

SAN JUAN COURIER

An Annual Publication of the San Juan County Historical Society

Summer 2008

Silverton, San Juan County, Colorado

Jail Museum Restoration Underway This Year

Housed in the former San Juan County Jail, the San Juan County Historical Society Museum is undergoing a major restoration, the first portion of which will be completed for the 4th of July celebration this summer. Phase one of the project is being funded by \$30,000 from San Juan County and \$87,884 from the Colorado State Historical Fund. Silverton Restoration Consulting completed the Historic Structures Assessment of the building in 2007 and is managing the project. Mark Mackie of Engineer Mountain Inc., and Tracy Reynolds of R&A architecture are providing engineering and design services for the project.

The building was the third known jail structure in Silverton. Escape of prisoners from the first two facilities led to the necessity of a multi-cell escape proof and fireproof structure. An article in the *Silverton Standard* on April 26, 1902 described the last prison break to occur in San Juan County from the old stone jail building. Within two weeks the County Commissioners placed an advertisement in the newspaper soliciting bids for the construction of a new facility. Thomas Edwards of Silverton was awarded the contract for the project, to be completed by November of 1903 for a fixed price of \$12,175.

The building served as a jail until the early 1920s when it was abandoned due to the decline in population and crime in San Juan County. In the early 1930s the building became home to a small population of elderly miners who were essentially wards of the county. Several death certificates held in the County archive identify the building as the "County Poor House" during this period. By the end of World War II the building was again abandoned. In 1965, the San Juan County Historical Society rallied by Board Chairman Helen Salfisberg, Allen Nossaman, and others convinced the County Commissioners to allow the Society to use it as a museum. A 99 year lease was signed in 1988.

The architectural style of the building is Italianate and its historic fabric remains essentially intact, although in need of various levels of preservation. The original construction drawings for the

building are held in the San Juan County Clerk and Records office. These plans, when compared to the as-built conditions of the structure, are extremely accurate.

The building's original standing seam metal hip roof collapsed from heavy snows in the winter of 1978-79 and was replaced in 1979. That replacement roof remains today, but is sheathed with inappropriate corrugated metal on the north and failing cedar shingles on the other sides. The existing exterior porches on the building have been reconstructed. The north and east entries entering the residential spaces had originally been designed with small porchettes. By 1911, these porches were covered by small gables with Victorian detail. The north porch, off the historic kitchen space, was removed at some time and never replaced.

The design of the interior of the jail includes residential accommodations for the Jailor's family on the first floor, consisting of a kitchen, family room, and dining room. The floor diaphragms in the remainder of the building, including the ceiling structure in the first and second levels, are built of steel I-beams set on 24 inch centers, spanned by vaulted corrugated metal pans with cast-in-place concrete slabs. The family spaces adjoined the Jailor's office and two "insane cells" on the first floor. The basement level housed a furnace room and a cellar. The walls in the basement remained unfinished.

The second story of the jail housed the main holding cells including a "hospital" cell, two female cells, a bath cell, and four "tool-proof" cells. The tool-proof cells were manufactured by the Pauly Jail Company's foundry in St. Louis, Missouri. The double hung window openings in the high security portions of the building were fitted with the character defining steel bars we see on the exterior today.

According to Bev Rich, "aside from the emergency roof replacement in 1979, there's never been any work done on the jail except by good citizens with a bucket of paint." The museum has provided a small but continuous source of revenue for the Society since its 1965 conversion. This revenue has helped provide much of the

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Foundation work on the jail continues on the outside, stabilizing the old structure to a far better degree than it has ever been and preventing further moisture incursion.

Cemetery Work Day is Volunteer Effort

Forty-five people came to the 14th annual Silverton Hillside Cemetery work day June 16, 2007. Volunteers came from Westminster, Grand Junction, Montrose, Hesperus, Durango, Silverton, Arizona, North Carolina, and California. They filled sunken graves with gravel, leveled and straightened tombstones, cut dead trees, picked up branches and debris, as well as applied oil to preserve old wooden markers. The support and generosity of Family Craft Memorials in Durango enabled us to place 14 tombstones on previously unmarked graves. Over the course of years, more than 200 tombstones have been donated and placed at Hillside, by individual donors or by the Hillside Cemetery Fund.

