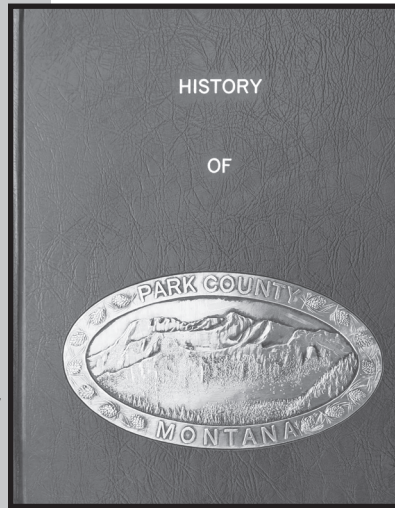
The *Index*

The new 274-page, 8.5" x 11", spiral-bound, softcover index includes:

- ◆ 36,000 line entries
- ◆ 1,200+ family names
- ◆ 550+ business names
- ◆ special summaries

This index makes the *History of Park County, Montana* much more user-friendly for families and researchers. **\$24.**

Compiled & edited by Richard J. Dysart
Wan-I-Gan Press, 2013
ISBN 978-0-9823753-4-1



The *History*

A spiral-bound reprint of the *History of Park County, Montana, 1984*

All photos and text from the original book are included. Only **\$36.**

(Wan-I-Gan Press has 5 hardcover books available for \$100 each.)

Both books are available at the Yellowstone Gateway Museum. For mailing, enclose an additional \$5 for shipping per book. Please call 406-222-6937 for more information.

Please submit payment to:
Friends of YGM, P.O. Box 815, Livingston, MT 59047

Just in from Dick Dysart...

The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Library in Washington, DC wrote and ordered a copy of the *Index*. With all of the names of Park County residents and many summaries such as "military service," this is a valuable resource recognized from afar.

100 Years, A Look Back – Clyde Park, Montana: Clyde Park Centennial 1913 – 2013

Historical documents, articles, photographs, ads, recipes, etc. Compiled by Cindy K. Good; organized by Terry Sue Boney. Published 2013, printed by 48HrBooks, 213 pages.

To obtain copies, call Cindy, Clyde Park Town Clerk, 406-686-4787.

Join the Friends of the Yellowstone Gateway Museum TODAY!

The mission of the Friends of the Yellowstone Gateway Museum of Park County, Montana is to support the museum, its successors and affiliates by raising funds for the perpetual care, growth, improvement and expansion of the museum and by serving as a source of volunteers.

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Friends of the Yellowstone Gateway Museum

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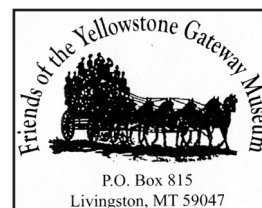
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Honoring Park County Veterans

By Karen Reinhart, Museum Registrar

The Yellowstone Gateway Museum's newest exhibit, Honoring Park County Veterans, opened on August 9. At least 150 people attended the opening held from 4-7 PM. Museum members provided homemade cookies and punch and decorated the museum with a patriotic theme, helping set the stage for a fun event.

The Veterans' exhibit chronicles the stories of local people who served in various wars, including the Civil War, Spanish-American Philippine War, World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, and wars in the Middle East. Artifacts from the museum's collection—uniforms, photographs, soldiers' manuals, war souvenirs, home front ration books and more—are displayed. Exhibit panels interpret the roles of Montanans during World War II, including what it was like to live in Park County at that time.

Because there are numerous servicemen and women we want to include in the exhibit, the museum plans

to feature other stories. To that end, the exhibit will be changed every Veterans Day. Please contact the museum if you are interested in sharing your family's stories and/or donating service items.

We have received many positive comments about this new exhibit. We hope that if you and your family

have not already done so, you will visit the museum soon to share in this tribute.



Two members of the Melin family pose next to their grandfather's biography at the exhibit opening.

A History Mystery: A Spanish Flag

By Paul Shea, Museum Director

It is always fun to research unknown objects. Just such a case arose while we were working on the military exhibit. In a collection of items donated by Ethel and Violet Speak, among several objects of their brother's WWII memorabilia, there was a Spanish flag. Was the flag originally from their father, or another family member? It was likely taken as a souvenir of war but who obtained the flag remains a mystery.

"Batallon De Cazadores XIII, Alfonso XIII No. 30"



is printed on the 32-inch square cotton flag. Research shows that this battalion fought for King Alfonso XIII of Spain in Puerto Rico during the Spanish-American War of 1898.

