

# San Juan Courier

Summer 2018

Silverton, San Juan County, Colorado

## ***Society Museum gets Bigger and Better Every Year***

by Stephen F. Rich  
Exhibits Preparator

### **Inside the Museum**

Since we closed the Museum last fall we have been working on several new projects. Zeke Zanoni began planning, cleaning and assembling the artifacts for his new exhibit of three Silverton Smelters. The exhibit will feature photographs, tools and several slag castings from the Kendrick/Gelder, the Greene and the Martha Rose/Walsh smelters. The scale model of the Martha Rose/Walsh, built by Ken Vaughn, that we exhibited last year was moved from the top floor to the basement. In order to get it down the stairs we had to remove all the weathered wood from the model base and reinstall it at the new site.

The new exhibit area is our old shop in the basement. I installed weathered wood lumber on the walls to give the space the look of inside an old building. The room will house the smelter exhibit and several ore cars displayed with various hardware as if they were in a repair shop. The smelter model will complete the exhibit.

We acquired a collection of very fine crystal from Sheryl Records in Arizona. The collection originally belonged to Mrs. Johnson of Silverton who during the nineteen hundreds worked as a prostitute on Blair Street. Her clients knew she loved crystal and so purchased individual pieces as gifts for her. When she died in 1930 her collection was packed in sawdust inside three oak barrels but her relatives in Boston could not afford the \$25 for shipping and the collection was purchased by William A. Way, the town attorney and grandfather of Sheryl Records. The collection will be on display in its own glass case with the domestic artifacts in the jail.

Scott Fetchenhier has designed and built several shadow box cases to display many types of small artifacts found locally and in privy holes around town. He has also cleaned many items from our storage area and put them on display throughout the Museum.

I built an oak exhibit case to display some very fine artifacts from Silverton's Masonic Lodge on Reese

Street. I then built a gun case to display several shotguns and a 50 cal. Spencer "Sharps" rifle. The case will be in the Sheriff's office in the jail along with our other display case of small pistols and derringers, directly in front of our "CC" camera for security.

### **Silverton Northern Caboose 1005**

Zeke and I extended the track to the rear of the Archive building in preparation for the construction of the new caboose shed. Early last summer we moved the historic caboose from the engine house to the new track section at the Museum complex. John Richardson and his crew, using the drawings I made, constructed the shed which will house the caboose during the winter months. We now only move the caboose about thirty feet instead of from the engine house to the site on Greene Street.

This saves us \$1000 per year in moving fees and the caboose is protected under cover during the long winter months.

### **In the Movies**

Early last September the tram station at the Mayflower mill was in the movies! Videographer David Dibble of Durango needed an interior that had dark wood with large beams for a "video trailer" promoting the Breckenridge Film Festival. Using several vintage arc light movie projectors we have in storage, we constructed a set to resemble an old movie projection booth. With unique lighting and a "London Fog Machine" it was the perfect location for the "Mad Projectionist" played by our very own Fred Canfield. It was a lot of fun and a lot of work. We set up at 1:00 p.m. and finished the shoot at 3:00 a.m.! David has done several videos in Silverton. His latest is for the Chamber of Commerce.

### **Printing Display**

A week before opening the museum we transported and installed three large printing artifacts from the Silverton Standard & the Miner on Greene Street. Loren Lew and his crew transported the machines and we had to find the space! We actually had only one half inch clearance at the last doorway into the Museum exhibit area. The 1830 Hoe cylinder press is one



***Volunteer Ken Safranski eases the 1830 Hoe press into a Museum doorway. The exact date the press was first used in Silverton has not been determined nor has its origins. It was last used by Silverton Standard and the Miner publisher Ross Beaber in the early 1950s. One fairly unreliable source says the press previously belonged to the famed Dave Day of the Solid Muldoon but extensive research has not validated that claim.***

of a very few in existence. The 1944 Model 8 Linotype is similar to one used to produce type for the local paper from the mid-1930s until 1973. The paper was last produced by the letterpress system by our late Archivist, Allen Nossaman

The third item is a handsome Peerless Gem paper cutter. It had been donated to the newspaper by late Silverton businessman Bill Howell. It previously resided in the basement of what is now the Wyman Hotel. Several additional printing related items from Silverton's rich printing — newspaper history were already on display and a few more are planned.

### **Model Railroading**

Ken Vaughn, Museum member and our friend has moved from Silverton to Alamosa, Colorado. Ken donated an extensive collection of rolling stock for an HO gauge railroad layout he was never able to build. He is allowing us to keep what we want and sell the rest to other model railroaders.

