

Finding Color

"News from the Montana Heritage Preservation & Development Commission"

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Spring
2004

GREETINGS FROM THE GULCH

"The best way to predict your future is to create it." - Peter Drucker, American management consultant.

The words of Peter Drucker seem appropriate for us, especially since the future of the former Bovey assets is in the hands of the citizens of Montana. We are doing our best to take advantage of this golden opportunity. We want to create a future that we can all be proud of. This includes having in place the legislative pinnings that will allow us to make progress. The last Session of the Legislature (2003) helped in that regard. The Commission started the Session with a pair of bills that were crafted to help "create" our future. The bills passed and were signed into law. Thank you to Legislators, lobbyists, and Commissioners for helping to get these bills through the process.

Both bills were sponsored by Senator Dale Mahlum, the longest serving member of the Commission and a great friend of Virginia City. Dale lives in a house near Missoula formerly owned by Baron O'Keefe. As a member of the Territorial Legislature, Mr. O'Keefe used to travel by horse from his home to Virginia City in service to our citizens. Now-a-days this seems like a long way to travel by horseback, and it makes me compare our lives today with those who were here not too long ago. Life was much more difficult in the 1800's.

Virginia City has many special connections such as this, not only to other towns in Montana but across the world (ask John Ellingsen to tell you the story of the Virginia City - Titanic connection).

This summer we will invite all 150 Legislators to Virginia City to participate in the Grand Ball for Peace, 1865. This ball will celebrate the end of the Civil War and begin "Mending the Rift." It will be the premier Civil War Ball in Montana, and we will be providing information on our website as to Civil War uniform suppliers in case participants want to attend as veterans.

Thank you for your continuous support of the efforts to save these towns. We are fortunate in Montana to have such treasures, and we are glad to have you as partners in this important quest to protect the buildings, artifacts and surroundings.

I hope to see you in Virginia City this summer!

Best regards,

Jeffrey Tiberi, Executive Director



Photo by Donnie Sexton

Kim Miller, owner of Red Weaver Fibers at Aunt Julia's, during a spinning demonstration, Summer 2003.

TRY YOUR HAND AT FIBER ARTS

Aunt Julia's, located on Wallace Street in Historic Virginia City features wares from Montana fiber artists and also offers you the opportunity to learn some of these crafts through a series of fiber art workshops and retreats during the 2004 summer season. This season will offer a combination of pre-registration and "come-as-you-are" one-day workshops in basket weaving, felting, knitting and batik dying.

And for the fiber enthusiasts who want to immerse themselves, Aunt Julia's is also proud to present two all inclusive four-day fiber art retreats set up to welcome the fiber artist and offer a relaxing atmosphere for all to enjoy. Instructor, Loree Herr, will teach at the knitting retreat and Judith MacKenzie McCuin will teach at the dying/spinning/felting retreat. Both Loree and Judith are experts in their field. Judith, an author and teacher, is internationally known for her expertise in the world of fiber arts.

For more information on these workshops please contact Aunt Julia's at (406) 843-5515 or visit them on the web at www.auntjulias.com.

Kim Miller

NEW MHC STAFF

We have lots of new faces on board in Virginia City. Jim Carpita, a native of Dillon, joined us in January as the Virginia City Site Manager. Jim has a varied background and lots of experience in and around Montana, including a stint with the Washington Corporation. Jim hit the ground running and is a welcome addition to our team.

We have a new archaeologist on board. Cecile Gevock-Delahaye recently began working for the Commission and will manage our archaeology program. Like us, Cecile was surprised to hear that we found an intact chicken egg about 5 feet underground on a recent water line project. Who knows what Cecile will find? Cecile has lots of experience as an archaeologist and has worked in Europe, Central America, and North America.

Jeff MacDonald has accepted the Lead Preservation Specialist position with the Commission. Jeff comes to us from Georgia with a varied background in historic preservation, including the preparation of Historic Structures Reports. In addition to his building preservation experience, Jeff has dealt extensively with fine arts. His expertise will be put to good use.

Many new seasonal workers will be coming on board soon also. Please welcome them as well as Jim, Jeff, and Cecile to the community when you meet them.

Jeff Tiberi



Photo by Donnie Sexton

Dr. Greg Johnson of Helena demonstrates historic medical instruments during Heritage Days 2003.