After the work, volunteers gathered in the Beabers' back yard with their brown-bag lunches for a discussion that included biographical accounts of the pioneers marked with tombstones. The following are selected accounts of a few of the pioneers whose graves were marked last year from Freda Carley Peterson's revised edition, Volume I & II, *The Story of Hillside Cemetery*.

Charlie Carney, a miner born in Cornwall, died in 1891 at the age of 31. Charlie had not had a drink in over a year. The day he died, he was in a saloon and complained of chest pains. Someone advised him to take a drink of brandy. He took more than a drink . . . he drank the whole bottle, fell asleep on the pool table, and was found dead the next morning by the bartender.

Lee Tinsley, who was called the "Mayor of Chattanooga" died in 1939. A telephone crew made their way to Chattanooga to repair a phone line downed by a snowslide in 1932. It took the crew an full day to get through the deep snow and they ended up spending the night at Tinsley's cabin. The next morning Tinsley offered to make them sandwiches. After frying the eggs he discovered he had no bread for the sandwiches so he made pancakes and wrapped them in the "funny papers" (colored comics) while the pancakes were still hot, so each sandwich had part of the Sunday "funnies" printed on it. The men read their sandwiches, then ate them!

Peterson released a new cemetery book last year, *Died Here, Buried There* which addresses burials of people who died here, and were buried outside of the county.

Some of the other markers placed were for a young girl who died of appendicitis in 1910; a soiled dove who died of carbolic acid poisoning in 1889; two miners who died in the Stony Pass Snowslide in 1879; miners who died of miners consumption; a teacher who taught in the Silverton schools; and a woman who operated a boarding house in Howardsville and died in 1886.

The 2008 workday is scheduled for Saturday, June 21st. If you would like to volunteer, join us at the cemetery at 10:00 a.m. and don't forget your lunch. If you can't join us, but would like to make a tax deductible donation, send to: Post Office Box 154 Silverton, Colorado 81433.

Chairman's Report

Dear Members,

It is a blustery, snowy day in Silverton as I write. We had a heck of a winter—one like the old days, really, almost epic. We had over six feet of snow on the level and it was full of moisture—a very good thing. And in April, it just disappeared, melting a foot a day in front of our very eyes. Our reservoirs are full and our forest healthy—we are grateful.

We are getting a new look at the museum. Elsewhere in these pages you will read about the jail foundation work, a wonderful project that has been ahead of schedule, on-budget, and which has produced a superb product. But because the work will continue this summer on the outside of the jail, the ground will be dug up, so we are moving our entrance to the Caledonian Boardinghouse, and with it our gift shop. The dining room of the boardinghouse is a large space which will let us display our books and gift items much better than our present cramped space—hopefully translating into better sales. As you know, dear members, we get no subsidy or tax money to run our operations, and our bills are rising too. In today's world, museum gift shops are essential. Come visit us and remember, members get 10% off on all purchases!

Speaking of gift shops, the one at the Mayflower Mill does very well proportionally, compared to the museum, because it has plenty of space and is laid out well, thanks to board member Scott Fetchenhier. The Mill will open in mid-June this summer—the Board of Directors determined that we be open only during the “busy” season. We hope to have a good season despite the high cost of gasoline, a hope shared by many of us who are dependent on the tourism industry.

Probably the best thing that has happened to us in a long time is the reestablishment of our website. Being a “historical” bunch, we are a little behind the times technologically. A couple of years ago I had a call from a member who said our website was “weird”, so I went to it and—it was weird, it had nothing to do with us. We lost our domain name and someone else had taken it. Thanks to a jump-start from member Casey Carroll and exhaustive follow-up by Julie Hinman, we now have our website up and running, better than before. Thank you, ladies, we couldn't have done it without your help. Please visit us at silvertonhistoricsociety.org and take a look. Thanks also to Freda Peterson and Zeke Zanoni for proofreading and bringing it up-to-date and the Silverton Chamber of Commerce for reestablishing the links.

