



# SAN JUAN COURIER

Summer 2017

Silverton, San Juan County, Colorado

## Significant Gift of Silverton Standard Printing Equipment Received by Society

By Fritz Klinke, Mark Esper, and  
George Chapman

When the Society built the Mining Heritage Center, one room was designed to house an exhibit on Silverton's historic newspapers. Its floor was built to withstand the weight of the old historic presses, and there was much expertise within the Society's membership to do the interpretation. But, alas, the old printing equipment remained hidden behind closed doors in the back of the 1875 George Wright building that had served as the Silverton Standard and the Miner home for most of the last half of the 20th century.

Then one day last summer the owners of that building and life members of the Society, Jon and Sharon Denious, called and said they were ready to do something with the building but knew the historic value of the Silverton Standard plant and are generously donating the equipment.

Unfortunately, the disuse of the set-aside area for the newspaper office over the years led to a situation where the space available for the display was drastically reduced. Therefore only a small portion of the Denious' gift will be on display at this time.

Another major change that has taken place in the intervening years is the conversion in 2009 of The Silverton Standard and The Miner from a privately owned for-profit newspaper to one of the few newspapers nation-wide that is owned by a non-profit. In this case it is the San Juan County Historical Society. While the paper operates independently from the historical society, it relies partially on donations and community support in its role as "Silverton Public Newspaper".

The current newspaper configuration is the result of a 1920 merger of the Silverton Weekly Miner into the Silverton Standard. The Miner is the oldest of almost a dozen newspapers founded in San Juan County, having been founded as the LaPlata Miner by John Curry in 1875. The words "and The Miner" did not appear on the flag of the Standard for several years after the merger, which some considered a last minute bailout of the floundering operation.

Silverton had a long history with the printing operation of the Miner and the Standard. In addition to the newspaper, job printing for all the needs of the town, mines, and railroads took up all the time when the paper was not being set or printed. This job printing was essential to the needs of the town and provided valuable income to support the paper. Initially all the type was set by hand, one letter at a time, into bill heads, advertisements or body type for the paper. Mechanical typesetting didn't arrive in Silverton until the

early 1930s when the first Linotype machine arrived. This form of printing is called letterpress and was the dominant type of printing until the 1950s. It survived in Silverton until 1971 when new owners Roz and Larry Duthie converted the paper in one week to offset printing and the printing of the actual paper left town for Durango.

The last editor/printer to operate the letterpress equipment at the Standard in newspaper production was the late Allen Nossaman, a sounding member of the Society. Nossaman had a love/hate affair with his mechanical marvels of cast iron and lead alloy type. The weekly production of the Standard in Nossaman's era of 1963 to 1971 was a wonder to behold as he coaxed his worn out Linotype to produce another column of type that he patiently made up into pages, and then carried the pages weighing nearly 100 pounds each to the back of the shop where he placed them on his 1906 era Miehle flatbed press. If the ink was cold, the first few sheets fed through the press would end up wrapped around the ink rollers, and his staff of teen age boys who were there to hand fold the paper were treated to a never to be forgotten string of some very innovative profanity.

All of the equipment that produced the Standard in the letterpress and Nossaman era is still there. There is metal and wood type dating to the 1870s, the Hoe cylinder press which dates to about 1830 and was used by Ross Beaber until 1959, a relatively recent 1938 Model 8 Linotype that replaced the first well-worn Linotype in the shop, and the miscellaneous parts and pieces needed to operate a job shop and newspaper.

With a little care, all of this is still operational and the intent is to set up a representation of the Standard office in the museum that can demonstrate how this material was used. As technology changed since Nossaman's time, the production of the newspaper is now done at a computer keyboard, the files sent electronically to the printing plant in Montrose, and our local boys have new sources to expand their vocabulary.

Editor and Publisher Mark Esper has now operated the newspaper for eight years. Originally from Flint, Mich., he has worked at weekly and daily newspapers in Michigan, Colorado, Montana and New Mexico. Over the years he's done some reporting on just about every conceivable topic. Esper has been to 53 countries, reporting from Northern Ireland, the former Yugoslavia, Central America, Cuba and the Middle East. He's also been to all 50 U.S. states. "I've been detained by Interior Ministry officials in Serbia, was interviewed on ABC's *Good Morning America* from Havana and

somehow made it out of Morazan Province (El Salvador) alive", Esper said. The experience left Esper well prepared to handle duties at the Silverton Standard. "It was good training for Silverton", he said. "Plus I've done a couple of grizzly-mauling stories in Montana, so I was well-prepared to cover the Town Council here".

