

SAN JUAN COURIER

A Periodical Publication of the San Juan County Historical Society

Summer 2003

Silverton, San Juan County, Colorado

Powerhouse Incubator Project Goes to Bid

by Bill Jones

After five years of planning, the first bids are now being solicited for work on the Powerhouse Business Incubator Project. This project combines historic preservation work with an economic development project. The preservation aspect will result in major structural repairs to the 1906 Animas Light and Power substation building. This imposing three storey brick building was long used as a warehouse by Standard Metals and later Sunnyside Gold Corporation, who donated the property and the Mayflower Mill. In addition, a new water and sewer system will be built to serve the site, which is too remote to connect to the Town of Silverton's infrastructure.

The Mayflower Mill turned out to be the key to cost effective water system development. The mill has an existing water line from high in Arrastra Gulch, which will be treated and stored in a new 50,000 gallon tank located behind the mill. Then a new 6 inch pipeline will be run down to the Powerhouse site. This large tank is needed for fire protection more than actual water usage. Local engineers Mark Mackie and Lisa Adair designed the system to connect with all the mill fire hydrants and the watchman's building. The tank and pipeline may also be able to provide water in the future to other Society properties in the area. This system will greatly enhance the value and usefulness of the mill and powerhouse properties. Seven potential building sites adjacent to the Powerhouse will be served by this new infrastructure.

The Powerhouse building will receive much needed structural repairs to roof and brick. Years of neglect and water damage have deteriorated many areas of the 35 foot high walls and the roof will need complete replacement. The interior will be cleaned of lead paint and

opened up for use as rental space. Bathrooms and a common office area will also be provided. Windows and doors will be repaired and restored. The original roof drain system will be repaired and improved. Failure of this drain system and later improper roof drainage methods caused the bulk of the damage to the building. Architects for the building project are Jay Lynch and Associates of Bayfield assisted by Architecture 2000 of Denver. Laura Landon has prepared wonderful working drawings of the building using the latest computer drafting technology and digital imaging.

Work at the site is expected to begin in mid-June. Total cost of the project is about \$700,000. This project is being paid for in part by a State Historic Fund grant from the Colorado Historical Society and a grant from the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade. Major funding is being provided by a grant from the Economic Development Administration, U.S Department of Commerce. Combining historic preservation with economic development is a "win-win" formula for the Society and the people of Silverton and San Juan County.

10th Annual Cemetery Work Day Scheduled for June 21

Saturday June 21, 2003 will mark the tenth annual workday for Silverton's unique Hillside Cemetery. Everyone is welcome to come help tidy up the historic cemetery, as the rugged winters always leave plenty of work to be done on the rocky mountainside. In addition to picking up and disposing of broken branches and other debris, several tombstones will be set on previously unmarked graves. Please bring loppers, shovels, and gloves. Bring a lunch and join Freda, Mary and Paul for some interesting tales.



All dressed up and no place to go! The rebuilt and expanded Caledonia Boardinghouse, a.k.a. the Mining Heritage Center has new windows as a result of a generous response from members and others to an appeal last year for funds. Unfortunately installation of exhibits is at a standstill because additional funds are needed.

Third Saturday in June:

The Day to Work at the Cemetery

by: Mary Beaber

The third Saturday of June each year is the day reserved for the workday at Silverton's wonderful little cemetery. June of 2002 was no exception. On a beautiful sunny Saturday, over 40 volunteers arrived at 10 a.m. and for the next couple of hours cleaned headstones, filled sunken graves with gravel, picked up branches and other debris, and applied oil to preserve old wooden markers.

The volunteers also placed nineteen beautiful granite markers on previously unmarked graves. The stone markers were made possible by Family Craft Memorials in Durango. The tombstones are paid for by individuals and Hillside Cemetery Fund. Since 1985 the marking of older graves has been a project of Hillside Cemetery Fund. Last year's workday was documented by filmmaker Tom Schilliacci of Durango. Tom's creative video is an excellent documentary and a valued asset for the Archives. It

is also available for viewing at the Silverton Library.