Freda reports that the archive is busy winter and summer with requests for information and donations. Among the requests for information have been from a couple of mining companies to look at our map collections, sparked by a resurgence of interest in mining because of the prices of metals. Among the donations have been a set of eight CDs transferred from cassettes recorded by Henry Doud, son of pioneer Merrill H. Doud, telling of early Silverton history. They are well done and extremely accurate. Also donated have been lobby cards and stills from Silverton's 1950s movie industry. Movies such as *Across the Wide Missouri*, *A Ticket to Tomahawk*, *Maverick Queen*, *Night Passage*, and *Run for Cover* were shot here, featuring many famous Hollywood stars of the time. We keep copies of the movies in the vault in our film collection.

Of note this year are two other donations, this time historic sites. We were the recipients of the Clifford Pemberton Lode SN 397 from the Old Hundred Mining Company. The Old 100 Boardinghouse sits on this mining claim. We took on the stabilization of the boardinghouse in 1999, a case of “extreme” preservation (using helicopters, etc.). The other was the donation of the Little Nation Mill from Fred and Nancy Clark, along with a generous endowment for its repair. We will get started on that highly visible structure at Howardsville (the first county seat in Western Colorado) this summer.

Save the date—along with the Mountain Studies Institute, we are proud to be a sponsor of a reception for noted local artist Judith Graham on July 26th at the Mining Heritage Center. Judith loves the mountains and it shows in her work.

We would be remiss if we didn't mention our brothers “down the hill”—the La Plata County Historical Society—for its receipt of the 2008 “Governor's Award” in the field of preservation for its work on the Animas School, the building that houses its museum. Congratulations Robert, Jan, and crew for a job well done!

I had the good fortune one day last week to have the opportunity to take the Yeastings and the Rich's, some out-of-state members, on tours of the Mining Heritage Center and the Archive. They were impressed. We get so caught up in the day-to-day operations of our empire, dear members, that we can't see the forest for the trees. It was so much fun to look through other people's eyes at some of our many accomplishments. It gave me the lift I needed to tackle the many tasks I will have to do before we open at the end of May. And thank you, dear members, we couldn't do it without your support!

Bev

Jail Museum Restoration

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matching funds for the many successful historic preservation project which the Society has completed in its 15-year partnership with the State Historical Fund. The completion of the Caledonian mining museum annex, incorporating the adaptive re-use of the Caledonian Boarding House has brought the Society to a new era in accomplishing its heritage education mission. The Society intends to fully restore the jail building and provide a controlled environment in which to house, display and interpret their collection.

The first phase of the rehabilitation project is focused on the basement level of the building. The interior and exterior of the basement walls are being repaired where many years of utility penetrations, alterations, and inappropriate cementitious patches have been installed. An analysis of the stone and brick along with a mortar analysis has been completed to prepare specifications for the repair and repointing work. Moisture coming through the exterior basement walls and dirt floors resulted in decay and failure of many of the wooden sills and floor joists in the basement framing. Therefore, in addition to the joist and sill repair, a full sub-grade water-proofing package will be installed by Fulmer Construction around the exterior perimeter of the building along with the installation of a dehumidification system that has been designed for the basement's interior. Archaeological monitoring is being conducted by Julie Singer and a full report will be prepared by Grand River Institute Inc., documenting any findings.

An added bonus of Phase One of the rehabilitation is the significant expansion of the basement's interpretive display area. It is partitioned by two thick load-bearing masonry walls, which cross at the middle, creating 4 distinct chambers. Only two of these rooms have been accessible for the past 100 years. The current phase of the project

has opened up one of the enclosed chambers providing new concrete floors behind a high security entry door and custom security bars protecting the historic daylight windows. Visitors will be now be able to go from full-scale mining industry displays in the New Caledonian mining museum annex through a tunnel and enter into the newly expanded basement of the jail to experience one of Colorado's best gold and mineral displays featuring several notable private collections from San Juan County and around the world.

Phase Two of the project, scheduled for 2009, involves brick and stone masonry rehabilitation in the upper floors, restoration of all 29 windows in the jailor's residence and high security areas of the jail, reconstruction of the missing northern porch and chimney, and replacement of the entire roof with the original standing seam hip detail. Phase Three, tentatively scheduled for 2010, will involve major interior work, including wall plaster and ceiling repair in the upper floors and a state-of-of-the-art update to the interpretive displays housed on the first and second floors.

Managing this project has been a great honor for me personally. By acting as our own contractor, Beverly and I have been able to realize a longtime educational vision for the Society, which is the establishment of the SJCHS preservation crew. Together with the experienced direction of John Richardson acting as our foreman we have been able to provide a training opportunity in the preservation trades for our crew members.