Esper covers various news events around town, takes photos (and gets a lot of help from local photographers Ray Dileo, Jerry Lyle and Criss Furman), then lays out the newspaper on a 27-inch screen computer. There's no hot-lead type and no dealing with a grimy, antique press.

The high-resolution digital Standard pages are relayed to the Montrose Daily Press Wednesday afternoons for printing. Wednesday evenings (or sometimes very early on Thursdays), Esper drives over Red Mountain Pass to pick up the finished product.

Then he fills the nine newspaper racks around town, and labels and pre-sorts hundreds more for mailing all over the country, and hauls them to the Post Office. Oh, then it's time to update the website and send out the e-mail edition to hundreds of electronic subscribers. Then get started on the next week's paper, usually doing the Caboose page with its history items first.

On May 5, 2012, The Society of Professional Journalists presented the Standard with a beautiful bronze historical marker, as the Standard was designated a National Historic Site in Journalism, the only newspaper in Colorado with such a title. The marker is prominently displayed on the Grand Imperial Hotel, where the newspaper was housed for much of the early 1900s.

### Visit the Museums

**The Mining Heritage Center & Jail are located on Greene Street just behind the County Courthouse, and are open daily until mid-October, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

**Admission is \$8.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children 5 to 12.**

**The Mayflower Mill Tour, located just northeast of town is open through Labor Day with an \$8.00 adult admission and children under 12 are free. The hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

**A special Mining Heritage Pass including the Old Hundred Mine Tour is also available.**

## Society Sponsored or Endorsed Events this Summer

**Night at the Museum:** Free Open House, June 9th. 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

**Hillside Cemetery Work Day:** June 17th, 10 a.m. to noon.

**5th Annual Antique Truck & Car Show:** June 24th, Blair Street.

**Lecture and Slide Show:** Andrew Gulliford, FLC Professor, Bears Ears and the Antiquities Act August 25, 7 p.m. Town Hall

**Step Back in Time:** September 15th, 16th, 17th.

For the latest information, please check our web site: <http://www.sanjuancountyhistoricalsociety.org/> and/or our Facebook page.

## Silverton Northern Railroad Project Steaming Towards Howardsville — Well Not Quite!

By Fritz Klinke

After a spurt of activity in 2015 laying the demonstration piece of track, the Silverton Northern committee has been working with a potential operator for the railroad who will also take on the completion of the rail construction.

Our group brought three trailer loads of rail from the Ridgway museum to Silverton last summer and is preparing to bring one fourth of a mile of rail donated by the Galloping Goose Historical Society in Dolores to Silverton this summer.

A proposal for the operation of the Silverton Northern was presented to the Board of Directors in April and they approved moving ahead to developing a long term contract with our potential operator.

As part of this operation, John Braun, owner of Mammoth Locomotive Works in Palisade, Colorado has started converting the old wood shop at the Society owned power house into his locomotive machine shop. John is presently building a full size narrow gauge steam engine that will go to the Ridgway Railroad Museum. John has years of railroad equipment building experience and is the past mechanical engineer in charge of the Georgetown Loop Railroad.

All of the track and right-of-way improvements are the property of the San Juan County Historical Society. We are still soliciting donations for rail, transportation, and track materials to advance the work towards Howardsville. Contact us at [www.silvertonnorthern.com](http://www.silvertonnorthern.com).



# Chairman's Report: A Busy Year for the Society

Dear Members,

As I write today the sky is blue with big fluffy clouds meandering in from the West. The trees are budding and it is only April! We got a LOT of snow in January, so much so that the Town Crew didn't know where to plow it—it really was amazing—huge banks of snow, our streets were only one lane wide, wow! And snow up to the eaves. Then in February and March we got a huge melt. We had temperatures in the 50s with lows above freezing, so all of that snow went fast. Sure has made for a really long mud season!

