

SAN JUAN COURIER

A Periodical Publication of the San Juan County Historical Society

Summer 1997

Silverton, San Juan County, Colorado

Town Hall Restoration Honored by National Trust

Last October, Fritz Klinke, Loren Lew, Ken Safranski and Beverly Rich traveled to Chicago to receive the National Preservation Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation for the Society's work on the Silverton Town Hall Restoration. This is the highest award presented in the preservation world. The annual award is presented by the Trust to "those individuals and organizations whose contributions demonstrate outstanding dedication and commitment to excellence in historic preservation".

The award culminated three years of careful and expert labor restoring the landmark Silverton Town Hall, which was nearly destroyed by a fire on November 30, 1992. The disastrous fire left a smoking shell, encased in ice. There were concerns about safety and many expressed the belief that the beautiful building should be torn down. The Society immediately stepped in and got emergency grants from the State Historical Society and the National Trust to employ a structural engineer to inspect the building to see if it could be saved. It was deemed structurally sound, and the Town Board voted to restore it.

With the town acting as its own contractor and keeping the work local whenever possible, it hired a three man management team: Loren Lew as main contractor, Ken Safranski as code inspector, and Bill Jones as project accountant. Fritz Klinke acted as preservation consultant and Darnall Zanoni was hired to document the project in detail. Beverly Rich wrote grant applications which were funded by the State Historical Fund for \$175,000 and the Boettcher Foundation granted another \$20,000.

The Society was active in every phase of the construction, from hiring the architectural/engineering firm to being on-site labor. The first stage of the project involved cleaning up the damage from the fire and getting rid of the accumulation of snow and ice from inside the building,

which was open to the elements. During this stage careful documentation was performed as burned materials were removed and tagged. This provided guides as the building was being rebuilt.

The second stage was the actual rebuilding of the structure, including installing a temporary roof. At this point the building's services were brought up to modern codes and ADA standards were utilized. The third stage was the finishing of the building, in many instances employing 100 year old building techniques. This included flying in experts to teach the local crew such methods as "plastering in place".

The last stage, ongoing, is the repair of the facade of rose-colored sandstone which was damaged by water and ice and years of exposure. This stage involves taking down the whole wall of stones, numbering them, repairing, and in some cases, where the damage is too great, replacing them, and then putting them back up with new mortar. This is very costly, and very complicated. The bulk of the restoration costs were covered by the town's insurance carrier, CIRSA, with grant help from the Society. A superb job was done and the project got nationwide attention and news coverage.

The award ceremony was held in the grand ballroom of the Palmer House Hotel in downtown Chicago. Over 1000 people attended the event, which featured a film of the projects being honored. Richard Moe, president of the Trust, was master of ceremonies.

Those attending to be honored for the Town Hall restoration were Rich, Klinke, Lew and Safranski, project engineer Dick Beardmore, architect Jim Reidhead, stone expert Glenn Bournazian, and rock bolt supplier Robert Lloyd Reece. Also attending to cheer for Silverton were Karla Safranski, George and Lillian Lew, Dave, Mary Beth, Dan and Kathy Kalina.

Following the ceremony the large



As if tipping its hat in a salute for a job well done, the Silverton Town Hall bell tower's crowning element is hoisted into place during the rebuilding of the historic structure in May 1995. The Society was instrumental in raising funds for the restoration of the building after a devastating fire in November, 1992, and money garnered by the Society from the Boettcher Foundation, the Colorado Historical Fund and private donations supplemented insurance settlements to achieve financing of a job many felt could not be accomplished. The building was reoccupied later in 1995, and the Society and Town of Silverton were recipients of a National Preservation Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1996.

A notable delegation of Silvertonians and interested friends and technicians gathered at the Palmer House Hilton in Chicago in October 17, 1996, for the presentation of a National Preservation Honor Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation at its annual national awards program.

Silverton contingent went to a 130 year old German restaurant to celebrate. There they were joined by Ellen Fisher,

Colorado's advisor for the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Needless to say, a good time was had by all.

Chairman's Report

Dear Members,

It is a stunning day in the San Juans. Winter was nice with plenty of snow, and now we are having a very early spring. I think we will get an extra month of summer this year which will be nice since we have much to do. This has been a big year for us. We have been recognized nationally for the work we have done. We are recognized around the state as a group that gets real preservation done...and it came from a lot of hard work. We have known for 33 years the role that preservation plays in our economy and in our quality of life. Through the years we have provided jobs, bought locally, and fought to preserve our historic sites throughout the county. We continue to fulfill our mission of education by providing a state of the art archive and a first-rate museum. And we saved the Mayflower Mill.