Our cleanup group this past year was honored by the presence of Ohio resident, Lance Pettijohn. Although Lance learned his great uncle was not buried in Hillside Cemetery, his search did lead him to the grave of his great uncle's friend, Louis Fleitas. Lance had found letters and old mining records that indicated that his great uncle's friend, Fleitas, had staked several claims at the head of Lime Creek, and had died in his prospector's cabin during a severe winter. Mr. Pettijohn was pleased to assist in placing a marked stone for Fleitas who died in 1909 and was referred to as the "Hermit of Lime Creek".

The following highlights are selected accounts of a few of the pioneers marked last year:

Emil Bro died in the Shenandoah Mine Snowslide in 1906. Emil was one of twelve men who died in

Chairman's Report

Dear Members,

It is a beautiful, windy day in the San Juans. The flags at the courthouse are fluttering against the clear blue sky with nary a cloud. We had our first rain of the season yesterday—a wonderful daylong, steady rain, that we hope is a good omen for this year. We had much more snow this winter—we reached about 80% of average snowpack. This morning I crossed Cement Creek, and it has risen a lot in just a day. Hopefully we will have a good summer—it certainly can't be worse than the last.

Freda, Nicole, and I have been cleaning the museum this week—getting it ready to open on Memorial Day weekend. We really did a good job this year. We even cleaned the closet and found treasures we didn't know we had! And we found a whole bunch of space! Amazing how that happens. Tomorrow member Dan Garner will wash the windows and help hook up the hose. In the next few days Patty Dailey will come plant the flowers in the ore buckets out front. Duane arrives on Monday. Do you know, dear members, I have been doing this for over 30 years!

Elsewhere in these pages you find reports on the projects we are doing this year. We are a busy bunch! Our two biggest projects, the Powerhouse Business Incubator and the Mining Heritage Center are well on their way to becoming a reality. Bids on the Powerhouse project are due June 6th and with the gift of \$63,000 from the Mountain Studies Institute, we will have exhibits. Members Don and Shirley Kramer volunteered to make the signs for us—a huge donation of their time. Zeke and Scott volunteered to spray the new museum with an oil stain—it makes it look not quite so new. We get by with the help of our friends. In this lousy economy, we need the help of those friends. The foundations were hit by the falling stock market and people are watching their spending more closely. It makes the donation of time all that more valuable. And with that said, I am going to reintroduce you to our best volunteers: your Board of Directors. These people spend literally thousands of hours in the service of our mission—preserving the history of San Juan County, Colorado.

Vice-Chairman Steve Fearn owns Fearn Engineering and is also owner of the Silver Wing Mining Company. His interests include Western history, railroads and theater.

Secretary Scott Fetchenhier owns Fetch's, a gift shop and has a background in geology. He worked at area mines in the 1980s. He is interested in rock collecting and often gives programs to school children.

Treasurer Bill Jones owns the Old 100 Mine Tour and Root and Norton Assayers. His interests include mining history and railroads.

Board member Zeke Zanoni is retired from Sunnyside Gold Corp. where he acted as safety director. He also owns Studio Z, an art studio. His interests include mining history and sculpture.

Board member Fritz Klinke is owner of Klinke & Lew Preservation Contractors, the crew that worked on the prize-winning Town Hall restoration project. He also owns NA Graphics, a printing supply company. His interests include letterpress printing and railroads.

Board Member Jerry Hoffer is a retired electrical engineer. He was once the head electrical engineer at the Sunnyside Mine. His interests include model railroading and brass band music.

Archivist Freda Peterson retired from running an oil law records business in Oklahoma. Her family visited Silverton every summer and she got interested in Hillside Cemetery, leading her to write the 900 page cemetery study *The Story of Hillside Cemetery*. Her interests include research and the cemetery.

And me, your fearless leader. I tell people I have two jobs—I am the San Juan County Treasurer, the job that pays, and the Chairman of the Society, the job that doesn't. I serve on several local and state boards, mostly preservation related. I am a very busy person.