Well, if it is April, then that means May is right behind, with all of its attendant duties—cleaning the museum and mill, getting ready for the summer season. Already downtown is busy with our snowbird merchants returning, spiffing up their establishments. A familiar ritual of the summer is upon us. I am happy to report that last summer was really excellent—up 12% in visitation at the museum. It was a summer that we deserved—no fires, no landslides, no high gas prices, just a plain old-fashioned good summer. Hope this trend continues. I want to thank Judy Zimmerman for her years of work at the museum—she is off to new adventures. We will surely miss you, Judy. It has been one of the great pleasures of my life to have been your friend and colleague for all of these many years. But our team of Casey, Steve and I will be there to greet you, dear members. We have some marvelous new exhibits for you to see.

Our plea to you for extra donations for the Mill was answered and work was done fixing windows and sealing the roof last fall. The snow was so heavy this winter that there is more damage to fix before we open. There is always something! I had a note from David Singer this morning—he is almost done with the construction documents for the Mill—coal trestle, water tank and interior of the assay office—just in time for me to look for matching funds for their implementation. The Mill will open June 10th and again Melanie Bergolc and Will Meyerricks are our docents. You can't get any better than those two—Melanie has a degree in geology and Will wrote the book—*Drills and Mills-Precious Metal Mining and Milling Methods of the 19th Century Frontier West*. Thank you, guys.

After 23 years of organizing Cemetery Workday, Paul and Mary Beaber are retiring. That is the bad news. But the good news is that the Town of Silverton is taking on the event. Started by Freda Peterson, Cemetery Workday brings out about 50 people annually to work on grave sites and cleaning Hillside Cemetery. People of all ages, from near and far, come to spruce up this facility—a day of free and loving labor. So, bring a lunch and a pair of gloves on June 17th at 10:00 am and enjoy the day! Thank you, Paul and Mary! It was a lot more work than you would think.

Loren Lew finished up the Old 100 Boardinghouse foundation work last fall in record time, all the while getting rained and snowed on. Thank you Loren and crew. And thank you to you, dear members, for answering the call for the match money for this grant—three weeks, \$13,000. Amazing! Something about this building just resonates to all who love San Juan County history. Thank you, Skip Kimball III for giving us permission to save it and, then, outright donating it to the Society. There is a line item in the paperwork in the State Historical Fund grant that calls for “after” photos of the work. Loren Lew

brought us some spectacular ones—ones taken from the helicopter supplied by our friends at the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (DRMS). Another adventure in the world of “Extreme Preservation”!

We continue to finish up some other projects—the facades of the Cole and Hoffman buildings across from Town Hall. Silverton is one of the first National Historic Landmarks (1962) and is still one of only 23 in the State of Colorado, so it is important that our pristine main street be maintained—it is what people come to see. It is how we make our living! We also are finishing up a Historic Structure Assessment on Silverton's old town hall on Blair Street (pre-1907 town hall) and the Martha Rose Smelter exhibit. Other work done last fall thanks to funding by member Ryan Bennett was the stabilization of a boardinghouse on Treasure Mountain, a project that was difficult and dangerous, but thanks to John Richardson and his crew will now stand for many years to come.

After a shaky start, we are about to continue a scanning project of some of our thousands of maps of the Bonita Peak Superfund sites. We have entered into a contract with Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety to allow them to scan maps which may or may not be helpful in their work. We have been getting updates and kept in the loop by the EPA, and, hopefully, will be consulted as they move forward with their work on the ground. There are rules they must follow as they do their work—Section 106 surveys of historic sites, among them. We intend that they do what the law requires.

The Society and the Durango Railroad Historical Society along with the Durango and Silverton Railroad are building an outdoor rolling stock museum. The DRHS is leading the display track and shed project to get permanent facilities in place to help protect the six railcars restored so far and another one (Reefer 39) expected to be finished this summer. This Park is situated between the Silverton Northern Engine House and the old Denver & Rio Grande depot. The name “Silverton” is synonymous with Narrow Gauge railroading, and the Park is just another attraction to draw visitors to town.

We have had a movie crew in town this month. They used the museum quite extensively and gave us \$1500 for the honor. It is interesting, they are very fluid—they say they want to film here or there tomorrow, but by the time tomorrow rolls around, they have completely changed their schedule. But we have been having fun with them. There must have been at least 50 people involved and they all had to stay somewhere and eat somewhere, so it provided a nice shot in the arm for the spring season.