SUMMER 2004 HIGHLIGHTS

Summer 2004 promises to be one full of activity. In addition to ongoing concessionaires, the Montana Heritage Commission welcomes three new concessionaires. Linda Hamilton, owner of the Stonehouse Inn Bed & Breakfast will be the new proprietor for the Fairweather Inn and Nevada City Hotel & Cabins. Dave Warwood of Bridger Outfitters will operate a horseback riding concession from the large parking lot just below the Virginia City Depot. Dave's operation will be a welcome addition to the towns. Susan O'Connell will conduct "Red Light Tours," with stories of the Soiled Doves of the mining days. Her character, Mattie Silks, is one you won't want to miss.

Many special events are in the works for great summer fun. The Living History events at Nevada City in 2003 were so popular, we have expanded to six weekends. (See the "clip & save" schedule on the back page.) New events to the towns this year include a Blues and Brew Fest in July, the Grand Ball for Peace, and Jazz and Blues Festival in August. Please see virginiacitychamber.com for the full Calendar of Events 2004. See you at Alder Gulch!



Nevada City Depot today

THE REST OF THE STORY

This isn't a story about the most beautiful depot on the NP but it is about an NP Depot and how an NP Depot got to a rather unusual place. Dad related this story to me back in the 50's. He was working at the HQ at 5th and Jackson in St. Paul and decided to have lunch at the Union Station which was only a couple of blocks away. He was sitting at the counter when another fellow sat down next to him. The stranger ordered lunch and introduced himself to my father. He proceeded to describe how he was restoring a historic town in Montana called Nevada City. It is just down the road from Virginia City in southwest Montana about 50 miles from Bozeman. Dad was familiar with the town and here was the guy that was building it. Seems the man needed a wooden depot and he wanted one just like the one at Hugo, Minnesota. He had just been through Hugo, just North of St. Paul, and that was exactly what he was looking for. He was trying to figure out who he could talk to and how he could get the plans for it so he could build it. Dad told the guy he was in luck and he thought he could help him out.

So they both finished their lunches, grabbed their hats and coats and headed off back to the General Office. Dad instructed the Chief Clerk to run off a set of plans for the depot at Hugo. They gave them to the man. The man thanked them profusely and out the door he went. About three years later while on our family vacation, we were in Nevada City, Montana and we walked up to the depot. I remember Dad asking me, "Does that depot look familiar"? I said it looks like any other depot I've seen. He said, doesn't it look like the depot at Hugo? Well to a kid, one depot looks like another. I sort of agreed with him and then he told of his chance meeting with the guy at the lunch counter and how he had given him the plans.

So that's why the NP looking depot at Nevada City, Montana looks like the depot in Hugo, Minnesota, and I would guess a lot of other NP depots.

Harold Shannon

Note: This post was discovered on the Internet by Dan Stinson, a friend of the Alder Gulch Shortline Railroad. Dan put us in contact with Harold who gave us permission to share his story.

WANTED
Youth ages 11-15 for History Camp
2004, Aug. 2-7, virginiacitymt.com or
phone 406-843-5221.

THE ENERGY OF VOLUNTEERS

The Montana Heritage Commission (MHC) has been very fortunate to be the award recipient of not one, but two AmeriCorps crews this summer. The 1st crew of ten young people, ages 18-22, arrived in late April. They have assisted MHC staff with projects ranging from artifact cleaning and care to remodeling efforts on the gym for the Town of Virginia City. We expect a second crew of nine members to arrive mid-June. This crew will be in town until the end of August.



AmeriCorps crew members receive a tour and history lesson from John Ellingsen, MHC Curator of History.

Another great event occurred on May 14 with the arrival of 79 Montana Youth ChalleNGe cadets. Cadets combined a day of history education with a major spring cleanup of the towns to ready them for the summer season. With rakes, shovels and garbage bags, they spiffed up the towns in no time.



Youth ChalleNGe cadets helping with spring cleanup.

Volunteers, young and old alike, have a great impact on the work that can be accomplished in Virginia City and Nevada City. The Montana Heritage Commission would like to thank these volunteers as well as the many others we have welcomed over the past seven years.