Some personal notes about the National Honor Award: Winning was wonderful. We were met at our plane by Chicago members Dan and Dave Kalina, who rented a van for us and proceeded to cater to our every need. They took us to museums, to see the sights, and to fine restaurants. They, and Dave's wife Mary Beth, were marvelous and made our trip to the great city of Chicago a joy. We thank them. There was standing room only at the ceremony, which was smoothly orchestrated by the staff of the Trust. I wish you could have been there. We had such a good time, and it was wonderful to see the people who worked so hard get honored.

Yes, we are busy. Last year we co-sponsored a grant application with the Town of Silverton for \$400,000 to finish the rock work on the other three sides of Town Hall. We co-applied for and did a substantial amount of the research for a \$100,000 grant for roof and gable work for the Miner's Union Hospital with San Juan County. We are doing the research for an application for restoring the stately County Courthouse. We are also helping the Congregational Church, the oldest Protestant church on the Western Slope, with a grant application for repair work on that 1881 structure. All of this work has been donated by us to further the cause of preservation, our mission. We continue to be active in the community and regionally, and found out that activism has brought us an ISTE grant of \$60,000 for work at the Mill.

It looks like our planned move of the Caledonia Boardinghouse has been pushed back for a bit. I hope it survived the winter, and hope it will another one, too. We applied for a tax exemption on the donated Mill property. We got it on the 5 acres that the Mill actually sits on, but not on the Blair Mountain Placer and the property closer to town that the power house and mule barn sit on. That means that we have to do something with that property soon to make it earn its way. What we decided is to make the area around the power house into an industrial park, and the power house into a business incubator. The ground is flat, it has a road and power to it, and there is a lot of space. Silverton has no inexpensive space in which businesses such as small manufacturing plants, may develop. This would accomplish several things. It would help us restore the powerhouse and stabilize the mule barn, it would encourage business and maybe provide a few jobs, and, most importantly, pay the taxes! With the help of member Leslie Jones, we have applied for an EDA planning grant to fund a feasibility and engineering study, which we hope to get done this summer.

We have some new exhibits at the museum this year including the mineral collection of Amos and May Jaramillo, collected over a 50 year period in the San Juans and donated by their children. We also have something for the rail fans: a set of Mears passes issued to C. W. Gibbs and furnished through the courtesy of collector Bill Strong. Included are a buckskin, a solid silver, and watch fob, and a silver filigree. Showcases for these collections were built by Bob Schmidt, master craftsman at Signature Furniture in Silverton.

Our annual cemetery workday will be the third Saturday in June. Elsewhere in these pages you will read about some of our other projects. You can see that we are a busy bunch of volunteers. And we cannot do it without you. The awards and recognition couldn't have come without your support.

Thanks, dear members.

Bev

SAN JUAN COURIER

George Chapman, Editor

Beverly Rich, Allen Nossaman, and Duane Murphy; Contributors

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Mailing address: Post Office Box 154, Silverton, Colorado 81433

San Juan County Historical Society
Officers and Directors, 1997

Beverly Rich, Chairman
Allen Nossaman, Secretary

Scott Fetchenhier, Vice Chairman
William R. Jones, Treasurer

George Darnall Zanoni, Steven Fearn, Alfred Klinke Directors

Archive is a busy place

by Allen Nossaman

In its first full year of operation, the new archival facility of the San Juan County Historical Society has, within the limitations imposed by budgetary and personnel considerations, met a number of goals in a satisfactory manner.

The facility opened May 28, 1995, with a total of over 700 patrons and 62 serious researchers using the archival aspects of the building through the annual meeting report date of October 18, 1996.

Total revenues realized through the archival office of the Society, including memberships and donations solicited and received by that branch, were \$5,897.75 during the last year. This figure includes \$1,840.00 in photographic copy work—more than three times the figure for the 1995 summer season—and \$527.00 in Colorado Gaming Fund revenue, but does not include a separate Archive Endowment Fund established early in 1996 by Silverton High School graduate and former resident Eleanore McKenna. Mrs. McKenna donated \$5,000 with which to begin an endowment fund designed to assist with support of the archival facility. The money has been placed on deposit to accumulate interest, and any immediate draws on the fund will be limited to assistance with utility costs for the archive building. Mrs. McKenna is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hammond Mathews, late Silverton residents, and she has continued solicitation among fellow members of her 1943 graduating class.

