

Finding Color



Spring/Summer
2006

"News from the Montana Heritage Preservation & Development Commission"

visit our website at www.montanaheritagecommission.com

FRIENDS OF HISTORY

From the Executive Director

As we approach the 10th anniversary of the State of Montana purchase of the Bovey assets, we will be using this year to prepare a detailed summary of what has been accomplished, and what lies ahead of us. Looking back over the years, we can say that we have been able to accomplish much work with very few dollars. However, one must remember that from the time Senator Charlie Bovey died in 1978, until the date of the acquisition in 1997, very little if any capital maintenance and regular maintenance were completed on the properties. The people of Montana acquired a backlog of work that will take many additional years to complete. Due to lack of resources, some of the items in the collection are in worse condition than when they were purchased in 1997. The State of Montana paid \$6.5 million for these assets. Our latest insurance coverage lists the value of the real and personal property at over \$30 million. The historical value of the properties is inestimable. As an example, some items, when "Googled" do not get any hits. Does this mean that we have one-of-a-kind items in the collection? Maybe, but the point is that the resources in Alder Gulch are rare and precious. Montana is very fortunate to have what is said to be the largest collection of Western Americana outside of the Smithsonian Institution. Our responsibility is to protect and preserve these resources. Some of you are aware that our state tax dollar support in the form of bed tax expires in about one year. We will be asking Montana's 60th Legislative Assembly to renew and make permanent state support. We see this Session as the second most important in the life of Virginia City. We hope that you will be able to lend your support in the Legislative arena.

In a lighter vein, the Opera House and the Brewery Follies have a great summer planned for you: "The season is set and the curtain will once again rise on the 2006 summer season of the Illustrious Virginia City Players. The Victorian style playhouse will this year present three shows with vaudeville once again running in repertory fashion starting May 27th and playing six nights a week through September 4th. The season opens with 'The Monkey's Paw' adapted from the short story by WW Jacobs. This is the classic 'be careful what you wish for' thriller directed by Stacey Gordon. Second up
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PIONEER CABIN ACQUIRED

The State Land Board voted unanimously at their June 19th meeting for the Montana Heritage Commission to acquire and manage the Pioneer Cabin adjacent to Reeder's Alley in Helena. The Pioneer Cabin is the first log residence in Helena (1864) and fits well with the Commission's mission and management of Reeder's Alley. We would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to the Last Chance Gulch Restoration Association for their kind and generous donation of this property. This change in ownership will protect the historic integrity of the property in perpetuity. For more information on the acquisition go to reedersalley.com, click on Pioneer Cabin Acquisition.

NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

The Montana Heritage Commission is pleased to announce a new partnership with Washington State University in Pullman. In October 2005, at the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Annual Conference, Virginia City Site Manager Jim Carpita spoke of the site and its potential to WSU Public History professor Dr. Rob McCoy. McCoy quickly realized the value of such a site and its possibilities to students in public history. Upon his return to Pullman, Dr. McCoy presented the item to the head of the Public History Graduate Program, Dr. Orlan Svingen. Svingen and McCoy traveled to Virginia City to see Alder Gulch first hand in February, 2006, where they were given extensive tours by Commission staff. Commission Curator of Interpretation Bill Peterson and Carpita traveled to Pullman for further discussion, after which WSU faculty and graduate students agreed there are many educational possibilities in Alder Gulch. WSU has committed to funding a field school in Virginia City, which will welcome its first students in the late spring of 2007. The Montana Heritage Commission is pleased to see the educational and research potential being recognized by the academic community.

Bill Peterson, Curator of Interpretation

**ALDER GULCH SHORTLINE RAILROAD
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Are you a retired railroader, interested in steam locomotives or just interested in steam power? If you are, you should consider volunteering with the Montana Heritage Commission's Alder Gulch Shortline Railroad in Virginia City this summer. The Railroad, which features a fully restored 1910 Baldwin Steam Locomotive #12, has been in operation in the Gulch since the Golden Spike Ceremony was held in the fall of 1999.