And so, dear members, this is who you have working for you—all volunteers, working tirelessly to protect the history of this beautiful place. Thanks for your support—we have the best members in the world.

Bev

P. S. Check out our website at www.silvertonhistoricalsociety.org

Cemetery Work Day in June

Continued from Page 1

the bunkhouse when the snowslide hit at 6:30 p.m. on St. Patrick's day. Six other men died in snowslides in the county that same day.

Thomas Andrews died in 1885. He was one of the earliest mail carriers in San Juan County. He had been ill for a few days and before killing himself, got out of bed, washed and shaved, put on a clean shirt, and returned to bed pulling the covers around himself.

Carl "Sidney" Dillon died of pneumonia in 1924. He was a gifted musician and a violinist of rare natural ability. He was the leader of the Silverton "Sidney Six" orchestra. The nickname "Sidney" came from his love of horses as a child. Sidney Dillon was a well known horse racer of that time.

None of this information would

be readily available without Freda Carley Peterson's remarkable books, *The Story of Hillside Cemetery, Volumes I & II*. No maps or organized records existed of this mountain graveyard until Freda began her research 30 years ago. Because of her dedication and hard work, this cemetery is one of the best documented of any mining town in the West.

The 2003 workday is scheduled for Saturday, June 21st. If you would like to volunteer, join us at the cemetery at 10:00 a.m. Bring a sack lunch. Following the work session, we'll adjourn to the Beaber's backyard to eat and have a short program. If you can't join us, but would like to make a tax deductible donation, send to: Hillside Cemetery Fund, P.O. Box 115, Silverton, Colorado 81433. We have many more burials to mark!



In an anti-preservation event that commanded national media attention, the Kohler/Longfellow Boardinghouse near the top of Red Mountain Pass was bulldozed by owner Frank Baumgartner early last summer. The Ouray and San Juan County Historical Societies had just finished stabilizing the building with a \$6000 grant from the State Historical Fund. The National Trust for Historic Preservation covered the destruction in a lead story in the January-February issue of Preservation, the Trust magazine.

Society Participates Again in "Step Back in Time"

You are invited to join us in the celebration of our unique heritage. Take a step back in time to the turn of the century mining boomtime heyday. Silverton is the perfect setting, with its charming Victorian architecture, for this historical celebration of a time gone by.

Step Back in Time has proved to be a success with an emphasis on liv-

ing-history and dance. This year's celebration is June 5th, 6th, and 7th, with events happening throughout the day. The Society is sponsoring cemetery tours by Mary Beaber and Nicole Sharp on Friday and Sunday at 10:00 and new museum tours by Bev Rich on Friday at 1:30. Locals and visitors are encouraged to dress in costume.

SAN JUAN COURIER

George Chapman, Editor

Contributors: Bill Jones, Beverly Rich, Fritz Klinke, Mary Beaber, Freda Peterson, Zeke Zanoni

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San Juan County, Colorado.

**San Juan County Historical Society
Officers and Directors, 2002**

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Old Hundred Location Explained by Bev Rich

by Beverly Rich

The Seven Level Boarding House, known locally as the Old Hundred boarding house, was built to house miners at what, in 1904, was the lowest working level of the Old Hundred Mine. Because Colorado mine claims were located according to Apex Law, which states that when a vein surfaces on a claim it may then be followed to its end, the Old Hundred mine was placed high on Galena Mountain to follow the visible ore.