The Archive Log continues to be maintained by the director and indicates 691 hours by the director during the past year. In addition, other Society members have donated hours in acquisition, inventory, and analysis of archival items. Additionally, the director's off premise hours in such activities as interviews and lectures are not included.

As during its inaugural year, the archive was visited by a number of professionals in the field during the past year, including James Hartman, president of the Colorado Historical Society; Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation; and Tom Casadevall, western regional director of the U. S. Geological Survey. On November 1, 1995, the facility hosted a workshop of the Colorado Preservation Alliance, which was presented by Terry Ketelsen, Colorado state archivist; Karen Jones, preservation specialist with the Jefferson County Public Libraries; and Ellen Fisher of the University of Colorado at Denver faculty and the Gates Foundation.

The archives received a Statewide Preservation Award from Colorado Preservation, Inc., during the spring of 1996, with the director able to accept the award in person at a meeting of the organization at St. Cajetan's

Church, a restored meeting edifice in Denver, on behalf of the Society.

Outstanding among the volunteers during the past year was Silverton High School graduate and Wellesley College student Laura Paoiff, who volunteered as an intern during her summer vacation. Ms. Paoiff worked on three major projects, organizing and cataloging the English language letters in the French Boys Mining Company-Victor Vincent collection; conducting a preliminary inventory of the colored transparency collection of the late Helen Salfisberg, donated by Daniel Salfisberg; and developing a listing of the issues missing from microfilmed newspapers in a cooperative project with the Silverton Public Library.

The archival unit also cooperated in a grant project with the cemetery committee, this one for \$2,500 in connection with the research, identification and permanent marking of grave sites outside of Hillside Cemetery and on public domain in the county. Over a two year period, the Society acquired filing cabinet space with a portion of the grant, and the balance has gone to the manufacture of five granite stones to mark burial sites at Ross Basin, Wood Mountain, Arrastra Gulch, Burns Gulch, and the Animas Canyon above Eureka. Freda Peterson and Paul and Mary Beaver have been the lead members of this project.

The archive's reference library has grown during the year with generous donations from, among others, Cathy E. Kindquist, John Marshall, Sundance Publications, the Colorado Genealogical Society and Shirley Ann Sheets, the Creede Historical Society, and the Colorado Historical Society.

Paid library acquisitions have included the newest edition of the "Hinsdale County Cemeteries: book, "The Grand Imperial Story," "Historical Atlas of Colorado" and "Trials and Triumphs," a book on the depression and war years in Colorado. The book incorporates a number of illustrations of Silverton during the period, and the Society worked with Tommy Savich to develop a supplemental index to the identities of Silverton subjects in the book.