The Alder Gulch Railroad is Montana's only operating steam-powered railroad, and a major tourist attraction to Alder Gulch during the summer months. In 1964 the Boveys established the Alder Gulch Shortline railroad and the track running one and a half miles between Virginia and Nevada City. The original engines on the line were two coal fired Davenport "Dinky" locomotives, which had been used at the Anaconda Copper Mining Company's Great Falls Smelter. These engines were in daily operation during the season from 1964 to 1969. Historically, railroad service never reached Virginia City, but trains played a major part in the life of early Montana, making the connection with the rest of the world easier and faster.

Volunteer positions open on the Alder Gulch Shortline Railroad include; Engineers, Firemen, Conductors, Switchmen / Brakemen, and Engine Wiper. Some of the positions require certification, licensing, and training, while others are entry-level jobs that our volunteers find to be quite satisfying. Skilled, licensed and certified volunteers provide training to interested and dedicated applicants to the railroad.

If you are interested in volunteering contact Dan Thyer, MHC Vol. Coordinator, at (406)843-5247 today!



Roger Williams
Railroad Volunteer Extraordinaire



Alder Gulch Short Line Railroad
1910 Baldwin Steam Locomotive No.12

***Virginia City, Montana "Prospecting the Past"*
Monte Dolack © 2005**

Prints are hot off the press. See Monte Dolack's newly commissioned artwork--
"Prospecting the Past."

Poster Size: 33 x 22

Unsigned \$ 40
Signed \$ 150
Publisher Proofs \$ 200
(limited number available,
\$50 tax credit for Pub. Prfs)

To order, phone
406-843-5247
Credit cards accepted.

\$10 shipping for up to 10
posters in a
very sturdy mailing tube.



Cecile Gevock
MHC Archaeologist

ARCHAEOLOGIST DISHES DIRT ON ALDER GULCH STORY

Kelly Dixon, Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Montana, Missoula, recently invited Montana Heritage Commission Archaeologist Cecile Gevock to speak to her graduate students in a seminar entitled "Cultural Resource Interpretation." Gevock presented the site and her work with the help of a Power Point presentation on April 10. During the presentation Cecile focused on the public Archaeology and History projects on Heritage Commission properties in Alder Gulch. This presentation generated much interest among the students regarding the potential at Virginia and Nevada cities for their research. Dr. Dixon and her students were amazed at the scope and complexity of the Montana Heritage Commission's undertaking in Alder Gulch. Dr. Dixon is the author of a recent book entitled, *BoomTown Saloons: Archaeology and History in Virginia City, Nevada*. For more information on the archaeology program in Virginia and Nevada cities, Montana you may contact Cecile Gevock at 406-843-5247 ext. 204.

THE MONTANA SOUTHERN RAILROAD EQUIPMENT

Among the railroad equipment in the Alder Gulch Short Line collection are four small boxcars and a gondola of special interest.

The Montana Southern was the last major (not tourist) narrow gauge railroad built in the Continental United States. Thirty-nine miles long, it connected Coolidge, Montana to Wise River and Divide, where there was a rail connection to the (standard gauge) Union Pacific line running from Dillon to Butte.

Silver had been discovered in the area south of Wise River in 1873, and through the early 1890s the mining area was profitable, even though silver ore was transported to Corinne, Utah by bull teams, shipped by rail to San Francisco, and then on sailing ship “around the horn” to Swansea, Wales, for refining. But the Silver Panic of 1893 had closed many silver mines. An upturn in silver prices in 1903 created a new interest in the district. William Allen formed the “Boston Montana Mining Co.” in 1913, bringing together a large number of silver claims. Mr. Allen tried to interest President Calvin Coolidge in the mine, naming the town after him.

Work at the mine and planning the railroad began in 1913, but the railroad was not really started until 1917. Allen is said to have bought most of the Florence & Cripple Creek (Colorado), a 36-inch narrow gauge railroad built originally in the 1880s. Allen purchased two Baldwin steam locomotives (very similar to our No. 12), two passenger cars, and 22 freight cars. He eventually also had a rotary snowplow and a Packard automobile converted to run on the rail. The driving of the Golden Spike took place with great celebration at Divide in November, 1919. After the railroad was completed, Mr. Allen built one of the largest mills in Montana, nearly as big as the mill at the Anaconda smelter. Completed in 1922, it cost close to a million dollars, a huge amount at that time. Coolidge had about 250 men working.

