

# SAN JUAN COURIER

An Annual Publication of the San Juan County Historical Society

Summer 2010

Silverton, San Juan County, Colorado

## Mayflower Mill is 2010 Focus of Society Restoration Efforts

By David Singer

In the darkest days of 2009, when the sun turned its shortest arc over Baker's Park, the San Juan County Historical Society was blessed with a burst of financial sunshine. Closing out a very successful year of restoration work in 2009, the Historical Society landed a grant for \$375,400 from the State Historical Fund setting us on a path to the preservation of one of southwest Colorado's most important landmark heritage sites, the Mayflower Mill.

This hard-won funding has essentially secured a major Congressional appropriation of another \$150,000 through the National Park Service's Preserve America's Treasures Landmark restoration program. Over the last few years, Beverly Rich and I spent hours lobbying both locally and nationally and with the help of Congressman John Salazar's office last fall our politicking resulted in achieving a major funding milestone for the project.

Preservation work at the Mill began this Spring and will focus on three of eleven structures that have been meticulously documented at the site, including the tram receiving terminal, the tunnel passage connecting the terminal to the crushing plant, and the conveyor trestle that transports ore to the top of the fine ore bin. The scope of work in this first phase of the planned four phase rehabilitation of the entire mill complex will also include improvements to surface drainage across the five acre site and around foundations, including necessary repairs to several historic stone retaining walls.

The first phase of restoration is the next step in a long range planning effort that began with two summer field school projects in 2005 and 2006. Silverton Restoration and the Society organized the field schools with the National Park Service's D.C.-based heritage documentation team, bringing in professionals from all over the country to offer training in field assessment, geology, industrial archaeology, and mining and mill technology specific to the Mayflower operation. A group of six architects lived at the mill for three months and created a fully three-dimensional set of drawings of all buildings and equipment housed in the complex, ranging from tram systems to crushing, floatation, and filtration machinery. These drawings and

the Historic Structures Assessment of the mill, which received awards from the Colorado Historical Society have been catalogued at the Library of Congress and will guide the restoration effort. Several of the drawings are on display in the Society's Mining Museum.

The announcement of the grant for the project capped off a stellar year for the San Juan County Historical Society which includes: the restoration of the exterior of the 1903 Jail which houses our museum, the installation of connecting tracks to the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad at the historic Silverton Northern engine house in the remnants of Silverton's rail yard, taking ownership and operating the Silverton Standard and the Miner, the oldest newspaper on Colorado's Western Slope, and undertaking the planning process for a new hydroelectric plant at the mill site, and the list goes on.

2010 is offering many challenges for the Society on this and other projects. However, planning and preparation continue to be the key aspects of our successful mission. Together with the ongoing restoration of the museum, the Society will continue to provide new jobs and economic opportunities to contractors and suppliers, turning our portion of Silverton's heritage-based tourist economy into real paychecks and specialized preservation training for our crew members.

Honoring our commitment to the memory of those men and women who carved out the path for us today and struggled to raise their families and secure their success in our mining and milling heritage is a resolution of which I am proud to be a part. Walking this path with folks like Bev Rich and John Richardson and other super-active members of the Historical Society like Scott Fetchenhier, Zeke Zanoni, Freda Gooch, and Jerry Hoffer has been an inspiration. The restoration of the Shenandoah-Dives Mill will be a landmark event in their decades of work.

*David Singer is the owner of Silverton Restoration Consulting and its chief and only grant writer. He is currently managing the restoration of the San Juan County Museum building housed in the 1903 jail and is about to become deeply entrenched in the restoration of the Shenandoah-Dives Mill.*



*Time and weather have taken their toll on the Mayflower Mill. Out of service for almost two decades, the mill will receive important attention this year as a long planned and long term restoration commences.*

## Ownership of Silverton Standard and Miner Completes One Year

By Mark Esper

It's been a year since the San Juan County Historical Society acquired the Silverton Standard & the Miner. The oldest continuously operated newspaper (and business of any kind) on Colorado's Western Slope was donated to the historical society by Randy Miller of Boulder, who also owns the Telluride Daily Planet.

The move returned the Standard to local ownership, and for the first time, community ownership.

I have stayed on as editor and publisher, and Gina Rosato is managing advertising and the business office.