I was looking at our tax bills today—yes, the Society pays taxes—and I was struck by the bill for the Hayden Campsite. This archaeological site was donated to the Society by Fred and Nancy Clark. There is a picture of it in *Many More Mountains*, page 199 of volume 1. (Nossaman, 1989). The Hayden Survey was commissioned by the US Geological Survey in 1874 to map the mineralization, geography and flora and fauna of the San Juan Mountains, which had just been opened to prospectors. In this party was William Henry Jackson, the famous photographer who visited this area many times. That Fred and Nancy saw the historical value of this camp site, enough to carve it out and

give to the Society for safekeeping, is so far-sighted, so forward thinking. Thank you Fred and Nancy!

And that brings me to my theme for this letter: foresight. Without foresight by Zeke Zaroni, we would not have the National Historic Landmark Mayflower Mill. Without the foresight of Fritz Klinke and Jerry Hoffer, we would not own the Engine House or have a Railroad Park. Without the foresight of Allen Nossaman we would not have the best archive of which a little town can boast. Without the foresight of Freda Peterson, our cemetery would be over-

grown and crumbling. Without the foresight of Zeke, Scott Fetchenhier and Steve Rich, we would not have one of the best mining museums in the country. We would not own the Old 100 Boardinghouse or the Hayden Campsite. We stand on the shoulders of those many people who had the foresight to know that one day we would be making our living by protecting places that people want to see. I hope that we will continue to be so far-seeing.

And thank you, dear members, we could not do it without your support.

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## Toll Road Named to NRHP

After many years the Animas Canyon Toll Road—a historic wagon road that was the first route from Durango to Silverton—has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places. This was a labor of love for Richard Robinson, who started it as a nomination to the La Plata County Historic Register in 2006. With the help of Julie Coleman of the US Forest Service, he was finally rewarded by the national designation of the road in 2017.

The road was built James L. Wightman and Joseph W. Wallace in 1876 to transport goods, food and supplies from Animas City (present day North Durango) to Silverton.

It was much more efficient to transport goods in a wagon than using pack animals over Stony Pass. The Animas Canyon Toll Road could accommodate wagons and commerce both ways—supplies and food to Silverton and ore to points south.

The road started at a toll booth at Baker's Bridge and followed the Animas Canyon bottom 35 miles into Silverton. After the D&RG arrived in Silverton in 1882, much of the traffic on the toll road was reduced, but it still was used to transport goods from Animas City to Rico over the Rico-Rockwood Toll Road. Today portions of the road are clearly discernable, particularly in the Haviland Lake area.

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# San Juan Courier

*Published annually by the San Juan County Historical Society, a non-profit Colorado corporation, for its members and all persons interested in the preservation of the history of San Juan County, Colorado.*

*Edited by George Chapman*

## San Juan County Historical Society Officers and Directors, 2017

Beverly Rich, Chairman; Scott Fetchenhier, Secretary/  
Treasurer;

Jerry Hoffer; Darnell Zaroni; Patty Dailey; Stephen Rich; and  
Kim Davy Eisner,  
Directors.

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## Join the San Juan County Historical Society Today!

**Box 154, Silverton, CO 81433  
(970) 387-5609**

I wish to enroll as a member of the San Juan County Historical Society in the class designated below (please circle desired membership) for the calendar year 2017.

I understand that this membership entitles me (and my spouse, if applicable) to a vote at the annual meeting in October, 2017.

1. **Member** — \$25 per year, entitling an individual to one vote in meetings of the general membership, discounts on books, and free museum admission.

2. **Family Membership** — \$50 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** — \$100 per year, entitling an individual or couple to voting privileges, a museum pass for the season, and discounts on books.

4. **Life Member** — \$1000, entitling an individual or couple to all of the above privileges for life.

Name:

Mailing Address:

Email:



## Museum Work Crew Kept Busy With Many Tasks in Past Year

By Stephen F. Rich

It has been a busy year and much has been accomplished. Last fall we performed several projects that involved moving numerous heavy artifacts, including 30' section of narrow gauge rail and ties from the back of the Museum to the side of the Archive building. Cody Bradford excavated and graded the bedding for the track to be installed, while Zeke Zaroni, Jerry Hoffer, and I constructed a short trestle and an abutment at the planned end of track. The town of Silverton donated the use of their big loader to transport the rail section and install it on site. The track will be the home for the newly restored Silverton Northern caboose #1005. This summer season we will extend the track to the back of the Archives and construct a shed roof for winter cover. We think the placement will attract more visitors to the Museum.