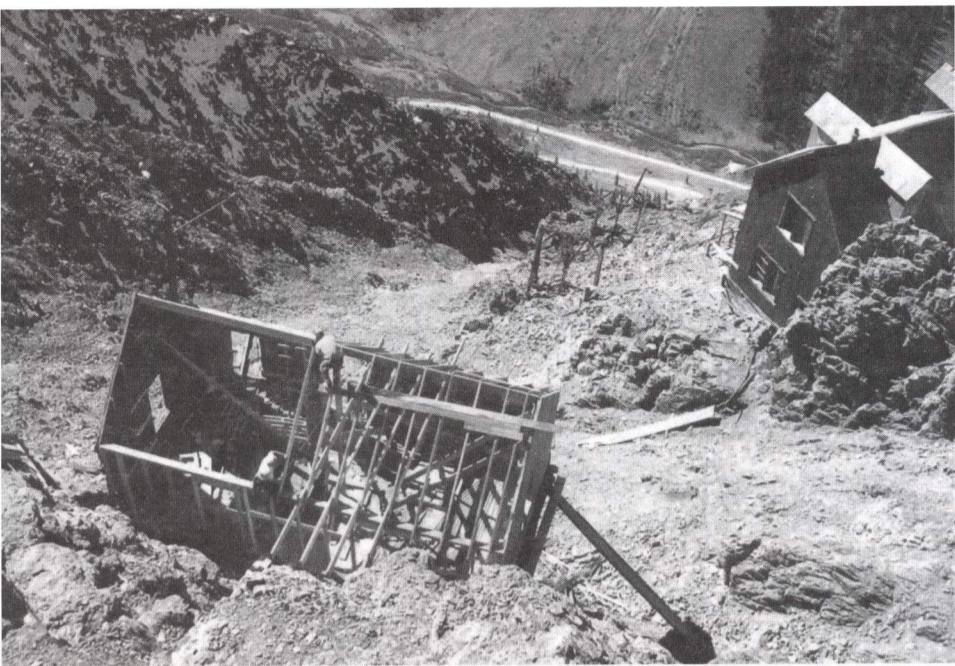
A boarding house at that level was needed for several reasons: to allow mine employees ready access to the nearby adit without their having to combat the weather or the rugged terrain, to allow the mining company some control over workers in their off hours, and to provide employees the expected room and board which were considered a part of a miner's compensation. Housing the Old Hundred miners in Silverton or even in Howardsville was untenable; it was a three or four hour hike back to town. The boarding house was linked to the nearby tram house by a precarious boardwalk which gave the roomers access to the mine, the mill and the gulch below.

The Old Hundred Mine boarding house and accompanying tramway terminal represent one of the few remaining sites typical of the tramway-dependent mining systems of the San Juan district. The two buildings, along with an attached mule barn, are perched 2000 feet above Cunningham Gulch on the face of a steep cliff, on Galena Mountain, in one of the West's most rugged, weather-beaten, and inaccessible mining districts. The boarding house and tram house provide one of the better-preserved examples of the remarkable resourcefulness, perseverance, and inventiveness that miners would resort to for the removal of valuable ores and are a model of the

technology typical of the San Juans. This site is listed on Colorado State Historical Register. In the summer of 1999, stabilization was done on the boarding house using funding supplied by the Colorado Division of Minerals and Geology (DMG), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the State Historical Fund, and the Society.

In 2002, the Society was awarded \$10,000 from the DMG, \$15,000 from the BLM and \$30,000 from the State Historical Fund to finish the stabilization of the tram house and to make a documentary film of the project. Filming the project documented the techniques used in mining structure stabilization. It also documented the harshness of the conditions that the contractors will work in at 12,500 feet in elevation. The film will act as an educational tool for the San Juan County Historical Society and the Colorado Historical Society, as a public relations tool for the Division of Minerals and Geology and the Bureau of Land Management, and show how historic preservation can fuel the economy and promote heritage tourism. It will also document the partnerships that need to be made to accomplish a project such as this.

The State Historical Fund put the project on the fast track, getting our contract signed in record time so that the Society could "piggyback" onto a DMG project to enable us to use the helicopter that they were using to close the Veta Madre portal. The crew started on the 17th of September and were done by September 30th, a good thing, because they came down from Galena Mountain in a snow storm! Film was shot during the construction, and further work will be done this summer, with our filmmaker, SouthWing Films doing archival research and interviews (at the present time, Ken Sauls, our filmmaker, is on a Mount Everest expedition). The film will be available for distribution by the end of the year.