Yes, the newspaper is still a business. We still rely primarily on subscription and advertising income (and in fact we ended up having a pretty good year despite the challenging economy).

But the Standard has also become something a bit different. It has become "Silverton Public Newspaper." Donations from groups, students and individuals helped us re-establish the business office here and got us off to a great start. The most humbling moment of this whole experience was when students at Silverton School came up to our office last spring and donated \$2,000 to our cause. We also had a few fundraisers that were tremendously successful.

Our big upcoming project is to produce a summer vacation guide for San

Juan County. Hopefully we can launch a winter version to spread the word that Silverton is even more amazing during that time of year.

A year ago, the Standard was on the brink. Thanks to the community's support (including the vast Silverton diaspora), we have survived. We have survived to continue telling the amazing story of Silverton—its past, its present, and its hopes for the future.

The Standard & the Miner managed to endure an incredibly challenging year. And we emerged with community ownership restored and as a revitalized institution ready to continue our role as a beacon for the town.

Through all of this, I keep thinking of John Curry who started it all back in 1875 when he managed to haul what was even then an antique press over Stony Pass by pack train.

I imagine what was going through his head on that amazing trek into the wilderness. I think of that journey of his often, just to keep things in perspective—the hardships he went through to establish this historic newspaper and keep it afloat.

I can sometimes almost hear him saying: "Keep going!"

This summer, we will conclude our 135th year. And then we'll keep going.

*Mark Esper is editor and publisher of the Silverton Standard & the Miner.*



## Chairman's Report

Dear Members:

As I write today, the sky is brilliantly blue and cloudless and the air finally calm. We are thankful- it has been a windy, snowy April so far. We got our "pink" snow yesterday- a sure sign of spring. The pink comes from the red dust blowing in from the desert. But we don't call it spring in Silverton- we call it mud season!

We are getting an early start to finishing up a couple of projects- last week the crew started again on the jail project, installing some steel bracing on some walls and preparing to put the roof on. The jail is looking very sharp; almost newly built. This year the jail will be open to the public. It was closed last summer because of all the construction. We are also gearing up for the big construction project at the Mayflower Mill using grant funds from the State Historical Fund.

For the first time since its inception, anyone who is awarded grant funding from that program is now considered a contractor with the State of Colorado. What this means is that we will "graded" by the work we do and how we perform will affect whether we get grant funds again. To this end, board member Jerry Hoffer is writing a management plan for us which outlines the duties of each person in charge of components of the grant- the contractor, the project manager, the accountant, etc. We do pretty well now, but hopefully this will keep us on track better.

Because of the construction, the Mill Tour will be closed this summer. It was a hard decision, but for safety's sake, it is in the best interest of everyone. At present, the SJCHS has been able to provide full-time employment for a crew of six local residents at the rehabilitation of the County Jail building. We will be able to expand the number of jobs that we can offer to others in the community at a living wage through the funding and implementation of the Mill Restoration Project. We are proud to be able to do that.

We continue to apply for funding for the hydro-plant project which we hope to get started this summer. Sunnyside Gold Corporation donated the Mayflower Mill to us in 1995, and with it came the water rights for the mill from Arrastra Creek. The project will include repair of the existing intake in Arrastra Gulch in order to increase water flow; repairs to leaks in the pipeline; installation of a powerhouse adjacent to the Mears/Wilfley Mill ruins; and installation of a eight kilowatt micro-hydro turbine. On June 18th, 2010, the SJCHS will co-sponsor a workshop called "Micro Hydro Opportunities in Colorado" in conjunction with the Colorado Renewable Energy Society's annual conference. This workshop will take place in Ouray, with a follow-up conference in Silverton in 2011. Our partners in this venture are Telluride Energy, LLC, San Juan County, Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety, Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority, and USDA Rural Energy for America Program.

The end result of this project will help offset the cost of the Society's electric bills. This project builds on a long and impressive history of past successes: from the acquisition of the Shenandoah-Dives Mill and the Animas Power and Water Substation in 1995; the listing of the Mill as a National Historic Landmark in 2000; rehabilitation of the Substation in 2006 and its development as a business park and incubator; two historic preservation workshops at the Mill in 2005 and 2006 which resulted in HAER drawings and an award winning historic structures assessment of the Mill; to the current Save America's Treasures and SHF grants to rehabilitate the Mill; and the current project to develop an audio tour of the Mill. The currently proposed project will ensure that the SJCHS's hard work and vision for preserving and rehabilitating the Shenandoah-Dives Mill and the Animas Power and Water Substation and the economy of San Juan County is viable and sustainable into the future.