### **Summer Lecture Series**

June 19th, 7p.m. Museum: Book signing by author Jane Parnell: *Off Trail: Finding My Way Home in the Colorado Rockies*

June 22nd, 7p.m. Town Hall: Charles DiFerdinando: Silverton was one of the hardest hit towns in the United States by the 1918 flu epidemic. Learn more about "The War with Nature".

July 6th, 7p.m. Town Hall: John Wright. Presentation on the building of a tunnel at Antarctica

August 25th, 7p.m. Town Hall: Andy Gulliford. Book: *"The Last Stand of the Pack"* Explores the past and future of wolves in Colorado

We did an inventory and found we have enough stock to construct a small layout of the local rolling stock. We feel that our young visitors as well as their parents will enjoy the exhibit. The plan is to make the layout a timed "coin-op" exhibit so the train will run on short intervals and generate some money. It should be lots of fun!

The remaining inventory we wish to sell as a unit and not a piece at a time. There is rolling stock from many well-known eastern railroads and several structures, some assembled. Over ninety five percent of the rolling stock and some structures are new-in-the-box. I am presently working on our inventory and will soon have an e-mailable list and catalog values. We will set a price for the works that will be discounted from retail pricing. It's a great collection looking for a home. Contact Bev Rich for more information.



# Chairman Beverly Rich Reports that it is a Busy Year for the Society—as Usual!

Dear Members,

As I write today, May 8, 2018, it is an unseasonably warm day in Silverton with bright blue skies and snow-covered peaks—just beautiful. The train started running on Saturday, proving that the summer season has landed on us. The construction going on here is something to see — new houses being built, new bridges at the park installed, a busy little town. After a whale of a winter in 2017, we had just the reverse this year. We had a very dry winter, at only 32% of normal snowfall. We are under a Stage 1 Fire ban already. Pray for a wet summer!

We had a group on Mine Tour owners and representatives from the Division of Reclamation Mining and Safety visit Thursday. We cleaned the museum early so we could show it off to the group. As expected, they all said it was the best museum they ever saw. Last season was so good that we decided to open a week earlier than normal. But there is still work to be done. Museum clean-up day was May 12; thank you to those who showed up and helped. Elsewhere in these pages you will find a full report on what Zeke, Steve and Scott have been up to. One special thing is going to happen this summer and it comes from the fourth and fifth graders of the Silverton School. I must tell you about a project they have been working on for two years: They wanted to find under-represented cultures in Silverton and help to get their story told. Many of you do not know that we had a Chinese community that, shamefully, we treated badly and finally chased out of town in 1902. History is history, dear members, even the bad stuff. We only have one artifact in our museum from that community: an opium weight

that they used to weigh opium for sale. The students decided to study the history of the Chinese in Silverton. Fortunately we have a lot of information in the old newspapers from that time, so they were able to piece together material to put on a play about when the Chinese were forced out of Silverton. They performed the play in the museum. Our kids did this on their own—what amazing kids! But it gets better. This year they decided to put an exhibit about the Chinese in our museum. They worked with History Colorado and were able to borrow some artifacts, and indeed, the curator of the Colorado History Museum is coming all the way from Denver to help set it up. The kids will do all of the labeling and interpretation themselves. It will be there all summer, so come and see it. Thank you to Mark Esper, Editor of the Silverton Standard & the Miner for his help with the Chinese project.

We had to shuffle some workers at the Mill around this year—Melanie found a better-paying job and Will wants to stick to his new house. Thank you both for your good work for many years. We welcome Susan Catt and Susan Toms to our workforce this year. We are all sharing duties at both the museum and the mill—yes, even Bev is going to work at the Mill. (Hey, it has the best view in the world—Arrastra Gulch and Sultan Mountain—wow!).

The Assay Office building at the Mayflower Mill is a contributing structure to the National Historic Landmark mill complex. We applied for and received a grant of \$168,000 from the Colorado State Historical Fund to complete the interior of the building, with help from Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety.

Our other source for matching funds fell through, leaving us short some \$50,000. We are working diligently to raise that match, including asking you, dear members, and many of you have answered our call. We could use more!

The Shenandoah-Dives Mine Company's operation was based out of the historic Assay Office building. Located at the center of the mill complex, the building served as the central focus for the company's business, geology and engineering operations including exploration and processing of ore, and housed the office of Charles Chase, the highly regarded General Manager and founding officer of the Company. There will be an assay exhibit on the first floor courtesy of David Singer and Shenandoah-Dives scholar Bill Jones. Mill clean-up day is June 2, so come up and help. Thank you Steve Allen, for the volunteer work you are doing at the Mill as I write and thank you to ex-mill hands Joe Zimmerman and Jimmy Cole for helping us “newbys” understand the milling process.

