

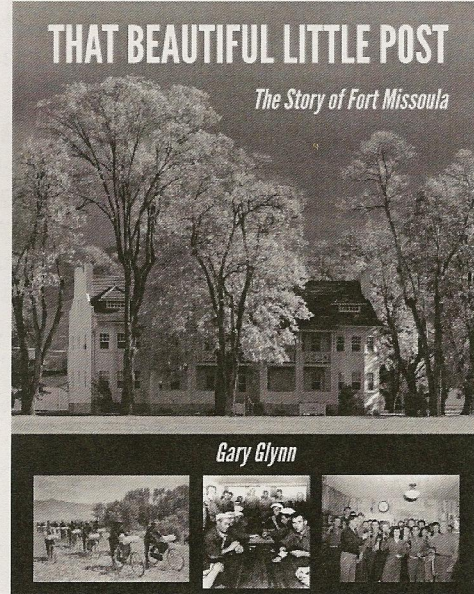
Interview with Gary Glynn author of *"That Beautiful Little Post"*

1. How did you get the idea for your book *That Beautiful Little Post*?

The need for a book-length comprehensive look at Fort Missoula's history had been evident for a long time. Wally Long had written a brief history of the fort, but I wanted to expand on his work and add detail to those aspects of the fort's history that had not yet been fully explored. I also thought that the Fort needed a full-color book that would appeal to visiting tourists, and I tried to make it interesting to the general public.

2. How was the research process? Do you have any interesting archival or research stories?

I thought I knew a lot about the history of Fort Missoula when I started research on this book. I had been involved with the museum for more than 15 years at that point, and had written about the bicycle corps, and the internment camp, but I once I began the research I realized how much of Fort Missoula's history had not been recorded in any detail. I discovered many things I did not know about the fort.



The soldiers at the fort had a much different relationship with Native Americans than popular lore would suggest. Much of their time was spent escorting Salish and Kootenai hunting parties to the buffalo grounds in eastern Montana. Chief Charlo would frequently ask the commander of the fort to mediate disputes between the local Salish and white settlers or other tribes.

I was also surprised about how much paperwork the officers at the fort had to do on a daily basis, even in 1877. As an example, when the commander of the fort wanted to spend three dollars to purchase a hammer, a box of candles, and some writing paper for the office, he had to mail a letter to the Department of Dakota, headquartered in Minnesota, requesting written permission to do so.

3. Which aspect of Fort Missoula's history interested you the most, why?

Some of the most important and interesting aspects of Fort Missoula's history have been covered extensively in other books. What I wanted to do was to present a complete history of the fort, and put in context the most famous incidents of Fort Missoula's history. The Nez Perce War lasted but a few months during the summer of 1877. The Bicycle Corps was active for a few months over two summers in the 1890s. The Fort Missoula Alien Detention Center was in existence for about three years during World War II. The three events that Fort Missoula is known for consist of only five years of the fort's 137-year history.

I wanted the book to cover not just the well-known

aspects but also those many years that haven't been covered as thoroughly. I also thought it was important to provide some insight into the day-to-day activities of the people stationed at the fort during that long history. I wanted to give people a sense of what it was like to live at the fort, not only for the soldiers who were stationed there, but also for their wives and children, who were present from the very beginning.

4. How did you become involved at Fort Missoula?

I first became involved with the Historical Museum about twenty years ago when Bob Brown, the director at the time, contacted me about helping with a World War II exhibit the museum was planning. He then asked if I was interested in joining the board of the Friends of the Historical Museum. I wound up serving on the Friends Board for six years and then on the Board of Trustees for another ten.

5. How many books have you done? How does this book compare to the others?

This is my fifth book, and is similar in format to "Montana's Home Front During World War II," which was published in 1994. I put out a greatly revised edition of that book in 2011.

6. What do you hope people take away after reading this book?

I hope people will realize the important role that Fort Missoula has played in the history of the Missoula Valley since 1877 and will be inspired to help protect and improve the fort grounds..