

River News

Salmon River Rafting Company

Fall 2016

50th Season Issue

Two thousand sixteen marked my 50th year as a professional river guide and my 36th year as an outfitter on the Salmon River. This career has allowed me to observe the changes that have evolved in the “river running industry” during the last half century. Some of these changes relate to the equipment we use, but there have also been changes in the clientele who seek the services river trip outfitters provide.

Fifty years ago most rafts commonly utilized for commercial rafting were war surplus survival or assault rafts and inflatable bridge pontoons. Prior to the availability of these military craft the industry relied primarily on wooden boats of various designs depending on the water type, purpose of the trip, and/or clientele or cargo to be transported. The military surplus inflatable craft were considered “high tech” when I began guiding on the Snake



Wooden sweep boat on the Salmon River- 1940s.

River in Wyoming in 1967. Currently, there are a variety of river craft, both inflatable and rigid hull, manufactured from many different types of materials in a rainbow of colors specifically designed for river sections, clientele experience, and water type.

The changes in clientele over this period relate more to the experiences they seek, and outfitters have adapted their operations to accommodate this change. Gradually, the portion of the public with sufficient



War surplus sweep pontoon on the Snake River- 1960s.



Our custom built sweep boat on the Salmon River.

interest in river adventure to seek out an outfitter have evolved from merely hiring a guide to take them down a section of river to expecting a participatory role in the navigation of the river. Paddle rafts and inflatable kayaks (rubber duckies) are common sights on rivers and an integral part of many river outfitter's equipment inventory.

With this five decade long evolution in mind, Salmon River Rafting Company has endeavored to blend the old (historic) elements of the past with technology and adventure expectation of the present. Our sweep-rigged rafts (custom built on the basic design of the war surplus bridge pontoon) provide a drier, more secure alternative for river travel. Our paddle rafts allow a participatory involvement in the navigation of the river and rapids and a wetter ride. The rubber duckies permit a more adventurous and personal relationship with the river.

After fifty years of running rivers all around the country, it is perhaps not surprising that a person would contemplate the future and consider a possible exit strategy from such a career. In fact, a number of former clients have inquired how long I plan to continue offering trips on the Salmon River. I assume that as a septuagenarian it may be presumed that I'm "circling the drain" (to use a water metaphor). Baring an unexpected health issue or injury I anticipate continuing to offer the Salmon River Lodge Accommodation trips for the near future. I'm still having fun.



Rafts steered by a guide with oars offer the small boat experience without the responsibility for navigating the rapids.



The inflatable kayaks provide a more intimate personal relationship with the river.



Paddle rafts provide a group participatory experience.

2016 Season

Returning guests and the friends and family they bring with them sustain the company. This season my "Frequent Floater" list includes Barbara Jo Kinley, Debbie Sibley, William and Leslie McClintock, Janet Monahan, Sally and Bob Blair, Dawn Gale, Bob and Becky Turner, and Jan Buehler. It is always a pleasure to have friends return and add to our Salmon River memories and experiences.

Our late April trip this year had higher than normal river flows due to warm temperatures. The fast flows made for shorter river days between lodges but did not inhibit our enjoyment of the trip. The late April group is pictured at the right: Michael Kinley, Wayne, Barbara Jo Kinley, Jake Rozier (guide), Doug Lorain, Rebecca Lorain, Robert Lorain and Mike O'Neil. At the time of this photo Bob Lorain was one month shy of his 90th birthday. I hope I'm still running rivers when I'm 90.





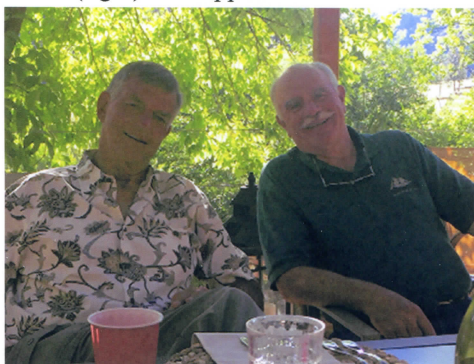
Ruth Ann Smith (left) with daughters Allyson Gibson (center) and Lesley Sand (right) at Shepp Ranch.