In these pages you will find an article about doin's at the SNRR Engine House. Our colleagues from the Durango Railroad Historical Society received a grant to construct a railcar shed, platform and tracks to display a dozen restored narrow gauge railcars. They plan to construct a pair of display tracks for six cars each by connecting the track to both the current Silverton Northern track and the Durango and Silverton track. They will be laying track this summer. For those rail buffs in our membership—if you want a real workout, come and help lay track! The word Silverton is synonymous with Narrow Gauge Railroad. We get rail buffs from around the world. This outdoor railroad

park will be another attraction to draw visitors to Silverton.

Some of you are wondering what we are doing about our Superfund situation. First, we are working with the agencies on the map scanning project. It is slow going because we have to catalog as we go. Thank you Lisa Richardson and Kirstin Brown for your help with this. San Juan County is becoming a Certified Local Government and we hope that will give us more leverage over what happens when it comes to historic sites. Thank you, Mark Reavis, Town/County Planner for this idea for the whole county to become a Certified Local Government. It is one that has developed a local preservation ordinance which meets standards established by the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties, and afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment. We have a commitment from the State Historic Preservation Officer to tour the 48 sites when the snow melts. We are committed that all of the agencies involved will follow the law—not just for historic structures, but also historic mining landscapes. Leave that dump alone! Divert the water—do not remove the dump. It tells a story.

And our commitment to you, dear members, is to preserve the history of San Juan County—our mission. For that, we thank you for your support.

P.S. Casey Carroll says to remember to look at our website.

*Bev*  
<http://www.sanjuancountyhistoricalsociety.org>

## San Juan Courier

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*Edited by George Chapman*

### San Juan County Historical Society

**Officers and Directors, 2018**

Beverly Rich, Chairman; Scott Fetchenhier, Secretary/Treasurer

Jerry Hoffer, Darnell Zanoni, Patty Dailey, Stephen Rich,

Kim Davy Eisner, Directors

### Join the San Juan County Historical Society Today!

Box 154, Silverton, Colorado 81433

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 2018.

I understand that membership entitles Me (and my spouse, if applicable) to a vote at the Annual Meeting in October 2018.

1. Member: \$25 per year entitles a couple to one vote each in meetings of the general membership, discounts on books, and free museum admission.
2. Family Membership: \$50 per year entitles an individual to one vote in meetings of the general membership, discounts on books, and free museum admission.
3. Society Patron: \$100 per year entitles an individual or couple to voting privileges, a museum pass for the season, and discounts on books.
4. Life Member: \$1000 entitles an individual or couple to all of the above privileges for life.

Name:

Mailing Address:

email address:





*While the exterior of the assay/general office building is looking in fine shape, the interior still needs a lot of work. See Beverly's message for how to donate.*

## Building Important to Mill Complex

*by Bill Jones*

While all eyes were on the construction of the huge new Mayflower Mill during the summer of 1929, a small two story building was also constructed on the mill site to house the company offices and the assay laboratory. The building was very modern with electric heat and Cellotex insulation panels on the walls. Locals thought the flat roof was a big mistake but company manager Charles A. Chase told everyone not to worry as the wind would blow the snow off! He was proven right: the building has survived almost 90 winters without the roof being shoveled.

The upper floor was originally accessed by a walkway from the tram house level. This floor contained two private offices. Chase's office was in the southeast corner where he could keep an eye on the aerial tram and the upper terminus at the mine portal. The other office was used by the chief accountant. The rest of the space was for the clerks and secretaries. All ore production and metallurgical data was tabulated and typed by hand. To save costs, the room was never painted except a circle of white paint on the ceiling to reflect more of the feeble light from the old Mazda bulbs hanging on cords.

Chase could be very personable but tended to be formal in business and always dressed with a waistcoat and tie and crisp celluloid collar. The late Marge Baudino worked there in the early 1940s and recalled a salesman coming in to see Mr. Chase one day. When Chase came out of his office the salesman grabbed his hand and said "Hi Charlie glad to see ya!" They retired into his office and the door was closed. Marge and the others exchanged knowing looks. Soon the salesman and Mr. Chase came out, the salesman looking somewhat deflated. After he was gone

Chase looked at everyone and said with a glint in his eye, "Imagine, calling a grown man *Charlie!*" Marge and the others had to stifle their giggles.