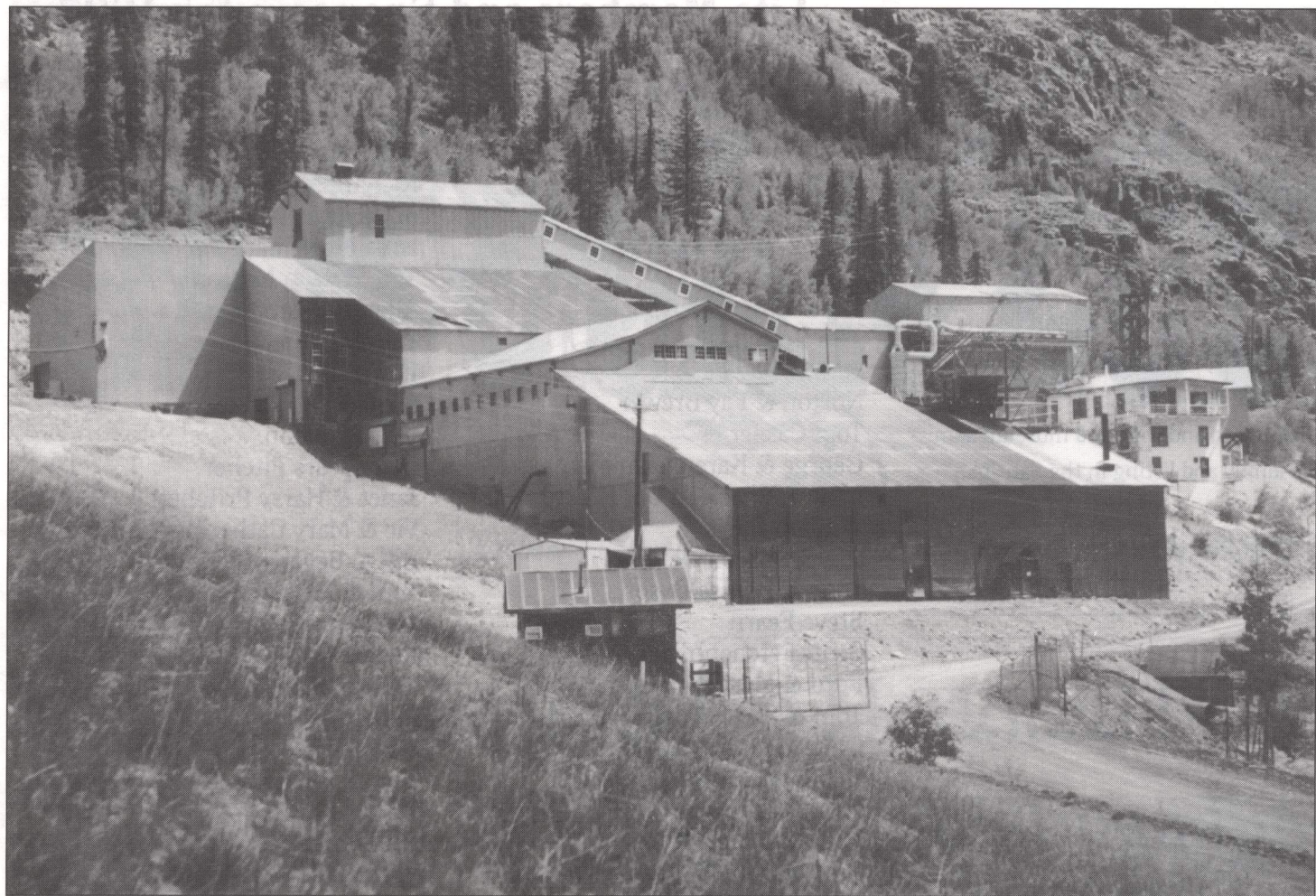
Among the other projects of the archive during the past business year were:

- Continuing cataloging and preservation of the more than 800 nitrate negatives in the collection of the late Edgar Dyson, donated by his son, Arthur Dyson. The images span the period 1905-1921.

- Assistance with research by National Park Service aide Dawn Bunyak on the proposed expansion of the boundaries of the Silverton National Historic District, including cataloging and use of Mayflower Mill interior photographs donated by Frederic Athearn, state historian for the Bureau of Land Management.

Continued on Page 4

Mayflower Mill opens as an attraction



The recent donation of the Mayflower Mill has added a significant resource to the holdings and programs of the Society. Mill tours will be undertaken on a daily basis this summer, after a trial initiation of the tour concept late last summer. The Society has also done much in the way of maintenance and clean-up on the mill, which was built in 1929 by the Shenandoah-Dives Mining Company and is one of the best surviving examples of a working mill in the state. The mill, the lower portion of the aerial tramway into Arrastra Gulch, and associated properties were donated to the Society by Sunnyside Gold Corporation in 1995.

The official donation ceremony of the Mayflower Mill was held during a gala celebration thrown by Sunnyside Gold Corporation and the Society on June 15, 1996. Dressed in colorful embroidered ball caps, over 200 Society members, Sunnyside executives and employees, State and Federal agency personnel, Town and County officials, former mill hands, and the media were bussed from the museum to the mill for tours of the historic building.

This celebration culminated three years of negotiations with Sunnyside and its parent company, Echo Bay Mines. When the great mine shut down, its mining permit required that the historic mill be torn down. The Society, already having seen much of San Juan County's mining heritage disappear, approached Sunnyside to ask them to donate it to us. This set a

very long, involved process into motion. Sunnyside had to amend its permit, which involved state and federal agencies and public hearings. The Society had to do extensive research as well to see if accepting the industrial property was prudent.