By about 1928, most operations at Coolidge and the railroad had ceased. The two locomotives and most of the railroad equipment were located at Divide, and by
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Interactive interpretive banner allows visitors to scroll through the history of transportation in Montana Territory.

STAGES, STEAMERS, AND OXEN

Interpretation and Collections team members have finished the installation of a new exhibit located in the old Wells Fargo Express Office. The Overland Stage and Horseback Company owned by B.J. and Lisa Morgan currently occupies this space. This exhibit space is representative of a typical 1910 era Express Office and is a further attempt by the Heritage Commission and a Concessionaire to incorporate a business and a historical theme. An interactive rolling banner delivers photographs, a historic map, and interpretive text. Visitors pull a rope to advance the banner and learn the history of transportation in Montana Territory, particularly as it relates to getting people and material into Virginia and Nevada cities.

Bill Peterson, Curator of Interpretation



MARY STILES AND FAMILY HONORED

A plaque honoring Mary Stiles and her family has been placed in Nevada City. Mary is the daughter of Matt Carey and Helen Jeffers, who were both children of Alder Gulch pioneers. Charlie Bovey acquired Nevada City from Mary and her husband Lester. Celebrating her 96th year, Mary is proud of her pioneer ancestors and has passed her enthusiasm for Montana on to her great-great-grandchildren. The plaque was given by the Montana Historical Society at the request of Mary's daughter, Lois Yenny.

NEVADA CITY AUDIO TOUR WANDS

The Montana Heritage Commission is pleased to announce the arrival of audio wands in Nevada City. These wands deliver nearly forty minutes of interesting history on Nevada City and its buildings. Montana Historical Society Historian Dr. Ellen Baumler and Heritage Commission Curator of History John Ellingsen researched the information for the script. This tour was made possible by a donation made in honor of Mr. Bert Hurwitz, a long time rancher near White Sulphur Springs. Mr. Hurwitz was a self-made man who worked hard every day, lived the American dream, and was proud to call Montana home. The wands are available for rent at the Nevada City Museum entrance.

(SOUTHERN RAILROAD, cont. from pg. 3) the mid-1930s, the track, engines, and most of the cars had been scrapped. An attempt to reorganize the mining company was made in 1945, but was unsuccessful (Shirley Wirtz and Lorene Lovell, *One Man's Dream Elkhorn Mine - Coolidge, Montana*, Butte: Ashton Printing, 1976).

Due to the difficulty in reaching the mine after removal of the railroad, it remained much intact for many years. Charlie Bovey learned about the four boxcars stranded there, and purchased them in October, 1963. The four boxcars had been tipped over on their sides to remove the trucks for scrap, and on the bottom side the lettering of "Florence & Cripple Creek" and "Montana Southern" was nearly perfect. Lloyd Harkins still vividly recalls the great difficulty he experienced in hauling the cars out of this nearly inaccessible place.

At Nevada City, Charlie Bovey repaired the box cars using six-inch tongue and groove lumber from Broadwater Hotel in Helena. In 1964, the State of Montana greatly remodeled the State Capitol Building in Helena, removing much of the elegant original interior, including the stained glass ceiling in the Senate chamber and the "barrel vault," a large stained glass skylight over the grand staircase. Charlie Bovey purchased these treasures at public auction to preserve them, and hoped to see the day when the State would see the error of their ways and reinstall them in the Capitol. He stored the stained glass in these boxcars. After the purchase of the Bovey Restoration Properties by the State in 1997, and coinciding with restoration of the Capitol, the stained glass was reinstalled.

The Montana Southern equipment continues to be of great interest to rail fans that visit Nevada City.

John D. Ellingsen, Curator of History

(DIRECTOR, continued from pg 1)

this season is the classic Dion Boucicault play 'The Colleen Bawn', a charming romantic comedy set in Ireland directed by Gregory Johnson. The season will round out with guest director Bruce Hurlbut's musical adaptation of 'Rumpelstiltskin'. New to the Opera House this year is a mid-week bargain matinee beginning June 29th. In addition to the Saturday 2PM show (Saturday matinees begin June 3rd) the Players will add a Wednesday afternoon matinee at 2PM where all seats are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 12. Evening shows are once again at 7PM Tuesday through Sunday with tickets for evening shows and Saturday matinees being \$15 for adults and \$8 for children under 12.