If you would like to spend a day, a week, or even a month volunteering, call Dan Thyer, Volunteer

Photo by Janna Hermanson



Conservator John Kjelland (left) and Curatorial Assistant Tim Gerber in the Gilbert Brewery next to a cask--now upright and out of water.

WHAT'S BREWING?

In 1864, Henry S. Gilbert established the Gilbert Brewing Company in Virginia City, taking over the brewery originally built by Thomas Smith. The Gilbert operated until 1925, producing a lager and a bock, as well as bottling wine and soft drinks. Fast forward...

In the fall of 2003, two newly hired curators sorted through 140 years of accumulated material left in the upstairs areas of the Gilbert Brewery building and the Bottling Plant next door. Some of this material was original to the Gilbert operations; some had been placed there during the Bovey years, when unoccupied areas were used as general storage. A selection of the objects found there, including the branding iron used by H.S. Gilbert to mark his kegs, have been placed on exhibit in the McFarland Curatorial Center Lobby Gallery for the summer 2004 season. Stop in and have a look!

While the Preservation Team completes the Historic Structures Report on this building and prepares for further stabilization work, conservation has begun on the large holding casks in the "cold room," the room used to age beer. These three casks are straight-sided, stand upright instead of laying on their sides, and hold up to 1,270 gallons each. They have been sitting in 17 inches of water for untold years. Over time, the annual freezing and thawing of the water, along with other natural processes, had caused deterioration of the lower portion casks. Additionally, two of the upright casks had tipped, throwing a support beam out of line and further stressing the casks themselves.

Wood conservator John Kjelland of Missoula was contracted to create a more stable environment for the casks. The process of deterioration is retarded by lifting the casks out of the water, cleaning out years of sludge and accumulated debris (including a spittoon and several beer bottles of more recent vintage), and other conservation techniques. When finished, the casks will appear much the same as they have, but will have undergone preservation work that will contribute to their continued longevity.

Stop at the Gilbert Brewery this summer, enjoy a performance of the Brewery Follies, and take a look at the newly uprighted casks!

Pat Roath

Special Thanks to the Ennis High School Heritage Club for their assistance preparing gold pokes as a promotional give away at the Governor's Conference on Tourism. Your help was greatly appreciated and the M & M gold bags were a big hit with all who visited the Montana Heritage Commission booth!

Donor's Reunion Weekend August 28-29, 2004

The Montana Heritage Commission will host a special weekend this summer to honor the donors who contributed so generously when the State of Montana was collecting and saving for the purchase of Virginia City and Nevada City. The Legislation to purchase the towns passed in April 1997--over 7 years ago! Now we want to show you the progress that has been made to preserve the towns.

The Donor's Reunion will also be a time to pay tribute to those who have given continuously to this project. The faith you have shown in us has been greatly appreciated and a true incentive to keep going. Stay tuned to our website at montanaheritagecommission.com, What's New for more details.

CLIP & SAVE

2004 Living History Weekends

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|--|----------------------|
| Old West Days 1860s-70s | May 28-30 |
| Road agents, Vigilantes, prospectors, Soiled Doves, historic craftsmen, Victorian Children's Games | |
| Gold Rush Town 1860s | June 18-20 |
| Historic craftsmen, prospector, Soiled Doves, school teacher, Victorian Ladies, Victorian Children's Games | |
| Old Fashioned 4th of July | July 2-4 |
| Horse shoe pitching, Victorian children's games, pie eating contest, homemade ice cream | |
| Trial & Hanging of George Ives | July 16-18 |
| Attend the 1863 trial, historic craftsmen, soiled doves | |
| Frontier Celebration 1860-65 | Aug 6-8 |
| Victorian celebration, Fashion Show, Victorian Kid's Games, Civil War encampment, historic craftsmen | |
| Committing to Peace | July 30-Aug 1 |
| (Montana's Civil War) 1865 Military Ball, Union & Confederate Veterans, historic Sutlers, Cavalry demonstrations and more! | |

Blue Moon Special--Moonlight & Steam

July 31, 2004

Steam Locomotive No. 12 will fire up for a special moonlight train ride (the 2nd full moon of July 2004). For more details go to virginiacitymt.com, Alder Gulch Shortline.



CLIP & SAVE



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