In the end, Sunnyside's permit was successfully amended and the Society felt confident enough to accept the property. The Society also entered into an agreement with the EPA which holds the Society harmless for anything that happened on the Mill property before our ownership. This is an almost unprecedented agreement, and involved many attorneys, the Judicial Department, and soliciting public comment in the Congressional Record. As project coordinator Zeke Zanoni said: "This whole thing has been to Washington and back!"

The Society was also given a donation of \$120,000 by Sunnyside to help turn the Mill into a tour. A crew was hired in April 1996 and worked swiftly getting the Mill in shape for trial tours in August to help work out the "bugs." One hundred seventy-five visitors went through the Mill, with very little advertising being done, so the goal of the tour being self-sufficient seems very possible.

We just received word that we would be receiving a grant for \$60,000 to help with visitor amenities, interpretation and safety measures at the Mill. This came from the Friends of the San Juan Skyway who received a large Federal ISTEAG grant to enhance sites around the National Scenic Byway. This will allow us to finish creating the tour in a very professional way.

Caledonia temporarily back-burnered; still in plans

For some years now there has been hope on the part of many members of the San Juan County Historical Society that the old, quite impressive, Caledonia Miner's boarding house might be saved from collapse. The magnificent building was carefully constructed of squared-off logs, which have been mitered together with opposing wedge shaped ends. The building which served the nearby Caledonia mine, is located close to timberline near the top of Minnie Gulch, not far from the Kittimac mine.

The attractive project was sidetracked a year or so ago when the prospect of receiving the Mayflower Mill faced the society. The acquisition of the mill, located within two miles of Silver-

ton, was a now or never proposition. The board members jumped at the opportunity. Available funds were poured into the mill restoration, enabling it to be opened to the public for tours late last summer.

With the mill tour operational, attention needs to be turned again to the Caledonia boarding house. Those of you who have seen it, know that it has a serious tilt and sliding rock of the mountainside behind it continues to threaten the building's stability.

The unique construction continues to hold the building together...but for how long? When a log building falls apart, it is almost impossible to put it back together.

Attempts have been made to stabi-

lize the building but now the hope is that it may be taken apart, the logs numbered and transported to Silverton where the building will be reconstructed near the museum.

An artist's sketch shows the building in place and furnished to show the living conditions of early miners. It may be attached to an "engine house" in which all the society's railroad artifacts, including rolling stock, will be displayed. It will make a possible a new addition to the museum. And do we ever need it! We have over five warehouse rooms filled with interesting items that have been donated to the society.

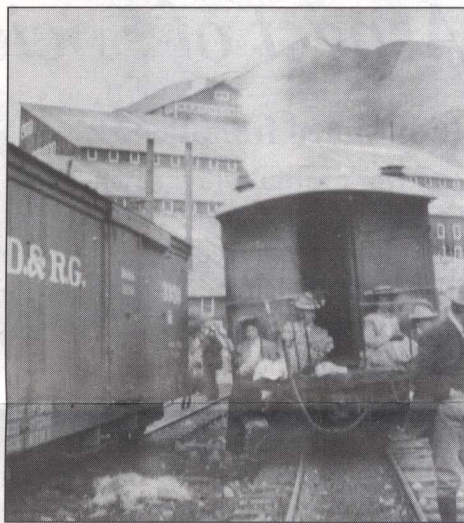
Stay tuned...and lets save the Caledonia boarding house before it is too late.

Animas Forks to be assisted with state funding

The Society just received word that we have received a grant of \$29,000 from the State Historical Fund for stabilizing the six structures remaining at Animas Forks and to do a boundary survey of the townsite.

The grant was applied for by the Society and the Bureau of Land Management as partners. Located on the heavily visited Alpine Loop National Scenic Byway, Animas Forks is one of Colorado's highest ghost towns at 11,190 feet.

The first claim was filed in 1875 and the town incorporated in 1881. It was the northern terminus of Otto Mear's Silverton Northern Railroad. At one time it had a population of over 500 and even had a newspaper, the "Animas Forks Pioneer". Its major mines were the Gold Prince, the Columbus, the Sound Democrat and the Frisco.



Friends and relatives of the Frank Ross family are shown here on the platform of a railroad car at Animas Forks around 1908.

Over the past 20 years the Society has been working on the Duncan House ("Walsh" House), the much photographed residence with the bay window. With the help of the Ghost Town Club of Colorado and Outward Bound, we got a new shingle roof on and got some structural shoring done.