Zeke, Jerry, and Scott have been hard at work at the Mining Heritage Center building the stope this spring. A stope is the hole that is left in the mine after the ore is taken out- where miners follow the vein and mine from. They also are building some storage space- it is hard to believe, but we are already out of space in the new building! Next week we are going to schedule some work days to get the jail cleaned up after the big construction project, and, before you know it, Memorial Day will be here and we will be open for business. And then we go into June for the annual Cemetery Workday which is scheduled on June 19th at 10:00 a.m. Then on June 24th the opening reception for the all school reunion will be held at the Mining Heritage Center. Most of the graduates have roots in the mining industry and will really enjoy the exhibits on which our crew has been working.

Work continues at the archive- this time aided greatly by Kris Peterson, archivist Freda Peterson's son. Freda and he have been cataloging movie paraphernalia- those wonderful western movies that were shot in Silverton in the 1950s. Kris has been scouring the internet for posters and playbills for those movies, many of which featured the biggest stars of their day- Audie Murphy, Jimmy Stewart, Marilyn Monroe, and James Cagney. What fun!

We had a Silverton Standard Committee meeting last week and we are proud to report that the newspaper survived the first ten months of our ownership in the black- not by much- but enough to pay the bills. This is exactly what we hoped for. Right now the Standard is putting together a summer vacation guide which will be available both in hard copy and on-line. Boy, I'll tell you, dear members, isn't that amazing! And remember, the paper offers an on-line edition!

Silverton is about to lose a couple of really good citizens. Board member George Chapman and his wife Karen are about to relocate to Iowa to be closer to their children and grandchildren. Truly good citizens, they both have sat on numerous boards and committees through the years, contributing to the overall health of our little community, which could not survive without volunteers. Godspeed, George and Karen. You will be missed.

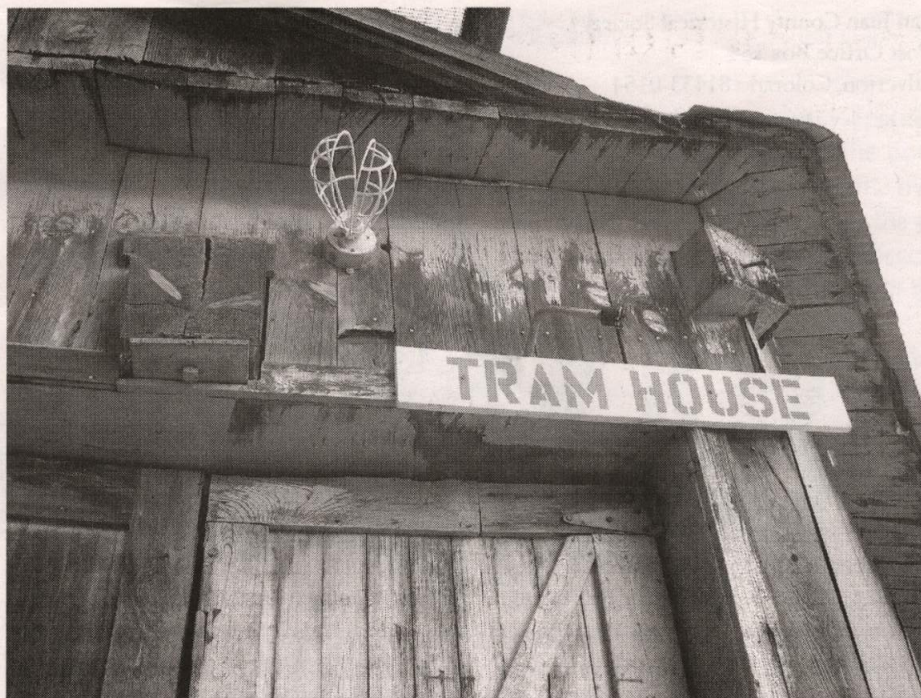
*Bev*

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Send a check to P.O. Box 8, Silverton, Colorado 81433 or email: [gina@silvertonstandard.com](mailto:gina@silvertonstandard.com)