An evening at THE BREWERY FOLLIES is not only entertaining, but an historical experience as well. Shows are performed nightly at the old Gilbert Brewery from May 26th through September 23rd. Show times are 8:00pm Wednesday through Sunday with matinees Saturday and Sunday at 4:00pm. Verdon Ventures is proud to present MORE COMEDY with matinees Monday through Friday at 4:00pm and Monday and Tuesday nights at 8:00pm. HILARIOUS COMEDY SHOWS may be seen twice daily seven days a week starting June 12th." For Mature Audiences Only.

Thank you for your continued support of Montana's heritage.

Jeffrey Tiberi, Executive Director

HERITAGE COMMISSION STAFF CHANGES

It is with deep regret that we announce the leaving of Jeff Tiberi, our Executive Director for nearly nine years. Jeff has accepted the position of Associate Director for the Intermountain Children's Home in Helena.

Jeff has kept hundreds of balls in the air to ensure the success of the Commission efforts. During Jeff's time with the Commission, we have seen the development of numerous programs including: preservation, interpretation, education, marketing, maintenance, archaeology, and visitor services, along with many, many special projects. The towns have experienced growth and prosperity since the State of Montana purchased the properties in 1997. Much of this progress is due to Jeff's commitment, creativity, team spirit, and can-do attitude. Jeff, you have made your place in the history of Alder Gulch and you will be greatly missed!

We are pleased to welcome Julie Simonsen from Sheridan as Admin. Assistant to the Virginia City staff. Julie served in the US Air Force and comes to us with over twelve years of administrative experience. We have an outstanding group of seasonal workers this year: Megan Doornboss of Alder, Amy Fischer and Tammy Burgett, of Sheridan, Truby Bachman, of Whitehall, Jason Kirby of Anaconda, Devon Cregor of Virginia City, and Yvonne Leatherman and Kate Schwend from Twin Bridges. Returning to the Heritage Commission from last year are J.P. Johnson, and Charles Edelen, of Butte, and Frances Larson from Sheridan. We are pleased to have such a great crew for this busy 2006 season!



Jeff Tiberi



A cover from a 1918 copy of Ladies Home Journal discovered beneath an interior wall partition

PRESERVATION TEAM RECEIVES GRANT

The Montana Heritage Commission was awarded a grant from the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund for Historic Interiors, presented by The National Trust for Historic Preservation, to assist preservation and conservation efforts of the Kramer building in Virginia City. The award of \$4,700 will be matched by present support from the National Park Service. Grant funds shall be used to hire an architectural conservator or similar project consultant, in addition to assisting more

comprehensive research of interior finish material and eventual publication of findings, in developing this unique project site further.

The Kramer building dates to the spring of 1863 and remains a prime example of the frenzied first year of town development in Virginia City--evolving from an extremely rustic log storefront style residence, to a well appointed domestic interior reflecting more than 80 years of continuous occupation. It is a richly layered environment, featuring an original roof system of small diameter lodge pole pine with a membrane of stretched animal hide and sod above. Discovered entirely intact, the original roofing material has remained encapsulated beneath several other applications of various roofing materials. The interior space is equally layered and displays events of multiple wall coverings including fabric, printed wallpaper, newspapers and periodicals dating to the late 1860s.

The Montana Heritage Commission is honored to receive the Cynthia Woods Mitchell grant, and looking forward to the development of an overall interior conservation plan and implementation of recommendations made by the conservator, in cooperation with the MHC Historic Preservation Team.

Jeff MacDonald, Lead Preservation Specialist

LIVING HISTORY PROGRAM CONTINUES TO GROW

Montana Heritage Commission's living history interpreters care about the material culture of the past. Site visitors are familiar with the living historians as they stand out in a modern crowd in their 19th century apparel. They recreate historical events and historic figures advancing our visitors understanding and empathy for the site. Those living history volunteers contribute much more to the site than just their educational programming.