I highly encourage you to stop by and see our new gold and mineral display in the basement of the museum this summer!

David A. Singer

Archive to be Named for Allen Nossaman

At the annual meeting of the Society last October, the membership voted to approve a resolution to name the archive after founding member, the late Allen Nossaman.

Nossaman started and lead the archive from its inception in 1964 to his health dictated retirement in Durango several years ago.

Nossaman served two different terms

as San Juan County Judge, was publisher of *The Silverton Standard and the Miner* for almost ten years, and served the society as secretary for a number of years.

Later this summer, a plaque will be placed on the front of the building designating it ***The Allen Nossaman Memorial Archive***.

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George Chapman, Editor

Contributors: Beverly Rich, Jerry Hoffer, Mary Beaber,
David Singer, Shirley Kramer

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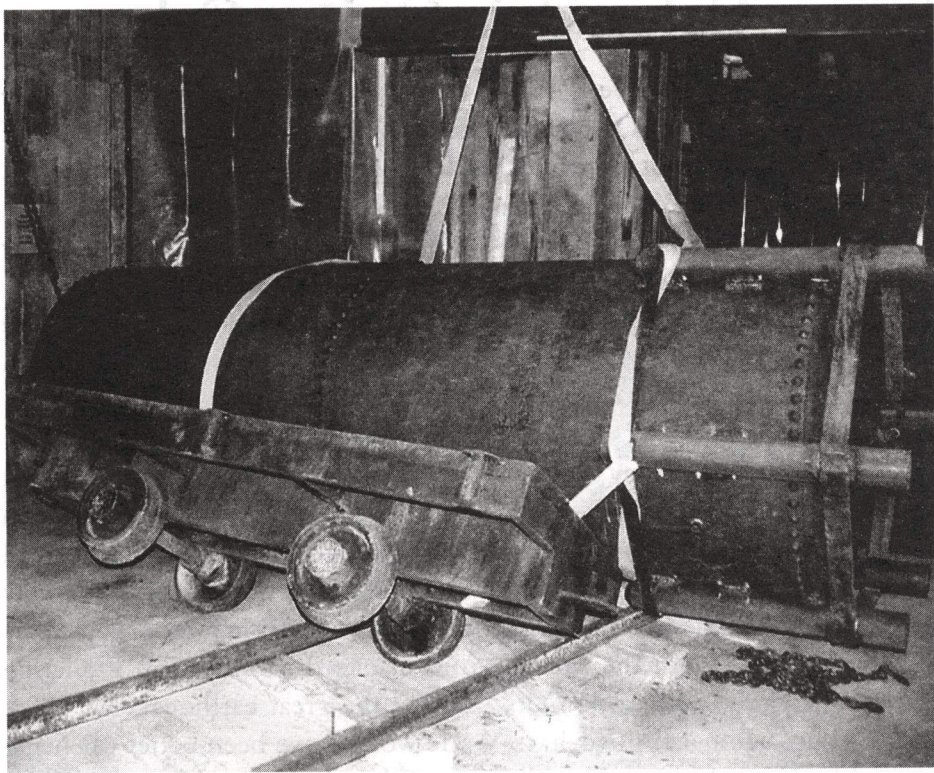
**San Juan County Historical Society
Officers and Directors, 2008**

Beverly Rich, Chairman

Freda Peterson, Vice Chairman

Scott Fetchenhier, Secretary

Brian Fullmer, Jerry Hoffer, George Chapman, George Darnall Zanoni,
Directors



Installing air receiver tank (above) proved to be a major project.

Great Improvements Made in Mining Heritage Center

With the Mining Heritage Center open during the summer of 2007, we couldn't make too much noise or sawdust inside the building. Therefore, we worked on a variety of outside projects including a concrete slab at the basement fire escape door, a shed for the air compressor, and a removable, level, rail extension to get the 2 foot gauge track out the ramp door. A preliminary survey from the Archive building to Reese Street was performed to see if the grade was shallow enough to establish some three foot gauge track for the future display and storage of the Casey Jones railbus.

Some of our time was diverted to the Mayflower Mill to screw down roofing panels that were lifted by winter ice and spring winds.