In 1994 we got funding from an ISTEAG grant and the L. O. S. T. Four Wheelers Association to restore the only remaining structure at Eureka and to do more stabilization on the Duncan House. With our carpenter working with hand tools just like in the early days, stairs were replaced, flooring installed, and inside sheathing repaired. The Duncan House is in by far the best shape of all of the structures at Animas Forks now, thanks to this stabilization.

However, the other buildings are in very bad shape, in fact, in danger of complete collapse. Our plan of action includes replacing the roofs of all of the buildings, and doing as much sheathing, flooring and window and door frame replacement as the grant funds will allow.

We hope this much needed work will help the nearly 400,000 visitors annually to appreciate and protect San Juan County's incredible mining heritage.

San Juan County Historical Society

Application for Membership — 1997

San Juan County Historical Society
Post Office Box 154
Silverton, Colorado 81433

I wish to enroll as a member of the San Juan County Historical Society in the class designated below for the calendar year 1997. I understand that this membership entitles me (and my spouse, if applicable) to a vote at the annual meeting in October, 1997.

- ☐ **Member:** Voting privilege [\$5.00]
☐ **Family Member:** Voting privilege, man and wife [\$8.50]
☐ **Supporting Member:** Voting privilege, man and wife, and museum admission for season for immediate family [\$12.50]
☐ **Society Patron:** Voting privilege, man and wife, and museum admission for season for immediate family and listing in the San Juan Courier [\$20.00]
☐ **Life Membership:** All privileges for life [\$250.00]

Name: _____

Address: _____

The Archive is an Important Aspect of Society's Operation

(Continued from Page 2)

- Work with Brynmor Williams of Cardiff, Wales, on a BBC documentary film he produced and directed to illustrate Welsh migration to the United States.

- Receipt and cataloging of a series of photographic images from the Burnell-Jones-Stanger families, donated by Laura Moore Ledbetter and her family in conjunction with major financial donations to the archive and cemetery projects.

- Receipt, cataloging, and indexing of a significant collection of material on the Shenandoah Mine strike, 1939-1943, and the Western Federation of Miners, Local No. 26, provided through courtesy of Clyde Cerniway.

- Continuing work on labeling the prints and negatives in the ever-expanding photo documentary project on the restoration of the Silverton Town Hall, undertaken by George "Zeke" Zaroni.

- Organization and cataloging the balance of the collection of hotel register forms from the Benson Hotel during the years of operation by the Anesi family, donated by Anna Girodo and Tiffany Smith DeKay.

- Receipt and cataloging of a large collection of photographs and copied negatives from the collection of the Frank L. Ross family, donated by Frances Ross Davis. Ross was the son of pioneer Jacob Ross and a long-time Silverton attorney and mine developer.

- Receipt of further mining claim and family materials from John F. "Jack" Schmelzer.

- Acceptance of donations from Bill and Iola Miller, Silverton residents during the late 1940s, including material on the family, the Silverton Gospel Tabernacle and Church of the Radio Prayer League, and a video of home movies from the period.

- Acquisition of a collection of papers and photographs from the estate of the late Grant Gifford by chairman Beverly Rich and board member George D. "Zeke" Zaroni.

- Receipt, cataloging, and indexing of a copied collection of portraits connected with the Bowman, Gifford, and Montgomery families, donated from a once-lost list by Andrew and Bernadetta Bowman Pfeifferberger.

- Acquisition of a small collection of photographs and recollections on the experiences of Dr. O. T. Nuttall, a Silverton doctor of short duration who previously escaped the medical doctor inventory because he was not in receipt of any direct county funding. Nuttall arrived in Silverton in 1923 by having his Auburn Beauty Six towed over Mineral Point from Ouray because contractors on the new Million Dollar Highway would not let him drive over the road.

San Juan County Historical Society

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The Story of Hillside Cemetery, Volume I
by Freda Peterson

An updated version of the popular 1989 edition, this first volume covers A through L. Much new material and a new easier to read format.

Order by mail for \$60.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. Colorado residents please add \$4.20 sales tax.

Sorry, no member discount on this item.

Special:

During the restoration of the Silverton Town Hall, it was necessary to obtain a new casting of light shades to replicate the unique originals. These glass shades are a piece of Silverton history and are available at the museum for \$17.50 each (plus tax). Lots of ten or more may be purchased for \$15.00 each.