The ground level was laid out to be the assay office and laboratory, a necessary function at a mine and mill. But though the mill started processing in February 1930, the lab was vacant. Money was tight after the 1929 stock market crash and Shenandoah-Dives could not afford to buy the assay lab equipment needed. Samples were sent on the train each day to Root & Norton in Durango for analysis. Finally in 1930, Chase bought used lab equipment from the Rahley Mine in Bonanza, Colorado and the lab was set up. E.C. Wheeler was one of the early chemist/assayers and his 1938 typed procedure for base metal assay was still being used when I went to work in the lab nearly 40 years later!

The lab used two oil fired assay furnaces to perform the fire assay for gold and silver. Sensitive balances were used to weigh the tiny gold and silver beads extracted from samples of ore. Upgrades were made over the years. In 1948 a new Heuser gold balance was purchased which is now on display in our mining museum. After a close call with fire caused by a leak in the old furnaces, an electric furnace was purchased in 1950. In 1962 the lab was move to the Powerhouse building because new crushers at the mill for Sunnyside ore made too much vibration for the sensitive balances.

In 1983 the lab moved back to the original Mayflower Mill facility but used an electronic type balance which was not so sensitive to vibration. The lab finally closed in 1987 and work was again contracted out to Root & Norton who had moved back to Silverton. Who says history does not repeat itself!

## Durango Railroad Historical Society Reports on Display Area Progress

*by George Niederauer*

### Boxcar Bodies

We need extra storage outside the engine house for parts, supplies, and tools to clear space for working inside the engine house. In September 2015 we moved our extra refrigerator car body to a location on the eastern side of the engine house as close to the front as we could.

In the spring of 2017 Richard Ballantine donated two boxcar bodies to us. They still had couplers and truss rods, and one had the brake cylinder and reservoir. We moved them to Silverton in June and placed them in line with the reefer body.

### Railcar Display Track

A few years ago we made plans for a new display track for 12 cars in Silverton on the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad land between the depot and the Silverton Northern engine house. We obtained an easement from D&S and asked the Galloping Goose Historical Society of Dolores for more rail. They had permanently loaned us (jointly with the San Juan County Historical Society) rails and most ties for the about 1800 feet of track constructed during 2010–11. We need to keep much of this track open for testing D&RGW 315, running Casey Jones, and connecting the SN engine house and the D&S track.

They granted us a permanent loan of 800 feet of display track, which will connect to SN track near the engine house and to the D&S track near its depot.

Because the display track is new construction it does not qualify for a grant from the State Historical Fund. We applied for and received grants from the Gates Family Foundation in Denver and the El Pomar Foundation in Colorado Springs. These two grants will cover about one-third the cost of constructing the roadbed and track.

We have worked with GOFF Engineering to create drawings for the track. The D&S and San Miguel Power Association have reviewed the drawings, as well as both SJCHS and DRHS staff. We expect to construct the track during 2018.

### More Railcars

DRHS has acquired ten complete railcars and the tank for an eleventh car. So far we have completed restoring six cars and have two others in storage in Silverton. This summer we will complete restoring two more (reefer and flatcar) and take them to Silverton. All restored cars, except the reefer, have received funding from the State Historical Fund.

## Silverton Northern Project Redirected by Society Board

*by Fritz Klinke*

The Silverton Northern reconstruction project has been underway for the past six years but encountered problems in 2017. The SN committee had accomplished the building of a demonstration track in 2015 and had been engaged in fund raising activities and searching for a suitable operator for the completed line.

SN volunteers operated separately from the main body of the San Juan County Historical Society. It had engaged San Juan County in the project for the necessary right-of-way over the abandoned SN between the Powerhouse and Howardsville on what is known as the Lower River Road.

In 2016, the group met with a potential operator of the railroad who promised to have both the experience and financial ability to complete the two plus miles of trackwork and provide the equipment necessary for

operations. We worked through the 2016-17 winter season developing this contact. He made an initial proposal to the board of directors of the Society in late winter which was accepted, and then followed up with a proposed contract for operating the railroad.

In the meantime, the SN committee had secured both donations and long-term loans for the initial rail needed. By May of 2017, a contract had been proposed and when presented to the board of directors of the Society for approval, it was rejected for several reasons with long-term liability to the Society being the most difficult problem. At that point, the Board decided that even after more than five years of support, it no longer felt comfortable with the project as presented and went to the San Juan County Commissioners and withdrew from the project.