For a year or so we have been talking about the fact that our large wagons take up too much space in the building and that we would like to display other items in this space. We had done some measurements on the Reese Street side of the building and decided that there was enough room for a 12 foot wide lean-to wagon shed. A very generous donation had been received that mostly matched the initial cost estimate for this addition so we hired a local contractor (John Richardson) to build it. Each end of this shed has a short hallway to openings into the main building and the Caledonian. A double door on the southwest end allows entrance for the wagons.

Once the Museum closed for the season, the push was on to get materials and large artifacts moved into the basement before the weather went bad. Fortunately, we had a very nice fall. The air compressor was skid up the track in the ramp and placed in its shed. The two foot gauge track was temporarily extended 10 feet past the elevator. A mine flat car was brought up from the Silverton Northern Engine House and used to lower several loads of 8 x 8 timber into the basement. A large slusher and a tugger were also brought from storage to the museum. The slusher was skid onto the first floor to await placement in our future "Slusher Scram display". The flat car was again used to lower the tugger into the

basement. The tugger was set in place across from the Raise (built last year) so it can be cabled to our coffin hoist.

All of the flat car tramming was done using heavy chains and a pickup truck. Then the four foot diameter by 12 foot high air receiver tank arrived. This tank had spent most of the summer at Frank Montonati's welding shop having legs attached so it could stand vertical. This thing looked too big, but Bill Alsup's crane easily managed to set the tank on the flat car and lower it into the basement. Our next problem was to stand the tank vertically. This was done by skillful manipulation of chain hoists and come-alongs, but not without an incident. The slings around the tank had slipped a little and the tank did not lift evenly. The tank was rigged to rotate 90 degrees once it was free of the flat car. However, before the low end of the tank could clear the flat car, both the flat car and tank rotated 90 degrees to the track. It was then in perfect position to easily finish standing the tank.

With the tank in place and the flat car out of the way, we reworked the two foot gauge track into a smooth S curve and extended it to go under the San Juan Chute. Next we turned our attention to adding a third rail down the ramp to also provide 18 inch gauge track into the basement. This dual gauge track continued to the S curve of the two foot gauge. Now, a very strange switch, with a single point, was installed to let the 18 inch gauge continue as a straight display track. With the 18 inch gauge track in place, we moved the small mucking machine and small electric locomotive onto the track. Two inch Victrol air piping was run along the ties down the ramp and over to the receiver tank. Placing air piping on the ground next to the track was a very common mining practice. Future plans include adding ballast to the tracks.

Our attention then turned to using the heavy timber that had been stacked in the basement. Timbers were installed around the air receiver tank and set up to support the north end of the future "Scram" display on the main floor. Hooray, the large (12 foot by 12 foot) open hole from the main floor to the basement is closed. Some smaller timbers and rough cut lumber were used to build an open front dog house around the tugger. This set up is typical of

Development Continues at the Powerhouse

Two miles north of Silverton is the National Historic Landmark Mayflower Gold Mill. In 1996 the Sunnyside Gold Corporation donated the historic mill to the San Juan County Historical Society. Along with that property, Sunnyside also donated the Jeannette Roux Placer, upon which sit two structures from Silverton's early days of electricity—a 1906 brick electric substation building and a frame mule barn, both built by the Silverton Electric Light Company, a predecessor to Western Colorado Power Company. In 1997 this property was added to the Silverton National Historic Landmark District. Due to the continuous industrial use and character of the site, the Society believed the best use of the site was to continue commercial activity in the form of an industrial park.

In 1998 the Society received a \$28,000 grant from the Economic Development Administration for a Planning Study for the Powerhouse Business Incubator. This study produced a plan to develop the site without impacting its historic character. It also determined that commercial property dedicated to industrial use was a needed commodity in Silverton.

In 2002, the Society received approximately \$700,000 from the State Historical Fund and the Economic Development Administration to develop the site. A water plant was installed behind the mill to process water from Arrastra Creek to feed the Powerhouse Business Park and water and sewer infrastructure was installed. The property was subdivided into lots which were then put on the market. All of the lots except one were sold immediately, proving the need for such commercial space. Construction of a beautiful new building was started by the firm of Klinke and Lew in 2007, and Venture Snowboards plans to break ground this year. The restored brick Powerhouse building now houses Fisher Woodworking and ScottyBob's Custom Skis, and an adjacent building is being

those once used at the Sunnyside Mine.