*A view of a portion of the Mayflower Mill slated for restoration work this summer. Because of the construction, mill tours will not be available this year.*

## A Progress Report on the Jail Project

Terrific progress was made on the restoration of the exterior of San Juan County Historical Society's Museum, housed in the 1903 County Jail building, in the first season of work. Masonry work including brick repair, stone repair and selective replacement and re-pointing and cleaning is complete on all elevations. Our crew's focus is now turning to the ornate upper parapet above the south entry elevation which was severely deteriorated. Much of the inner layer of bricks needed additional stabilization due to poor mechanical attachment to the outer bricks.

All windows in the building have been repaired and glazed and are curing. Window sash installation began in early October and was finished by late November. The steel security bars, many of which were removed for restoration, have been cleaned and painted with a special epoxy paint and reinstalled. The northern chimney has been reconstructed and the east chimney has been repointed and its missing upper corbels replaced. Both chimneys are now anchored to the roof structure and crickets have been installed to moderate the snow buildup and improve the flashing detail.

Larger sandstone belt course elements were repaired in place during the late summer months and new stone has been installed where deterioration was too extensive for repair. The porch recon-

struction has begun on the north elevation and should be completed this spring. The south and east porches are also being restored this spring and will include new decking and replica turned wood columns and spindle work.

The new stainless steel standing seam roof sheathing has been delivered to our sub-contractor in Vail. The Society has contracted with the manufacturer's representative to come on-site and train our crew for the actual installation. This training, like the stone consolidation and repair and the window restoration work will carry over to our next project at the Mayflower Mill. The project is being managed by David Singer with John Richardson as crew foreman.

The San Juan County Historical Society and the San Juan County Commissioners have dedicated \$25,000 toward this second phase of the restoration. The funds are a direct cash match for a \$227,500 grant from State Historical Fund and a \$100,000 contribution from the Department of Local Affairs. Assembling the funding necessary for this first-class restoration, and bringing these partners together for this project has been a major achievement for Singer, Society Chairman Beverly Rich and our County officials.

## Now's the time to help the Society: Join Today!

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 2010. I understand that this membership entitles me (and my spouse, if applicable) to a vote at the annual meeting in October, 2010.

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: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# Silverton Northern Track Project: A Precursor of Revitalization of Silverton's Railroad History

By Jerry Hoffer

To our great delight, on February 2, 2009, the Colorado Historical Fund (CHF) announced that we won our requested grant in the amount of almost \$180,000 to rebuild three blocks of Silverton Northern (SN) track on Silverton's Cement Street from 7th to 10th Street, with a connection to the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad (D&SNG) so that the SN engine house could become the winter home of locomotive 315. Matching funds from Durango Railroad Historical Society (DRHS) and San Juan County Historical Society (SJCHS) of almost \$60,000, are required, for a total proposed budget of \$239,540. A portion of the matching funds was provided by grants from the Gates Foundation (\$30,000), and the El Pomar Foundation (\$2,500).

This is a joint project between the two historical societies with the DRHS leading the project. The plans include display locations for railroad cars being restored by the DRHS and cars to be restored by the SJCHS, along with interpretive signs. To accomplish these plans, several strategic alliances were forged. A right of way on Cement Street close to or on the original grade was acquired, a connection agreement with the D&SNG was established, and a permanent loan of rails and ties from the Galloping Goose Historical Society (GGHS) of Dolores was obtained.

However, the formal agreements had to be in place before a contract with CHF could be signed. This process turned out to be more complicated than expected. The State Historical Fund required at least a 20-year commitment for right of way from the Town of Silverton. The Silverton Town Board and the D&SNG required that their legal counsels review and add their required language to the documents, which in turn forced the DRHS and SJCHS to have their lawyers review them. When it was all sorted out, there were four new formal agreements as follows: an agreement between the DRHS and the SJCHS; the GGHS and the SJCHS; the Town of Silverton and the SJCHS; and the D&SNG, the DRHS, and SJCHS, as well as the two existing agreements between the City of Durango and the DRHS concerning the 315. The contract with the state fund was finally signed on April 24, 2009.