In Spain the flag is called a Bandera de Mochila (knapsack flag). Regulations refer to it as a pañuelo

(bandana or handkerchief). First issued in 1860 to expeditionary forces fighting in North Africa, they were given to every Spanish soldier until 1927. Soldiers sometimes added ties or loops to the flag in order to attach it to a pole. The earliest flags were red but soon most flags had three vertical bars in the national colors of Spain: red, yellow, red. The Spanish arms, a branch of service insignia, or a regimental badge was in the flag's center, often encircled by a unit designation.

The flags performed a number of practical functions. When a soldier was housed in barracks, the flag covered his personal possessions and provided a small amount of privacy. It also identified marching units—soldiers draped a flag over the first and last man's backpack in a column—and company streets in camp. In battle, the flag might serve as a marker, showing that an objective had been successfully taken by force. Troops stationed in tropical locations routinely used them as neckerchiefs.

A local note: General Nelson Miles was a commander during the Spanish-American War. He was the uncle of local entrepreneur A.W. Miles.

CALENDAR

November 15—Friday

Early Day Montana Life

A Conversation with Don Ellis

6:30 PM

**Livingston-Park County Public Library,
228 W. Callender**

Don Ellis has a lot of good stories to share—from growing up on a Montana ranch to owning the Anvil Inn in Cooke City in the mid-1950s. Livingston stories too! Refreshments. Free.



From time to time...

we send out emails to notify our members about programs and events sponsored by the museum. If you are interested in receiving these emails, please email museum@parkcounty.org with your current email address—we have many old emails that bounce back. Thank you!

December 7—Saturday

Holiday Farmers' Market

Visit the Museum's Booth & Join in the Fun!

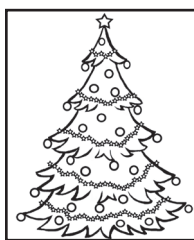
9:00 AM-4:00 PM

Civic Center, 229 River Drive

Shop for history gifts & memberships.

Decorate an ornament that will grace the museum's Christmas tree.

Learn about a great organization!



Stay in touch with history!

—Like us on Facebook, another way to keep in touch with local history and the Yellowstone Gateway Museum.



—Follow us on Twitter, keep up on what's happening at the museum.

—Visit our website:
yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org

—Visit your museum and research center!

Museum winter hours: 10-5, Thursday-Saturday until May.

Research Center hours: 8-5, Monday-Friday, year-round.

Appointments suggested.

Please call 406-222-4184.

December 12—Thursday

Cookies and Stories: A Holiday Swap

6:30-8:00 PM

**Yellowstone Gateway Museum,
118 W. Chinook**

Bring a dozen cookies and a story or two to share about holidays or winter in Park County or Yellowstone National Park. The program is on the museum's upper floor and is unfortunately not accessible to people who have trouble navigating stairs. Hot beverages provided. Free.



February 20—Thursday

Mysteries of Yellowstone Lake

Prehistory

Douglas MacDonald & Elaine Hale

6:30 PM

**Livingston-Park County Public Library,
228 W. Callender**

Which Native American tribes used Yellowstone Lake and for how long? Did they fish? Use boats? What role did bears play in their lives? Archaeologists Hale and McDonald share their exciting discoveries about native peoples and Yellowstone Lake. Refreshments. Free.



Memorials

For: Pansy Graham
By Cliff Rowe

For: Molly Wilson Hancock
By Sandra Christensen

For: Al MacDonald
By Ruth MacDonald

For: Cliff Miller
*By Priscilla & Richard Dysart
Bruce & Margery Graham*

For: Helen Bohleen Streblow
By Bud & Lorraine Bohleen

For: Doris Whithorn
*By Carole Breck
Suzanne Brown
Sandra Christensen
Leland Cobb & Carole Lawrence
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Bobbie Williams

the peculiar nature of an angler, never satisfied but always happy going fishing. She states, "I heard the best fish story yet today. To one fisherman the day was a poor one even though he caught three trout. They were too big – seven, three, and two pounds. He gave them away. He likes little ones!" But it was earlier that month, on the fourth, that she really sorted out the whole mess of trout fishing after selling a box of dry flies and lead weights to some out-of-towners. "And so the day goes with fishermen who catch them and fishermen who don't, with fishermen who take all the whitefish they can hold and



Wan-I-Gan Trout Derby catch.