Now we realized that we had a problem with getting wheel chairs and unsteady elders across the tracks. Our solution was to build a raised walkway from the elevator to the dog house between the two foot, and the 18 inch gauge tracks. This worked well and will reduce the ballast required in this area. We kept most of this walkway about 3 1/2 inches above the concrete floor then slowly ramped up to rail level to cross the two foot gauge S curve and then ramped back down and around the air receiver tank to connect with existing walkway by the elevator. To exit onto the concrete floor, another low ramp was installed beside the dog house. For those wanting quick access to or from the shop area, a seven inch high walkway was installed from the main walkway at the S curve, across the 18 inch gauge track to a 7 inch step to the concrete floor near the shop door.

With the hard but fun projects mostly completed, it was time for carpentry work again. A narrower showcase matching our other basement showcases was constructed for displaying our battery powered mine lights. Then we started on eight lighted mineral

rented by Richardson Construction. Sandco, Inc., a sand, gravel, and concrete company has purchased a lot for a bulk plant, solidifying their commitment to Silverton.

Work has begun on the final phase of the Powerhouse Project—finishing the grading of the streets, adding signs (Mathews Street and Mears Avenue) and installing telephone lines to the lots. Water and sewer lines were completed last summer, and construction began on the Machine Shop addition to the brick building—a lean-to wooden structure added to the building some years after the 1906 construction. The next order of business for the Society is to seek funding to replace parts of the water line and the headgate in Arrastra Gulch.

Klinke & Lew Honored

Frequent Society contractors and former board members, Fritz Klinke and Loren Lew were honored this year as recipients of the Stephen H. Hart Award for Excellence in Preservation from the Colorado Historical Society.

The award was presented in February in Denver at the annual conference of Colorado Preservation Inc. Unfortunately, roads closures due to heavy snows prevented the pair from attending. They participated in a May ceremony in Durango in which the San Juan Mountains Association, another Hart award winner, and the LaPlata County Historical Society, winner of the 2008 Governor's Award for Historic Preservation for the Animas City School restoration, were also honored.

Klinke & Lew Contractors were the general contractors for the school/museum project and have been involved in numerous projects in Southwest Colorado, including the First Congregational Church of Silverton, the Telluride Museum, the Silverton Town Hall restoration, Telluride's Sheridan Opera House, and many others.

showcases. We thought these would go quickly, but not so—there were delays in getting the plexiglass for the doors, we had to go to three stores to get enough piano hinges for the doors. We had to settle for different fluorescent lights than originally envisioned, and then needed to order cords with plugs for these lights. We had to find the right length shelving brackets for the glass shelves and order custom sized mirrors for the inside back of the cases. Well, at last they are ready to be mounted in a recently opened room in the basement of the Jail.

We need to thank Frank Montonati and Reno Montonati for welding the legs on the receiver tank; Larry Raab for welding the level rail extension assembly; Ludi Girodo for moving the flat car and heavy artifacts; Bill Alsup for the use of his crane to get the receiver tank into the basement; Jack Clark for donating the gravel for the wagon shed project; Pete Maisel for donating part of the excavation for the wagon shed; David Zanoni for donating miscellaneous plumbing jobs; and John Richardson for his repair jobs and many other items which make the Museum a better place.