In mid-February, 2009, the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) became interested in the SN track project. Their concerns were the crossing of streets, railroads, and proximity to utilities.

The PUC determined that we would be a private rail yard and, because of running along Cement Street, we would have to file an application with the PUC for the construction of the track. Our application was filed and after sufficient comment period, we were notified by the PUC that there were no objections to the project and that we could proceed with construction.

In the interim, efforts were underway on preparing water line, earthwork, ballast, engine house doorway, and track work specifications. This was followed by preparation of requests for bids for surveying and engineering, water line extension and hydrant installation, engine house doorway repairs, and roadbed and ballast earthwork.

The first contract, for surveying and engineering, was let to Southwest Land Surveying of Delta, Colorado, who had all of the topographical data, street and building locations, for the area of our project, in their computer. The surveyors were given a copy of the grant application, historical photographs, track layout maps, and D&RG track specification drawings as reference materials. They discovered that most of the maps showing D&RG(W), SN, and Silverton RR (SRR) tracks were wrong. There were never two parallel tracks at the west side of the present Shenandoah siding. Since the Shenandoah siding is owned by the D&SNG and in use, we had to design and build the parallel track that the old maps suggested and we originally planned.

Klinke and Lew Contractors of Silverton won the contract for work on the engine house doorways. Drawings were prepared by architect Joe Sebestyen from measurements taken by George Niederauer and Jerry Hoffer. Work was started on the southeasterly doorsill and then waited some more for the weather to dry out enough to remove large pieces of mining equipment blocking work on the northwesterly doorsill. Once work was underway, the doorway foundations and the masonry base for the doorsills were quickly completed. The doorposts were jacked up, then the rotten bottom portions were cut off, replaced, and set on new wooden doorsills.

Lew discovered that the whole front of the engine house had a list to the northwest and that the large engine doors were badly cupped. The front wall was straightened and held square with a cable from the top of the front wall to the ground. This cable will be kept in place



*The Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad track crew was hired on their off days to assist in the laying of track. Here they work on the installation of a switch which will carry the track into the historic Silverton Northern engine house.*



*Loren Lew, of Klinke & Lew Contractors, works on aligning the badly warped doors of the Silverton Northern engine House. The company was also hired to build a new storage building on the site to house mining and other artifacts that had been stored in the engine house.*

until the rest of the building is restored at a later time.. Restoring the doors, Lew was able to do replace broken and damaged pieces as well as restore the forged hinges without removing the 15-foot high doors. Fritz Klinke determined that the doors were painted a light grey as determined from paint samples taken from protected crevices in the doors. After painting, Lew fabricated steel X braces for the inside of each door, in a 1912 style, to straighten the cupped doors. After all of this was done, the doors looked beautiful; they opened and closed with ease; and the hinges lined up evenly across the doors.

Part of the SN project included extending a six-inch water line approximately 180 feet from 9th Street, ending at a new water hydrant near the engine house. This provides fire protection for the engine house and water for the 315. The contract to install this eight-foot deep pipe, with appropriate valves, was won by Fullmer

Construction of Silverton. This project was completed without incident, including excavation, pipe laying, hydrant and valve installation, electrical bonding, backfilling, and sanitizing. The maintenance crew from the Town of Silverton was very helpful.

By now it was mid-July, the tie storage locations in Dolores had finally dried out and Skanska of Cortez, who had agreed to haul the ties at cost, was available to move approximately 800 ties from the GGHS to Silverton. In Silverton, Peak Construction unloaded the ties using their large rough terrain forklift. Now came the fun! These ties were eight to nine foot long for standard gauge and had to be cut down to 6 1/2-foot narrow gauge ties. This effort was again done with volunteers with chain saws over several weeks. Useable ties were marked with a length gauge, cut off, stacked, and the cut end was coated with foundation tar. The ties were heavy; the

(Continued on next page)

## SAN JUAN COURIER

George Chapman, Editor

Contributors: Beverly Rich, Jerry Hoffer,  
David Singer, George Niederauer, and Fritz Klinke

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San Juan County Historical Society

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Brian Fullmer, Jerry Hoffer, George Darnall Zanoni, Directors



# Silverton Heritage District Important in New Master Plan

The 2010 Master Plan being developed for the Town of Silverton and San Juan County will include the following description for the Silverton Heritage District:

The Silverton Heritage District includes the Town of Silverton and adjoining areas in San Juan County that include Howardsville and Cunningham Gulch. This area contains significant cultural and historic structures and facilities that relate to the mining, business, and railroading history of this area. As an area, these serve to promote heritage tourism that provides a basis for continuing promotion of the area as a destination for visitors to Silverton. The town and county will implement plans and policies through land use planning, zoning, and other incentives to preserve, protect, and enhance the preservation of these areas. The District includes the following areas or activities:

**Town of Silverton:** The entire Town of Silverton is an established National Historic Landmark and all contributing historic structures are included within the town. A Cultural Inventory of these historic structures is presently being made under a grant from the State Historical Fund to identify each contributing structure. The town has begun the initial protection of the core business historic district through an ordinance protecting the historic values of the structures, and a further expansion of the covered area should be considered once the structures assessment is completed. The historic structures in Silverton form a major draw for tourism and provide the basis for continued economic development for tourist related activities.

**Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad:** A designated National Historic Landmark, this railroad has served Silverton continuously since 1882 and continues to be a major tourist attraction. Ridership has declined from a high of 212,000 people in 1992 to 143,000 in 2009. Part of this decline is attributed to the current (2010) economic recession and part to the Durango forest fire of 2002. It is the intention of the Silverton Heritage District to provide additional incentive for increased ridership from Silverton to Durango which will serve to enhance the lost revenues attributed to declining ridership from Durango. Increased stays in Silverton lodging establishments, restaurants and related businesses will result from increased tourism in Silverton.

**Railroad Museum:** Located at the Silverton Depot, this museum attraction needs additional development to serve as an attraction. Started by the D&SNG Railroad about ten years ago, it has not seen the time and investment needed to make it a worthy attraction. Involvement with volunteer groups, the San Juan County Histori-

cal Society, and support from the Town of Silverton along with additional effort from the railroad can make this a contributing element to the District.

**Engine 315:** The historic steam engine 315 housed in the historic Silverton Northern Railroad engine house will serve as an attraction in addition to the Railroad Museum. The Town of Silverton will play an important role by allowing the use of town streets to relay historic track age that was once in place on the original Silverton Northern. Limited use of the engine for special events will serve as a draw for additional tourism to the town.

**San Juan County Historical Society Museum:** Located in leased space in the county jail building, this museum serves as a major draw for tourism. The related Archive and Mining Heritage buildings are all on the grounds of the San Juan County Courthouse, and the county serves as a major contributor to the historical society by providing land and structures.

**Mayflower Mill:** Located about two miles from Silverton on County Road 2, this major mining facility is owned and operated as an interpretive tour by the San Juan County Historical Society. It is a seasonal summer operation. It is a unique facility that has complete and intact machinery that was used for milling ores that came from area mines. The tram line that connects the mill to the Mayflower Mine is an important asset that crosses both private and public lands.

**Old 100 Mine Tour:** Located in Cunningham Gulch, this privately owned mine tour is a major tourist draw. It accurately portrays underground mining as it occurred in the San Juans. When combined with the Mayflower Mill tour, this attraction completes the story of precious metals mining in this area. Further increases in attendance will enhance the positive economic development goals of employment and increased tourism within the Town of Silverton.

**Projected rebuild of the Silverton Northern Railroad:** This railroad reconstruction is a project of the San Juan County Historical Society, and will run from the society owned Silverton Northern engine house in Silverton to Howardsville, approximately five miles. A vendor with the required locomotives and equipment will be sought to operate the railroad that will serve as a major tourist attraction. The rail line will operate over right-of-way owned by San Juan County in the form of County Road 2A, through property owned by the historical society, and town streets owned by the Town of Silverton. There is a short distance across private property. This rebuild will serve as a major economic development tool to bring together

## Silverton Northern Rail Work

(Continued from prior page)

work was hard, dirty, and done mostly by the following retired railfans: Ron Atkinson, Duane Danielson, Will Foreman, Jim Granflaten, Jerry Hoffer, and George Niederauer.

The contract for the earthwork to construct the SN roadbed was out for bid in early July, 2009. In early August, the bids were opened and we announced that the contract was awarded to Necchi Construction of Durango. Tom Necchi quickly mobilized his equipment and started grubbing the organic material off of the staked track location. He worked the cut and fill needed along Cement Street to achieve the proper grade, then proceeded to bring in material to build the large fill for the track that parallels the Shenandoah siding.