A second project involved the moving and placement of several artifacts donated by Silverton Mountain: a track drill, which was used for road building in the county; a fairly large "Jaw Crusher" weighing in at about 2,000 lbs.; and a truly unique pneumatic dozer, which was designed for use underground. We also acquired four 30' pieces of 65 lb rail. Grady Ham of Silverton Mountain loaded the equipment on Pete Maisel's large flatbed trailer and the machines went to the Museum. Once again the town of Silverton donated the use of their loader.

Our next project was to move four rusty vintage service trucks from the corner of 14th and Blair Streets to a site near the depot and the engine house. Museum member Tony Vowels volunteered the use of his big 4x4 truck and towed each of them to their new home.

The trucks had been sitting in the same spot for forty years. While located on 14th Street, these unique trucks were some of the most photographed artifacts in Silverton. We decided to bring the old tow truck to the Museum in hopes using the winch/boom for heavy lifting around the Museum. A few volunteers who have expressed interest in getting the truck operational.

In late September, I went to Dolores to pick up an ore car that BLM donated to our Museum. It had been residing in a portal of an abandoned mine near there on Public Lands and was discovered by a person (to remain nameless) and pilfered. The perpetrator was observed by BLM Officers and the jig was up. We plan to tell this story, so as to get the message out that the removal of artifacts from public land is illegal.

Next came the moving of several ore cars from our storage shed at the engine house to the Museum basement for an exhibit depicting an ore car repair shop. This exhibit is still under construction and will be completed sometime later this season.

Prior to the unloading of the ore cars from the track, Zeke and I made ready a 16' x 8" steel "I-beam" to install a chain hoist to expedite lifting heavy and unbalanced objects and ore cars from the track and place them effortlessly on the concrete floor. John Richardson made several heavy duty brackets from which to hang the beam and welded the project together.

Scott Fetchenhier undertook the cleaning, oiling and polishing of artifacts (too numerous to list) from our stored collection. Scott and I built shelving and moved exhibit cases containing domestic

artifacts into the upstairs of the Caledonia. Many new artifacts we discovered that were in storage and several new acquisitions are now on display throughout the Museum. Scott also worked on the "Sporting in San Juan County" and the "Silverton School" exhibit.

Off and on, I spent some time cleaning out the "Prospector's Cabin" and installing new underlayment on the floor. The exterior of the structure was skirted to keep out critters and other repairs were made. While working on the building I discovered numerous vintage tools and several other artifacts and furniture for display after refinishing. Lots of nice weathered lumber and timbers were brought into the Museum for use in new exhibit construction. The now empty space will be the home for our rock saws and rocks/mineral storage, freeing much needed space in our new shop. Jerry will install new wiring to operate the rock saws and for lights. It will be a much nicer arrangement for sawing rock slabs for sale in the Museum gift store.

In between other smaller projects I designed and constructed three exhibit cases to house our newest collection of architectural scale models: A large 1:20.3 "F" scale model of the Red Mountain Depot built and donated by Larry Brewer; an "HO" scale model of the Rose/Walsh Smelter, a very complicated kit built by Museum member, Ken Vaughn, who worked on it five days a week for three months; A very fine collection of nine "HO" models designed and constructed by member and model maker extraordinaire, Lowell Ross of Anvil Mountain Models. Lowell is an architect and he developed the kits to sell to railroad modelers. This collection includes: The Duncan House and the Jail at Animas Forks, the Red Mountain Jail, the Yankee Girl Hoist Plant at Red Mountain, the Silverton Jail, the Mikado Saloon/Brothel, the Silverton Northern Depot, Fred Goble's Building Supplies, and finally the Iowa/Tiger Tram Terminal. We hope these exhibits will be enjoyed by everyone visiting the Museum.

Thank you for your continued support and we hope you can visit us soon.



**Former Archivist, Freda Peterson dies at 88**

Freda Rose Carley Peterson, age 88, was born March 28, 1928, in McPherson, Kansas, the fourth-oldest of six sisters. While in high school, she worked at a local drugstore. During this time, she met Paul Peterson. After Paul's return from service in WWII, the two married on September 3, 1948.