Sharron McFadden (left) with granddaughter Samantha Siegner.



River guide's fantasy- a boat load of women



Wayne and Steve- our 33rd year of working together on the Salmon River.



Mackay Bar Lodge's guest greeter seems excited by our arrival.



Bill Guheen, Janet Monahan, Leslie and Bill McClintock on the scenic flight out of the canyon.



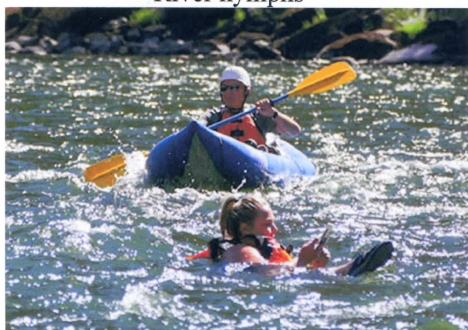
River nymphs



Looks like everyone cleaned their plate except Bill.



Calm water near the end of the trip.



Still no service for my phone.



Planes arrive for our return to Salmon.



Two twin engine Islanders provide a scenic view of the Wilderness as well as egress from the canyon.

2017 Scheduled Departures

Summer and Fall departure dates remain the same each year. Only the April dates are adjusted annually.

SPRING WILDLIFE DEPARTURES

(with river lodge accommodations)

April 7	thru	April 13
April 14	thru	April 20
April 21	thru	April 27
April 28	thru	May 4

SUMMER DEPARTURES

(lodge or camping)

June 25	thru	July 1
July 3	thru	July 9
July 11	thru	July 17
July 19	thru	July 25
July 27	thru	August 2

AUTUMN ADULTS ONLY DEPARTURES

(with river lodge accommodations)

August 4	thru	August 10
August 12	thru	August 18
August 20	thru	August 26
August 28	thru	September 3
September 5	thru	September 11
September 13	thru	September 19
September 21	thru	September 27

RATES

Lodge Accommodation Trips

Salmon Option	\$3,000.00 Per Person
Boise Option	\$3,360.00 Per Person

Camping Trips

Salmon Option	\$2,200 Per Adult
	\$1,800.00 Per Youth (6-12)
Boise Option	\$2,560.00 Per Adult
	\$2,160.00 Per Youth (6-12)

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT (all trips)

For Single room at the Stagecoach Inn on the 1st and 6th nights (before and after the river trip) please add \$95.00 per person.

Above prices are complete. Gratuities are neither required nor encouraged.

Prices include 3% Forest Service Land Use Fee and \$20.00 Recreation Enhancement Act Fee

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Changes on the Salmon River

At the end of the 2015 season Mike and Lynn Demerse retired from their three decade career as managers and hosts at Shepp Ranch. During their tenure at the ranch they developed and maintained a reputation for excellence and unsurpassed hospitality. They are good friends and we wish them well in the future.



Mike and Lynn Demerse

The new managers and caretakers, Wes and Christina, have a history of their own in the Salmon River Canyon. They previously were caretakers at Indian Creek Ranch which is about five miles upstream from Shepp Ranch. During this, their first season at



Wes and Christina

Shepp Ranch, they have proven they are adept at providing first class service and hospitality. Under their direction, Shepp Ranch remains one of our favorite overnight stays on the Salmon River.

Another change

for 2016 relates to

the management and operation of the China Bar Lodge. Mike McLean sold his interest in the lodge and retired. Jess and Brenda Baugh purchased Mike's interest in the facility and the jet boat operation. The new management has initiated numerous upgrades at the lodge and China Bar remains an important element in our lodge accommodation scheduling.



Mike McLean and Wayne