The Old Hundred Project from above. Not the place for those who suffer from hypsiphobia

Mayflower Mill Still a Great Place to Visit

By Zeke Zanoni, Mill Manager
With the Chair of the Board (Bev) insisting that something needs to be written about the Mill for the San Juan Courier, I sit sulking at my word processor staring at a blank screen, wondering what magic words to use to spellbind my readers.

Undoubtedly the Mayflower Mill has and continues to play an important part of the Society's many facets of history interpretation. A classic timber frame building with all of its machinery still in place, it tells the story of flotation milling for metals, so little understood by the lay public. Becoming a National Historic Landmark a few years back, it is impressive to the mining student and gives insight into a little known industry.

In 2002, like many businesses and tourist attractions, the Mill struggled to keep its head above water. Due to an overall down economy, state-wide forest fires scaring people away from Colorado, and 3-phase electrical power rates doubling in one year, the Mill had its first nonprofit season. With the loss actually small, we still had a good year of many satisfied customers enjoying our tour and panning for *real* gold.

Unfortunately, we lost one of the Mill's "old-timers" this year. Jerry

Ellis, who had served as Leadman the last few years, moved to central Florida to take care of his aging parents. Once down there and established, he suddenly developed a "heart condition" and passed away unexpectedly this spring. He was good for the Mill and will be missed. God Bless!

Last fall, Jeff Sunday became our new watchman, living at the Mill and working along with Jim Cole running the Mill Tour and gift shop. Jeff has considerable experience in the retail business end of things and has helped the sales at the gift shop. With Jim Cole's vast knowledge of milling and metallurgy along with being a Mill guide, we have a good team.

If you haven't visited the Mill, or if it has been a few years, we invite to come up and take a tour. The average tour takes a little over an hour. Some folks on the self-guided tour take several hours. You go your own pace, taking photos, studying every sign, and looking into all the dark corners. We will give guided tours (with reservations) for eight people or more at \$9.00 per person. The self-guided tour is \$6.50 for adults (seniors \$1.00 off) with children 12 and under free. The Mill phone is 970-387-0294.

D&SNG Plans Another Railfest for 2003

Much of the 2002 Railfest celebration was curtailed because of the extreme drought conditions in the southwest.

However, the outlook for 2003 is better and The Durango & Silver-

ton Narrow Gauge Railroad invites you to join it for Railfest, 2003, August 21 through 24.

Headliners include the Society's own Casey Jones Railbus, RGS Galloping Geese #1 and #5, Eureka & Palisades 1875 wood burning 4-4-0 engine, and locomotive #473 in its 1950 Bumble Bee paint scheme.

Excursions will be taken from Silverton and Durango

For more information go to www.durangotrain.com. or contact the railroad by mail or phone for a brochure describing the events.

Photographers will love the chance to snap pictures of these historic vehicles.

San Juan County Historical Society

Application for Membership — 2003

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 2003. I understand that this membership entitles me (and my spouse, if applicable) to a vote at the annual meeting in October, 2003.

- ☐ **Member:** Voting privilege [\$10.00]
- ☐ **Family Member:** Voting privilege, man and wife [\$16.00]
- ☐ **Supporting Member:** Voting privilege, couple, and museum admission for season for immediate family. Discount on books and Archive research [\$25.00]
- ☐ **Society Patron:** Voting privilege, couple, and season museum admission for immediate family and listing in the San Juan Courier, Discount on books and Archive research [\$50.00]
- ☐ **Life Membership:** All privileges for life [\$350.00]

Name: _____

Address: _____

Remember!

Your tax deductible donation will help the society complete the Mining Heritage Center.

Please send a check today.

Thank you.

San Juan County Historical Society

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Archive/Research Center Remains Busy

by Freda Carley Peterson

The Archive-Research Center of the San Juan County Historical Society is certainly an interesting and busy place to work! Last summer we had visitors from all over North America, as well as several European countries and Australia. Many were looking for clues about or traces of relatives who once lived in Silverton, and most we were able to help. Researchers came looking for old records for the roads, railroads, mining claims, cemetery, early towns, and businesses...almost anything you can think of! And we had many new Silverton residents, as well as old-timers, who have become interested in researching the history of a particular house or town building. This is gratifying.