*Continued on next page*





## Not Your Average Commute!

*A worker carefully makes his way to the job site at the Old Hundred Mine!*

# Maintenance on Old Hundred Continues

On February 14, 2018, the final payment was made to Klinke & Lew for their work on the Old 100 Boardinghouse foundation repair. Loren Lew and his crew cleaned out the north side of the boardinghouse, replaced sheathing on the back wall and rock-bolted the boardinghouse to the cliffside behind it. He re-built the stone foundation where it had failed all around

the building. Our good partners, the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety arranged the two separate drops of materials to the boardinghouse via helicopter. As Lew said, most of the work was sheer brute labor by him and his crew. Thanks to them, we will continue to see that incredible building cling to the cliff, on the most unlikely spot on earth.

# And You Thought Google had Maps!

*By Casey Carroll and Ray Dileo*

The biggest thing happening at the Archives over the past year was the commencement of the overwhelming task of scanning thousands (literally) of uncataloged maps that have been quietly sleeping for about two decades in the upstairs area of the Archive building. DRMS and BLM have taken a very active part in this project and have provided the Archive with a 44" professional scanner. Wednesdays are designated as map scanning days. Casey, Ray and Lisa Richardson (BLM) get together and sift and sort through an array of haphazardly stored maps. The selected maps are then scanned and cataloged for future retrieval.

Casey and Ray worked with the County scanning about 100 large maps for their digital file collection and we scanned several oversized La Plata mining maps for the Animas Museum in Durango.

One of the perks that the Archive has with this recently acquired scanner is that we are able to scan for others who have over-sized items (up to 44" images/documents) that need scanning. Otherwise, these items would have to

travel out of town to be scanned. This is a great service that the Archive now offers. If you have something that we can scan for you, please contact us for fees and appointment times.

Casey and Ray have met with several government agencies over the last year to discuss the scanning, mapping and cataloging of the Society's vast collection. This project will take several years to complete.

Over the last year, the Archive has assisted several businesses in obtaining historic prints for wall decoration. We had a member who wanted so many images to hang in his cabin that Ray suggested a large digital picture frame for him to hang on one of his walls! Hence, his cabin is now adorned with 30 plus framed local historic images and a digital frame with about 250 images that play as a slideshow. Good thinking Ray!

We recently installed high-speed Internet and VOIP phones at the Museum and the Archives. We are now able to send files much faster and this has definitely increased our productivity.

The Museum requested

## Silverton Northern

*Continued from prior page*

The Society did favor the splitting off from Society association the SN committee so that it could function as a separate group. The County Commissioners stated that they still supported the concept and idea of the project but also stipulated one significant new requirement, that there be public access to the route along the Lower River Road along with the railroad tracks. There is a national program called Rails with Trails that with certain safeguards, allows such cooperative efforts.

Since last summer, the SN committee has been working to set up a new 501(c)3 non-profit group to continue the work. One problem was to work out with the Society the use of their property where we had built the demonstration track as the base of operations for the SN and a tentative plan was submitted to the Society's board at the April meeting and it was received favorably. It will require the cooperation of the two non-profits and a renewed effort to find a qualified and suitable operator for the complete project and to finalize the requirements of both the Society and San Juan County.

Baylor University in Texas. Thank you, Darlene! We would also like to thank Kendra Hooper who has been volunteering by inventorying the existing 13,000 plus image collection. Kendra is making sure that the pictures are where they are supposed to be. She has been a huge help. Summer is here and we may not see her as often, as she is working full-time at Fetch's this season. Thank you Kendra! A big thanks also goes to Lisa Richardson. Lisa has been a delight to work with on the immense mapping project.

The Archive receives donations a few times a month on average. Most people say that their kids don't care about the artifacts or images that they have saved through the years and they feel these items should come home to Silverton. And what better place for them to live in perpetuity than the Society's great vault. If you haven't been to the Archive, drop by some Thursday and we would be happy to give you a tour. Remember we have a public computer where you may sit down in a warm and friendly environment and peruse the collection. Choose images to be printed (for a fee) for your home, office, gifts or?

Again, if you have any pictures of Silverton or Silverton's past residents and would like to share them to tell more of Silverton's story, you can donate them to the Society where they will be cared for, or we can make copies of images for the Archive and return the originals to you. We are beginning to have requests for pictures of the 50s, 60s, and 70s. Really? Wasn't that just a couple of years ago!

Visit our website at [www.sanjuancountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.sanjuancountyhistoricalsociety.org)

and while you are there, be sure to sign up for our e-newsletters, usually sent one or two times a year.

*And please...make sure that you check out the Museum's new Smelter Exhibit!*

**Like us on Facebook, and better yet, join the Society.**

**See information on Page 2 on how to be a member of this dynamic institution!**