After the locomotive had been removed from in front of the engine house and the tender moved out (they were taken to Chama), Necchi was able to cut the grade to the front of the engine house. The grade off 9th Street turned out to be exactly the same elevation as the original SN grade. The ends of the rotted original ties were visible in the northwest side of the cut. The gravel from which the sub-ballast was screened was wet and froze at night so only a portion could be spread every day. Necchi had also bid and won another small contract to provide some needed ditches and drainage culverts between 10th Street and the engine house.

We had Tom Necchi and Loren Lew take a detour from their contracts to work on the southeast engine pit. Volunteers had removed the floorboards and done enough pit excavation for Lew to determine that the bottom tiers of the support beams were rotting. Replacement beams were acquired from San Juan Timberwrights of Arboles. Necchi used his small excavator to enlarge the pit excavation and yank the old beams from

the mine tour, mill tour, and jail museum as a significant heritage tourist attraction.

**Electrical Generating Facility:** The construction of a hydro electric plant on the Animas River below the Mayflower Mill by the San Juan County Historical Society will provide electricity for the mill operation. Although not a historic rebuild, it will utilize a water line that was originally built during World War I for the Mears-Wilfley Mill that still serves as the water supply for the mill. This facility is typical of small hydro plants once built for many of the mines and mills in this area and continues the rich heritage of electrical history in the area that dates from the L.L. Nunn/George Westinghouse construction of the world's first high tension AC power system at Ames Station in San Miguel County. The Silverton-Telluride-Ouray area was the first industrial area in the world to be served by an interconnecting electric power system using alternating current. As part of this early system, the Historical Society has restored the nearby Animas Light and Power Co. 1906 era substation.

the pit. Lew then took over, separated the stacked beams, salvaged the good beams, cut the new beams to fit, then reinstalled them. This was where the pit project was left for the winter because the drainage material to be put into the pit was also wet and frozen solid.

In early October, Skanska was able to bring rails from the GGHS of Dolores to Silverton. It had been decided to use available 75 lb rail for the main line between 7th and 10th Streets and the connection to the D&S. In order to be more historically correct we settled on the use of available 55 lb rail for a stub switch and the two legs into the engine house. Niederauer and the GGHS had discovered that GGHS did not have the quantity of spikes, bolts, nuts, and splice bars that they originally thought they had. Therefore these items had to be purchased new. The stub switch would have to be fabricated on site, therefore only two 75 lb No. 6 turnouts were purchased. The two switches were ordered from L. B. Foster Company's Ohio Valley Trackworks and delivered at the end of October. The small track parts were ordered from Harmer Steel of Oregon and also delivered before the end of October.

With time short until very cold weather and snowfall would set in, we decided to hire Pete Maisel of Silverton to coordinate getting the D&SNG track crew on their days off to start assembling track from 10th Street toward the D&SNG connection and toward the stub switch on the engine house lead to include assembling the two 75 lb turnouts. We also hired Necchi and Lew to start assembling the track from 7th Street towards the D&SNG connection turnout. Before winter weather caused work to be stopped, the crew had laid a block of track and one turnout while Necchi and Lew had laid about 3/4 block of track. And now we have had the long wait until the snow melted and the ground dried out enough to resume track work, which should be underway as you read this.

### Important documents available

San Juan County history buffs should take note of several projects recently completed by the county Assessor's office. The 913 page Works Progress Administration mining claim project, originally done in 1936, has been scanned and is available on CD.

An original copy of the hand typed compilation of local newspaper articles documenting mining claims in the county from the 1890s thru the 1930s was found in the Assessor's vault.

Another long awaited project involved the scanning of all of the current plat maps of the county. Both projects are PDF files and can be viewed by anyone with a home computer.

In addition, the office also has a data base of all mining claims in the county. This data requires EXCEL software to be viewed. The data base includes the claim name, survey and patent numbers, township, section and range location, acreage, mining district and other miscellaneous information.

The CD's can be purchased from the Assessor's office for \$12.00 each, plus postage. For more information or to purchase copies contact the Assessor's office at 970-387-5632.