Zeke, Jerry, & Fetch

Membership Roster
Life Members 2008

Allabashi, Jim
App, Fred & Sandra
Baily, Nathan
Bausman, Walter & Patricia
Becker, Bill & Marilyn
Beidleman, Kirk & Whitacre, Kathy
Benham, Jack & Sarah
Bennett, Ryan& Jen
Berdak, Kevin & Crymes, Annette
Bergman, Les & Louise
Bertch, Michael & Tracy
Bertch, Rae
Biggers, Mr. & Mrs. John
Blazek, Mike
Bodemuller, Frances
Boeder, Robert
Brown, Michael & Maria
Bruchner, Gordon
Bryan, Bill & Loiese
Burtis, Carl & Marvel
Call, Maria
Campuzano, Sandra Voilleque
Carmack, Wiley and Wyatt
Casper, Tom
Chapman, George & Karen
Chase, Peter
Citizens State Bank
Clark, Fred & Nancy
Coggins, Clemency Chase
Connelly, Will & Carol
Cook, John
Dailey, Patty & Fasching, Fred
Daugherty, Lynn & Sharleen
Davis, William
Denious, Jon & Sharon
DeVeny, Maureen
Dodge, Bill & Chertos, Cynthia
Drodz, James
Dyson, Tony & Denise
Egan, Mike
Elliott, Casey & Joseph
Fearn, Steve
Fetchenhier, Scot
Francis, Mike
Fullmer, Brian
Galbraith, Tom & Stanna
George, Chris & Donna
Getz, Charles IV
Gibbons, Richard
Gooch, Freda & Brison
Haggar, Curtis & Nancy
Halaburt, Geoffrey
Harper, Al & Carol
Hawes, Alice
Heidy, Nick & Helen
Helvey, Tom
Hill, Milton & Janis
Hinton, Rick & Julie
Hoffer, Jerry & Nancy
Huston, Mark
Jackson, John Scot
Johnson, Ted & Elaine
Jones, Bill & Leslie
Jones, Richard & Melinda
Joy, Jim
Kalina, Dave & Mary Beth
Kalina, Kathi
Kimball, C. F. “Skip” and Linda
Kingdon, Fred & Carpenter, Terryll
Kramer, Don & Shirley
Kurtz, Dennis & Sue
Ledbetter, Laura
Leonhardt, Keith
Lew, Loren & Rena
Lippoth, Dick & Kelly

Lyons, Everett & Marjorie
Manes, Larry & Cuppy, Nelda
Martin, Lawrence & Ellen
Mathews, Richard
May, Dr. John & Sonja
McCoy, Dell & Rose*
McCuen, Mariah Paige
McCuen, Rebekah Calin
McCuen, Shannon Marie
McGavran, Harry & Lauren
McGlothlen, John and Kim
McKenna, Ellanore
McKenna, Marc
McNamara, Irma
Melton, Russell
Merson, Tom And Jean
Mobius Cycles & Café
Moore, Alvie
Moore, Stan
Morin-Voilleque, Normie
Mountz, Hubert & Marti
Moyer, James & Mary
Murphy, Duane
Newby, Parker & Berry, Nancy
Newman, Craig
Nieman, Kathryn & Jon
Ninde, Donna
Noon, Ken & Judy
Norquist, Bruce & Suzanne
Nute, Jodi & Chris
Ogle, William & Julie
Peterson, Gary & Terry
Peterson, Kris
Pritchett, Janet & Harry
Reich, Neal
Reichman, Vic & Mary Catherine
Reidhead, Darlene & Ken McNutt
Renoux, Edward & Clarice
Rich, Beverly
Robinson, Don & Jean
Royce, Ron
Sandell, Tom & Mary Jo
Sanders, Janice
Schmidt, Esther Mathews
Schmook, Robert & Carol
Schuler, Robert & Pat
Shapiro, Albert & Ruth Ann
Shaw, Cheryl
Shrader, David
Sigman, Mike & Furry, Kim
Silverton Brewery
Sloan, Robert & Sally
Smith, David
Smith, Robert
Sprague, Tom & Karen
Stewart, Carolyn & J. W.
Stott, Don
Swanson, David
Swanson, Gerald & Nancy
Swanson, Greg & Pam
Thorn, Charles & Kron, Andrea
Topek, Nathan & Cynthia
Van Buren, Dale & Diane
Vaughn, Kenneth
Vendl, Mark & Karen
Voilleque, Paul
Ward, Ruth
Warren, Beth, Kathrine, Chris
Whittington, Lorraine
Wilson, Joanne & Gene
Winkler, William
Wipf, Tommy & Patty
Wiseman, Tom & Paula
Yarbrough, Sarah
Yeastng, Rita Kramer
Young, Charles & Margaret
Zanoni, Darnall & Dorothy

Saving Colorado’s Oldest Caboose

It all started when Beverly Rich wrote a grant proposal. Of course, she’s written many grant proposals, so we need to be more specific. This was an assessment grant, to find out how much it would cost to restore Colorado’s oldest caboose. In summary, it took \$4500 to discover that it will cost \$75,000 to fix up a \$350 caboose.