The school year has seen Silverton middle and high school students make use of our facility in their research for school projects. For most, the Archive is a new learning experience. Their subjects have been varied and included early settlers and teachers, the two-story wooden school building, the present school (built in 1910), the Waldheim mansion, various mines, and the nationalities and work of the miners. It was good to become better acquainted with the students and the school, and vice-versa!

Our staff is comprised of a few volunteers, including the director, and one part-time employee, Nicole Sharp, whose dedication to the mission of the Archive-Research Center has been above and beyond the call of duty. Preparation of the attractive catalog of books the Society has for sale was largely her work. She is also working on creating a website for the Society. So far she has survived frozen water pipes (no bathroom), intermittent telephone service, and electric power which does funny things to computers, rendering them useless. Still, she comes back for more! We have been blessed with the quality and enthusiasm of our volunteers. Major technical assistance in the computerization of archival material has come from Julie

Peterson Hinton of Edmond, Oklahoma. Susan Pense of Durango has helped immensely with the book catalog and the website. Their help has been and is priceless and deeply appreciated. A heartfelt "Thank You!" to each and every volunteer.

Computerization of the archival records has begun on computers loaned by the director. The task is monumental and cannot possibly be completed in one lifetime. Last summer we were open to the public every day of the week including Sunday, and because of the steady flow of patrons, we were able to accomplish almost nothing in the way of cataloging and indexing our enormous backlog and the new accessions. If there are enough volunteers this summer, we hope to be open for the public two or three days each week. Remaining days can then be spent accomplishing other essential work.

Our income is almost non-existent, but our expenses are not! We anticipate instituting a modest fee structure for accessing and copying our records. This special Archive-Research Center, unusual to find in such a small town, was established and maintained for many years by Allen Nossaman. It is known as one of the finest, large or small, for this entire region. The specially designed building with its 1024 square foot concrete vault is ideal for document preservation. Available materials in the Archive-Research Center must first be meticulously cataloged, indexed, cross-referenced, and filed; very time-consuming but important chores. It is essential that we keep the facility in operation and also that our materials be accurate, cataloged, stored, and accessible...otherwise they are useless. Building on Allen's solid foundation, and with helpful advice from the staffs at Fort Lewis College and the Animas Museum in Durango, as well as the Telluride Historical Museum, we can already see encouraging progress.

This work must be carried forward. Your financial help, designated for the Archive, will be put to good use! Thank you.

Red Mountain Day

Join members of the Red Mountain Task Force as they give tours of their stabilization project sites in the Red Mountain Mining District.

See the beautiful joinery of the American Girl headframe and visit Ironton to see three houses that will stand for years to come thanks to the Ouray and San Juan County Historical Societies and the State Historical Fund.

Visit mines that have been closed off for decades until the purchase of the Idarado property was completed in 2002. Folks are invited to meet at the sign overlook for an orientation, then off for tours!

The event will be held September 20th. Watch our website at www.silvertonhistoricalsociety.org for details.




**Reserve Some Time
for a VISIT TO JAIL...**
Next to the Court House

**San Juan County's
MUSEUM**
the former San Juan County Jail
OPEN 9-5 daily
thru mid-September
10-3 thru mid-October

* Fantastic local mineral collection
* Collection of notorious Derringer handguns
* Actual County Jail cells as they were used

* Collection of authentic Otto Mears Silver
Railroad Passes, from the 1800's

* 3 FLOORS OF PERIOD AND HISTORIC DISPLAYS

Did you know?

Supporting Members, Society Patrons, and Life members all receive a discount on book purchases and research fees from the society.

And...on top of this they receive free admission to the museum.

If you are not already a member, join now to obtain these valuable privileges. Drop a note to the Society along with your check and we will see that you receive a list of the current books and other items available from the museum store.

A membership application is found on Page 3.