She had made her first visit to

## Society's Archive is Valued by Many Beyond San Juan County



**Silverton once again became one big movie set this spring with the filming of *The Great Race*. Based on a story about the Iditarod dog sled race in Alaska, it confirms what many have thought for years: Silverton and Alaska aren't that much different! People and equipment were everywhere for a month or so and the Archive building received a lot of use.**

By Casey Carroll & Ray Dileo One thing that we do a lot of at the Archive is send digital images to online newspapers or TV stations. A typical request that we receive is to send historic pictures for featured stories about Silverton.

We received a very large donation of photos and artifacts with many pages of written history from the Martin Schmelzer family. We hear many interesting stories from our visitors and this is just one of many stories that we would like to share with you:

According to Martin's granddaughter, Patricia Schmelzer Schuster, "My father, John F. Schmelzer, always loved Silverton and the mountains, which is why he joined the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, US Army when it was activated in 1942. He grew up in Silverton and left when he received an appointment to The US Military Academy, West Point. He was graduated in 1933 and became a career Army officer. He trained at Ft Lewis, Camp Hale, and saw action in the Aleutian Islands and in Northern Italy. My Father's knowledge of snow, cold altitude and the mountains was valuable in preparing the troops at Camp Hale and later for combat in Northern Italy against the German Army from February to April 1945. My Father was Assis-

tant Regimental Commander of the 86<sup>th</sup> regiment, 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. He retired in 1961 after 30 years of service, with the rank of Colonel. He passed away in 2006.

"My father's father, Martin Schuster was once the owner of the Mill at Ice Lake. He worked in Silverton in 1906 as an electrician and millwright for the Silver Lake Mill. He staked claims in Upper Ice Lake, including the Diamond Claim. He also staked two tungsten mines on Boulder Mountain. My grandfather had valuable mining claims in Silverton."

"I was told that Martin's wife, Agnes Anne Schmelzer, had mining fever. She purchased the Ice Lake Mill Site and some Ice Lake Claims above South Mineral Creek, in the 1920s. She was also Proprietress of the Grand Imperial Hotel in the 1930s and was on the school board."

Patricia Schmelzer Schuster visited Silverton last year with her husband Daniel. She had visited twice before, once in the 70s and again in the 90s. However, this time she was able to go hiking with the Archives' Ray Dileo, and take in all the sights and sounds of the Ice Lake Basin area that her grandfather had seen and heard back in the day. She

Continued on next page.

Silverton, Colorado in 1940. Two of her sisters, Marge and Teddie settled in Silverton, and Freda returned here countless times. She fell in love with Silverton's people, history and mountains.

With an interest in genealogy, Freda found that there was no organized record of burials at Silverton's Hillside Cemetery. With Paul's help, she compiled and published a list of 1,750 burials, mostly based on tombstones. In later editions she expanded on her original 1981 work, adding many burials unmarked by tombstones, as well as biographies for those buried. In 1990, she was honored by the American Association for State and Local History for her work. Her published research has helped many to find long-lost relatives.

Freda organized annual work days for cemetery volunteers, to help with tree trimming, tombstone repair and clean-up. Proceeds from her book sales went toward cemetery maintenance and the purchase of tombstones for graves that had long been unmarked.

After Paul's death in 1990, Freda spent more time in Silverton and met Brison Gooch, a history professor who had retired there. They married in 1998. In

Silverton, she volunteered for work in the county's historical society and focused on computerizing the society's extensive archival holdings. When she could no longer tolerate Silverton's high elevation, she returned to Oklahoma City, where she spent the remainder of her years with family.

Freda's devotion to the archive made our small town stand out in the academic world. Taking up the work of Allen Nossaman after his premature illness and death, she devoted countless hours to the archive and computerized the card file. She also started a scanning project which enhanced access to the society's extensive photo collection.

She kept an eagle eye on the Hillside Cemetery, walking through it every morning. In addition to the annual work day, she helped grieving families choose burial plots and cataloged their family histories. Most people knew that she was the cemetery's advocate, but many people did not know about this side of the job that she had taken on. How incredibly fortunate we in Silverton are to have had the luck to be the beneficiary of her work.