Next, Don and Shirley Kramer got involved. They wanted to make a contribution in the memory of their friend, Jim DeVeny, who had died suddenly. Don designed a t-shirt with the caboose on it, with the saying, “Does your caboose need work? Ours does!” Then came caboose hats, followed by Casey Jones t-shirts the next year. (By the way, these are still available for purchase at the museum, The Old Arcade, and Fetch’s. They can be mail-ordered by contacting the Society.) The cost is \$15.00 plus \$3.00 shipping.

At the suggestion of Bill Davis, the \$1000 club was begun, with Davis being the first member. The National Narrow Gauge Preservation Foundation, The Old Arcade, and Fetch’s all soon joined this elite group, the members of which will have their names engraved on a brass plaque inside the caboose.

Last year, Greg Posta hosted a Picnic in the Train Yard at his nationally known outdoor layout in Ridgway. Over \$1000 was made from this event. There will be a repeat of this great model railroad open house on the June 21 and 22, 2008. Please come to watch miniature (1:20.3 scale trains) run across model trestles that overlook Dallas Divide. The setting is unbelievable. For more information, contact Greg Posta at www.rgsrrhobbies.com. or (970)626-3733

Jeff Ellingson, a noted railroad watercolor artist and curator of The Durango and Silverton Railroad Museum, was commissioned to paint a picture of the caboose. He got a little carried away. The setting of the painting is The Silver Lake Mill, located up the old Silverton Northern Railroad grade, about 3/4 of a mile past the Power House. A switching move is depicted, with Silverton Northern Engine #1 and our caboose sitting on a bridge across the Animas River. Go to the museum to see a copy of this print. It is still available for \$250 unframed and \$475 framed. Needless to say, Posta and Ellingson have joined our \$1000 donors club. These efforts have taken almost four years. We have amassed over \$18,000, which is the minimum we will need for a matching fund.

While Rich was writing the grant proposal to the Colorado State Historical Fund, she was contacted by Nick Heidy, whose wife Helen had

recently died. Heidy wanted to give \$10,000 to the society in memory of Helen and her Father, Pete Savich. This generous donation insures that we will have all the money necessary for the matching fund.

Below is a short article on the Savich family, for whom this donation is dedicated.

Pete Savich (1885-1955)

Pete Savich was born in 1885 and came to the United States from Yugoslavia in his late teens. He arrived at Ellis Island and worked his way across the country in three or four years and managed to be in San Francisco during the great earthquake of 1906. (He would have been better off being in Silverton working on the construction of the new jail, which is our present museum.)

He eventually made his way to Silverton, where he practiced the only trade he had known—that of being an underground hard-rock miner. He married a widow named Annie and had three daughters and one son. Helen was his oldest daughter and Peter Thomas (Tom) was his only son. A special display of artifacts collected by the late Tom Savich can be found in the Caledonian Mining Heritage portion of the museum.

Pete was a hard worker, who saved money and invested in real estate. He presented each of his four children with a house in Silverton. What a dad!

In spite of having silicosis, Pete managed to live to the age of seventy. Near the end of his life, he had to move to Durango so he could breathe.

He said when he died, he didn’t want to be underground in Silverton, because he had already spent too much time there, so he is buried in Durango.

Helen Savich Heidy

Helen was the oldest of Pete’s four children. When she graduated from high school, Pete told her to get out of Silverton and see the world. After attending secretarial school, she ended up working in Washington D.C. at the Pentagon.

This is where she met Nicholas Heidy, who was stationed there in the army. At the end of the Second World War, Nicholas was discharged from the army on February 1st, and they married on February 9th in Silverton. They were happily married for 61 years.

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I wish to enroll as a member of the San Juan County Historical Society in the class designated below for the calendar year 2008. I understand that this membership entitles me (and my spouse, if applicable) to a vote at the annual meeting in October, 2008.

1. Member—\$15 per year, entitling an individual to one vote in meetings of the general membership, discounts on books, and free museum admission.
2. Family membership—\$25 per year entitling each couple to one vote each in meetings of the general membership, discounts on books, and free museum admission.
3. Society Patron—\$60 per year, entitling an individual or couple to voting privileges, a museum pass for the season, discounts on books, and a listing in the Society’s publications.
4. Lifetime Society Patron—\$500, entitling an individual or couple to all of the above privileges for life.

Name: _____

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