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thoughts, experiences, and stories of her new home. Those pages weren't without a few fishing stories: stories that certainly had a place at the lunch counter that year. On Thursday, February 10, Doris took some time off from the endless array of tasks required to run the Wan-I-Gan and went fishing herself. She recounted that "The wind was blowing like a fury and some ice had broken up and was floating down the river where there was a bit of open

channel—two conditions, they say, under which fish do not bite. They didn't. I came back with a wet foot and a healthy respect for those who say to put on lots of warm clothes, for it's cold down next to the river, even though the thermometer says 40. I'll go again someday, but I sure would like to accompany someone—rather two—who can pull out 3 whitefish in 20 minutes."

The best story about the "one that got away" was told on Sunday, April 10. Doris got an earful from a customer illustrating



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fishermen who take naught but trout, with fishermen who are experts with all manner of bait and with fishermen who sink dry flies!"

But aside from her own fishing experience and the many others that were told to her, she most cherished the stories of her son Bruce, who found his way to the river and became enchanted, as a young boy will, with the water and the delicate, shiny creatures who live there. On Sunday, June 26 Doris wrote, "Bruce caught his first fish today. It was a sucker, but it was a big sucker—it weighed 1 ¾ lbs. He was so happy, and I was just as happy. His pole was a rough tree branch with rough cord tied on; his bait a worm. I had fixed Carol and Harold Lee [a friend] similar poles, but when they got to the fishing hole, Bruce had cried because they wanted to be where he was. So Carol and Harold, disgusted with his crying, had come back. Then Bruce, with vengeful determination, just had to catch a fish; and though it rained and hailed, he did! I think I was as proud as he was. I told him so and I tell everyone. His ardor was somewhat dampened by four young men who were in the store when he arrived with the fish. 'What a sucker,' they said and laughed. But at my insistence, they too declared it a good fish.



The Whithorns. Back row: Carol, Bruce. Front row: Doris, Duane, Alta, and Bill.

Though the good pole we had ordered for him didn't come with our Montana Hardware order, a salesman who stopped in tonight said he had some cheap telescopic rods that Bill could pick up in town tomorrow. Now Bruce can have a real fishing rod."

It didn't take long. On Thursday, June 30, "That new fishing rod of Bruce's brought home the bacon today—a beautiful 1 ¾ lb. cutthroat trout. While he fished, the family had gone to put up a sign. When we came home, he was at Worrall's trailer house showing it off. After we had all cussed and discussed it, I asked him if he showed it to the Rosses in cabin 1. They operate a sporting goods store in Indiana. I went with him to show them. "Did it put up much of a fight?" they asked him.

"It wiggled some," he said.

They laughed. "That wiggling is what sportsmen really think is lots of fun. And imagine you landing a trout like that!"

Doris was beaming, and Bruce

was no doubt the happiest boy in Paradise Valley.

The best fishing story is your own, and it's the story that you keep over the years. Even as the catch grows larger and more amazing with time, it's still as real as it was yesterday. But that's what you cherish, and what brings a smile to your face and to those around

you the day of the catch and on down the line, twenty-five or sixty or however many years later. When the sunlight glints off the river's surface time is nowhere to be found.



Max Hjortsberg is a poet and backyard historian who grew up next to Pine Creek in Paradise Valley and now lives in Livingston with his wife, Anna, and son, Silas. He works for Environmental Resources Management as a mapmaker and water resource specialist. He would rather be trout fishing.

Editor's Note: Doris Whithorn passed away in July of this year. She contributed much to the gathering of Park County's history—was the driving force behind the establishment of the Yellowstone Gateway Museum—and touched the hearts of young and old. She will be greatly missed.

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So What's with the Fish on the Hill?

Fifty men, under the direction of Police Chief Frank Olson, placed the final rocks outlining the giant trout on the evening of July 8, 1942. Its completion had been delayed for several weeks by rain. The fish was built to advertise the Trout Derby held in Livingston in August of that year. *The History of Park County, Montana 1984* states that the last derby was held in 1977.

And the "P"?

The P appeared in 1953. Park High students built it, directed by Don White, Fred Nesbitt, Bob Figgins, Bill Wanderson, and Ken Hanson. John Fryer said Fred and Ken had walkie-talkies, and Ken directed the operation from Park Street. The story goes that when Don White ran for Student Council President he closed his campaign speech with "I want a P on the hill." Was it his humor that helped him win the election?

~ Compiled by Bruce Graham