## Archive: (Continued from prior page)

was quite moved. Ray was their tour guide for a couple of days and the three of them ended up having a very memorable visit.

Peggy Schaller from Collections Research for Museums spent two days with Ray, Darlene Bolfiging, and I in a training session of Cataloging Museum Collections.

Ray and I spent about six hours locating several maps of interest for RE-SPEC, a company doing work in regard to the Gold King Mine Spill in 2015.

We will be working with the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety and will be scanning maps of interest to them. They have obtained a 44" scanner for the purpose of going through the thousands of un-catalogued maps that the Archive houses. The best part of this is that we will actually begin cataloging the overwhelming stacks of maps that we have been preserving for decades. We provided pictures for Meghan Hicks of IRUNFAR, about the story of Hardrock 100.

We made room upstairs for all the boxes upon boxes of artifacts that had been stored in the treasurer's vault for many years. All these boxes were moved by Steve Rich, Zeke Zaroni and Outward Bound students. It took two days to accomplish this. Now all we need to do is sort through them and catalog them!

A film crew that was in town filming the *GREAT RACE*, featuring Treat Williams, a documentary about the Iditarod. The entire crew, including actors, producers, etc., were just a great group of folks. They spent about five weeks here and they used many of our buildings, Museum props, and our people for this movie. They set up the Archive to be a 1920s office. We hated to see them leave, but they say they will return to make more movies here! Silverton cap-

tured their hearts, as it does to so many.

The Archive has received many boxes of donations this past year. Judy Zimmerman has volunteered to go through them and identify as many people and places she can in these images

Darlene Bolfiging volunteers on Thursdays. She has been scanning historic pictures that have not yet been digitized. She and her husband own a home on Reese Street. When they are not staying in Silverton, they are teaching at Baylor University in their home town of Waco, Texas.

Susan Jones of the Animas Museum has helped us with our digital database. Susan has *single-handedly* updated over 12,000 descriptions of our cataloged images and artifacts for our File-Maker Pro database program.

We would also like to give a huge thanks to Misha Garcia and Lois MacKenzie for their volunteer work. These two ladies have been inventorying the 10,000 plus images that live in our vault. This is a huge undertaking and we appreciate their time spent with us.

And of course, I would like to thank the greatest volunteer of all, Ray Dileo. Thank you Ray, for all that you do.

Receiving donations of artifacts, images and hearing the wonderful stories from the heirs of Silverton's by-gone residents are sometimes, well ... *just magical*.

Do you have a picture, an artifact, or a great story of Silverton's past? We invite you to come to the Archive to share your stories with us.

Would you like to decorate your walls with images of Silverton's glorious past? Come visit us and let's see what we can find with which to adorn your walls.

The Archive is open to the public, Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. or by appointment (970-387-5609).

## Silverton Northern Oil Shed Build Continues at Engine House Site

By Jerry Hoffer

In June the shed site excavation was completed. The excavation unearthed a lot of old rotten wood, some of which appeared to be railroad ties. These had to be picked up and taken to our burn pile. Also, the refrigerator car body south of the shed location had to be towed to its final location.

These items took a couple days away from our first week-long work session. In the remainder of the session we built about half the shed foundation forms. Russell Thomas of Westminster, Colorado, and Ken Hawkins and David Kitchin from Arizona attended the first session.

Ron and Judy Schlueter of St. Charles, Missouri, attended the second work session in July, a two week stint. Ron's brother Steve, of Arizona, also helped. During this session, we finished the foundation forms, poured the concrete, attached the sill plates, installed floor joist, and framed the walls.

The summer monsoons hit in late July and early August. This plus the lumber for the roof joist not getting in on time resulted in a two-week halt of work.

Doug Bogart helped in all work sessions; for the concrete pour Steve Rich, Zeke Zaroni, and Brian Fullmer provided additional help.

By mid-August, with the roof material on hand, Jerry Hoffer, Bogart and Bill Chinworth proceeded to cut the end bevels, make 'bird's mouth' cuts, and make 2x4 end blocking and bridging. The joists were slowly installed between frequent rain showers. Two by four 'X' bridging was used down the center of the span to add rigidity, and the ends of

each joist were blocked and fastened to the wall plates with metal clips.