Last season, 70 living history program volunteers contributed 9,084 hours of service at an estimated value of \$150,249.36 based on the National Volunteer Standard wage. Projects completed included: repair of buildings, fences, boardwalks; assisted with setup for special events; provided live interpretation at the Dimsdale school, DuPuis house, Callaway cabin, Brooks cabin; demonstrated 19th century household skills, fashion, laundry of the 1865 era, black smithing, quilting, hand work, tating, broom making, boot repair, placer mining, wheelwright work, spinning and knitting; assisted



with fund raising efforts for the Montana Post with the Montana Newspaper Association; interpreted the Road Agents and assisted with the Road Agent Ride; removed fallen tree limbs; provided instruction at History Camp; assisted with general site maintenance; worked with #12 on the Alder Gulch Railroad; researched historic figures, and events of Alder Gulch, period correct historic clothing; promoted the Living History Program, Nevada City Museum, and Virginia City; and posed for many, many visitor photos.

Thank you to the Living History volunteers staff for all of their hard work, long hours, and amazing dedication to this historic site. To become a volunteer, contact Dan Thyer, 406-843-5247, ext. 206.

Dan Thyer, Living History/Volunteer Coordinator

MONTANA ADVENTURES IN TIME

Hands-On History Camp 2006 - July 31 - Aug. 5

Young people ages 11 to 15 are invited to experience history first hand in Alder Gulch. The Camp will explore the skills, traditions, and events of the past. Our enthusiastic and friendly living history interpreters and staff will help you have hands-on, full-sensory experience with vintage tools and techniques. History Camp is designed to allow the participants to learn by doing, and experience the 19th century first hand. This years planned activities include black-smithing, placer mining with Diamond Back Dave and his burro Dusty, archeological digs, attending one room school with Miss McNamara, exploring the inner workings of historic music machines, historic transportation, frontier chores, and more.

The Montana Heritage Commission's Hands on History Camp Staff is committed to creating fun and educational opportunities for our camp participants. Campers learn about the times of their great grandparents and the 19th century while working on a history project, and daily activities with our staff. Camp 2006 begins on Monday, July 31, and continues until noon on Aug. 5th. Parents are welcome to attend the graduation, and view the projects the students completed during the camp. For more information about *Hands-On History Camp 2006* contact the Montana Heritage Commission's Hands-On History Camp Director; Dan Thyer, at dthyer@mt.gov, or call (406) 843-5247. Additional Camp information and registration form, and 2006 schedule are available on line at www.virginiacitymt.com, click on History Camp.

2006 - Still to come this summer!

The Virginia City Institute

Preserving Log Structure Roof Systems August 7-11, 2006
For complete course information and applications, go to
www.virginiacityinstitute.com

LIVING HISTORY

At Nevada City, Montana

The Pursuit of the Road Agents	July 21-23
1860's Montana	July 28-30
Frontier Celebration	Aug. 4-6
Social life in Victorian Montana	Aug. 11-13
Alder Gulch Legends	Aug. 18-20
Mining the Miners	Aug. 25-27
The End of the Innocents	Sept. 1-4

For more detailed information and schedules go to
www.virginiacitymt.com, click on Living History

Other Virginia City Events

Dog & Grog Microbrew Festival July 21-22
Enjoy Montana micro brews and hotdogs on the patio of the
Bale of Hay Saloon, live music all day. 406-843-5700

Cowboy Poetry Gathering August 4-6
Join us for a great weekend of verse & song 406-843-5454

Moonlight & Steam Train Rides August 9
Ride Steam Locomotive No. 12 under the full moon. Ticket
includes snacks and a free beverage at the Bale of Hay
Saloon on the Virginia City layover. Reservations 843-5247

31st Annual Virginia City Art Show August 11-13
Fine artists from Montana and the Pacific Northwest 9-5
Quick Draw & Auction 7:30 Sat., Elks Lodge. 800.829.2969

Victorian Tea at the Bennett House August 18
"Dressing the Victorian Lady" 406-251-3261

Grand Ball for Peace (1865) August 19
A grand ball in full Victorian regalia. 406-682-4935

Virginia City Jazz & Blues Festival August 25-27
3rd Annual Jazz & Blues Festival 406-843-5700

Horseback Poker Ride September 2
Saddle up and put on your poker face! 406-843-5555

101 Reeder's Alley, Helena, MT 59601



Greetings from the
Montana Heritage Commission
and staff at
Virginia City, Nevada City and Reeder's Alley

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