

GCPS Progress Report

June, 2020

By Diane Sterne

- One of our members brought it to our attention that a corral was being built near the cattle guard at 4 km. on the Blakeburn Road. The corral crosses over the road to the cabin. GCPS Chair, Dawn Gardner spoke with Linda Allison (the rancher who has the free range rights in the area) and Linda said there would be two gates to go through. The gates will be kept closed but will only be locked at specific times of the year: “the first week of July when they (cattle) are hauled out and one day and night the week after Thanksgiving when they are hauled home. There may be other times if I (Linda Allison) am getting the last ones home between Thanksgiving and the end of October.”

Linda applied for approval to build the corral over 2 years ago and has put in a lot of work filling and levelling the land in that area. It is important that members (and anyone) visiting the cabin respect her corral. She will be putting up signs. If the gates are not locked, please open them carefully and ensure you close them after you pass through them. Do not damage the gates or fences. If there are cattle in the corral, do not attempt to go through it. We must respect Linda’s rights as a long-standing rancher in this area. Just as the GCPS wants the public to respect the historic cabins, etc. in the area, we must also respect the ranchers and their livestock.

- I received the citizenship papers for Joe Delprato and this is what I learned: Joseph Delprato became a citizen in Princeton in 1926. He was born in Macugnaga (pronounced ma-COON-yaga), Piedmont region of Italy. I found a photo of the town online (attached) and it looks lovely. Joe lived in the Princeton area for 10 years. He came to Canada from England and arrived at the Port of Halifax on the Pretorian about Jan. 3, 1906 (he would have been 16 years old). Hugh Hunter prepared his citizenship papers. Joe was single with no children and was a miner. His character was vouched by Dr. Sheffield of Coalmont and Mr. D. McLean, Manager of Coalmont Collieries Ltd. Joe had no police record. His parents were Italian and Joe was 5 ft. 9 in. with brown eyes, black hair and a dark complexion.

Bob and I both went through countless ship records to try to find Joe’s name on a passenger list but did not have success. Joe was friends (and possibly arrived in Canada) with a man named Battista Vittoni who was also from Macugnaga. In 1943 Joe was co-owner of the Delprato-Hayes Prospect on the coal seams near the #7 tram tower at Barnes Flat (there was a sawmill there owned by Frank Barnes). When Joe became too ill to continue, he signed over his share to his friend, Vittoni and it became the Hayes-Vittoni Prospect until 1949.

I discovered that I can also purchase (\$30) a copy of Joe’s Probate Records. Does anyone have thoughts on whether I should do this or not? Sometimes they provide additional information about a person. I’ll wait until I hear from members before I follow up on this.

- Bob and I went to the Cabin and explored the old Granite Creek Wagon Road (photo attached). As our member, Justin Thomson, told us, you can follow it for about ½ km and then it reaches a large rockslide that makes it impassable. Up to that point the road is very easy to follow. It is packed down and quite wide. We also found the cutter that Justin told us about. It is quite decayed so not worth fixing up.

We also found what looked like a cabin (photos attached). It is only about 100 metres from the Cabin but hidden in thick brush. We just happened to spot it while we were on the Wagon Road. After bushwhacking through the brush, we found it. It is actually a wooden shed. We could not go inside it as the door has settled (partly open) and can't be moved. Looking through the windows we saw some mining equipment from what appears to be the 1970's or 1980's. There were hoses, plastic buckets, a lawn chair, etc. We have some good photos of it and Bob GPS'd the location.

- Bob and I returned to the Cabin on June 1 and I tackled the rat urine on the plastic sheets covering the mattresses in the loft. I also removed as much of the pack rat nest which was in the same location as the one I removed last year. It was made from the toilet paper that disappeared over the winter. We will need to return with the vacuum and generator so I can finish removing the nest. I sprayed it with Lysol and sprayed the mattresses with Lysol. I also put fresh ammonia in the jars in the loft. I don't think the pack rat will be back up there now because the loft is extremely hot at this time of the year. I think he comes to winter there. We discovered two spots that looked like the rat may have been entering and barricaded them and doused them with ammonia. There were no mice in the bucket trap. While we were there we were met with one man on a dirt bike. We gave him the royal tour and he was very interested in the history of the area.
- Financial Report from Bob Sterne: Bank balance as of May 31 - \$1,169.59 minus cabin expenses leaves a balance of \$1,141.71. Volunteer hours for 2020 - 92.5 valued at a total of \$1,850.00. Paid members - 20. Two have not yet renewed.