After Railfest and Band Festival activities were over in late August, Hoffer and Bogart installed the remaining sheathing on the walls. With help from Lewis Dahm, the screen wire for soffit venting was prepared and installed. Zaroni and a couple visitors provided help with lifting the 3/4-in. plywood panels onto the roof while Bogart nailed them down. Most of the plywood used as concrete foundation forms, was recycled. Installation of 1x6 fascia covered the perimeter edges of the roof decking.

Drip edge was installed on the low side and two ends of the deck and it was covered with ice and water shield and the drip edge on the high side installed. Within a week, the corrugated metal roofing appeared, and Society members Steve Rich and Steve Allen volunteered to be on the roof with Zaroni and Hoffer the ground crew. Once started, the metal installation went quickly and it was done without cutting a single panel.

With help from Duane Danielson, Tony Palmer, Mary Ann Dahm, and Mark Kasprovicz, house wrap was installed on the walls and plywood covers were placed on the door and window openings drying-in the shed for winter.

The plans for this spring and summer are to finish manual dirt work around the shed, install corrugated metal siding, build out the interior, install doors and window, and move in office furnishings.

Again we will welcome volunteer workers to help accomplish these tasks.



**Bunk car 04432 as restored by the Durango Railroad Historical Society. Built in 1899 as a box car and converted to a bunk car in 1914, it has been a useful car for the society's crew members when running their locomotive 315.**

## Durango Group Continues to Turn Out Cars for Railroad Yard Museum

By George Niederauer

Under a grant from the State Historical Fund, the Durango Railroad Historical Society finished restoring four more railcars in fall 2016 – just before the snows arrived. The Durango group has now completed six of a planned twelve car project. Completed in this two-year project are D&RGW narrow gauge cars: single deck Stock Car 5627, double deck stock car 5564, outfit Bunk Car 04432, and Flanger OT. The cars are displayed

on the Silverton Northern track that was reconstructed along Cement Street under another State Historical Fund grant as a joint project between the San Juan County Historical Society and the Durango Railroad Historical Society.

Both stock cars have completely new roofs including the structure down to some of the plates. The single deck stock car has an entire new set of floor planks. Only floor planks at the doorways of double deck needed to be replaced. Oth-

ers show some degradation, but that just adds character to the car. It is not expected that folks will be crawling around inside or hauling any sheep or hogs. Both cars are painted black with white lettering. Stock car 5627 has the standard letter applied during the rebuild in 1926. Stock car 5564 has special lettering that was applied to only a few cars in 1937 and appears in a 1939 photo of the car.

Bunk Car 04432 is a typical 4000 series boxcar built in 1899 and repurposed as a bunk car in 1914. It has three rooms with a window in each and the sliding cargo doors replaced by personnel doors. A pot bellied stove was installed for heat and cooking. A fresh water tank is mounted in one corner of the center room, and a table is attached to another corner. The bunk car was moved to Silverton on August 15 in time to serve as living quarters for some of the Locomotive 315 crew during testing, then running excursions out of Silverton for the D&SNG Railfest during August. The 315 crew outfitted the car with cots, a microwave oven, a small refrigerator, and lights, powered via an electric cord. It is painted boxcar red with white lettering.

Flanger OT was originally built for the Crystal River Railroad sometime after 1887, using the design of "snow flanger" patented by D&RG in 1885. D&RG acquired the car in 1916, when the Crystal River was abandoned. With hard use the wood frame flangers always had the possibility of buckling and killing enginemen, so they were rebuilt with steel frames beginning in the 1930s. Flanger OT was the last to be converted to a steel frame, in 1943. By this time work cars were being painted gray rather than boxcar red; lettering is

black. Durango Railroad Historical Society replaced all the wood in floor below the steel weights and on the top deck. They also removed modern piping and valves and returned piping to its original configuration.

As with all the Durango group's cars, each has its own interpretive sign, which is on sled type stand that is brought out and placed by the car for summer display. For this project the Durango Railroad Historical Society added a more general sign called Trails to Rails. It discusses routes to Southwest Colorado, as shown on five maps: Indian trails and explorers, wagon roads, stagecoach roads, railroads, and motor vehicle roads. One set of the 2x3-ft panels will be installed somewhere along Greene Street, the other beside the full-size model locomotive Emma Sweeny near the visitor center in Santa Rita Park, Durango.

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