
Mining History Association News

Denver, Colorado, November 1991

P.O. Box 150300, Denver, CO 80215

Volume 2 Number 2

Idaho Gold

Boise, center for the Boise Basin mines and home of a U. S. Assay Office, will be the location of the association's Third Annual Conference to be held June 5th and 6th, 1992. Boise was center for an expansive gold field that boomed in the 1860s to the north and south. Idaho City, a productive gold camp and now a pleasant mountain town, will be toured as will the isolated camp of Silver City. The U. S. Assay Office in Boise processed most the gold from the mines and today houses the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office. The Idaho State Historical Society museum houses exhibits about the State's mineral rich past. So mark your calendar and plan to attend. More detailed information will be in the next newsletter.

If you are interested in presenting a paper at the conference write Ronald Brown, Southwest Texas State University, History Department, San Marcos, Texas 78666-4616. Merle Wells of the Idaho Historical Society and Evelyne Pickett at the University of Idaho complete the program committee. The conference will also have time for presentations on works in progress, preservation and museum activities, and poster sessions.

A workshop on historic preservation issues related to mining sites is being organized for the week before the conference. Information on the workshop will be in the next newsletter as well.

Anyone interested in reading about the area before next summer should see Merle Well's classic volume *Gold Camps & Silver Cities, Nineteenth Century Mining in Central and Southern Idaho* (Moscow: Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology, 2nd Edition, 1983). A book specifically on the area north of Boise is Arthur A. Hart, *Basin of Gold, Life in Boise Basin, 1862-1890* (Boise: Idaho Historical Foundation, 1986). For Silver City see Julia Conway Welch, *Gold Town to Ghost Town, The Story of Silver City, Idaho* (Moscow: University Press of Idaho, 1982)

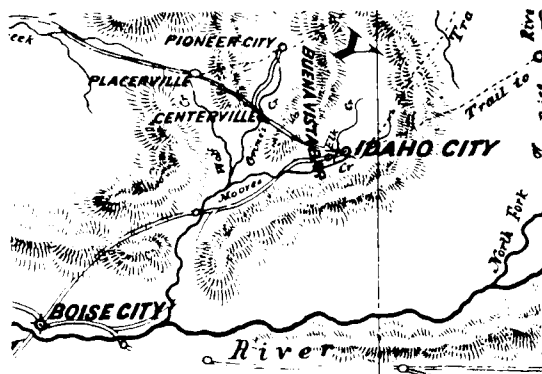
Members Comments

Several members wrote in response to Roger Burt's piece, "On the Road to Austin: A Brit's View on American Mining History," [May 1991 newsletter] and his opinion that Americans focus on social/urban rather than technological and industrial matters. We received three letters suggesting that a tour of The Sterling Hill Mining Company's underground mine tour at 30 Plant Street, Ogdensburg, New Jersey 07439 would dispel any notion that the U. S. lacks industrial exhibits. Similar notes were received for proponents of tours of the Molly Kathleen mine in Cripple Creek, Colorado and "Minnesota's Deepest Secret," the Soudan Underground Mine State Park in Soudan, MN 55782. We await word from Austin, Nevada.

A member has asked if someone has or will someone please reprint J. S. Phillips *The Explorers', Miners', & Metallurgists' Companion* (San Francisco 1873), 671 pages? Or is anyone reprinting nineteenth century volumes on mining?

Deadwood

A note about Deadwood: The MHA council has rescheduled the 1993 conference to Deadwood.



The President's Page

The Association's first summer meeting, held in Leadville on July 5th and 6th, was a good show. Nearly 100 people attended--a turn-out that was both encouraging and gratifying and which filled the fine auditorium of the National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum. Forty years ago, when I first became interested in the mining past, all the mining historians of the country could have met in the public telephone booth at the corner of Harrison and East Eighth.

Like the old Carbonate Camp in its heyday, what was striking about the group that convened in 1991 was its diversity, a diversity reflecting some of the changes taking place in broadening the field of history in recent years. Not only were there the traditional academic historians, but a cross-section from other disciplines, anthropologists, archaeologists, geographers and geologists among them. Add to those, the people from the historical societies, both state and local, and those from the museums, especially from some of the newer, specialized mining museums. Include archivists, librarians and those working in historic preservation at all levels for town, counties, states, the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management. Don't forget those who really know what they are talking about--the people in the mining industry itself--and a goodly number of just plain buffs. Visitors from Canada, Down Under and Texas added something of an international flavor. All in all, it was a lively stimulating group, casual, everybody in a good mood and seemingly enjoying themselves.

In a program put together by Michael Ostrogorsky, Ronald Brown and Jay Fell, four sessions covered a variety of topics and approaches: Ethnicity on the mining frontier, international historic preservation issues, and a series of case studies, ranging from the early smelting industry in the Salt Lake Valley to miners' health and safety laws in Progressive Arizona and the career of engineer William J. Loring. And at the evening banquet, Duane Smith wowed us all with his presentation on Horace Tabor's Leadville. The bus-load of sight-seers who made the Leadville tour on Saturday afternoon were not disappointed: they got their money's worth from the guide, a local judge, raconteur, and descendant who knew the local history and had a mind of his own. All in all, it was an auspicious beginning for a new organization.

At the meeting, the Association's Council decided to retain its current membership for another year, until the elective machinery can be worked out. Vice president Russell Elliott will move up to president in 1992, to be succeeded by Stanley Dempsey, head of Royal Gold and author of books on Colorado mining history. The Council also reiterated its willingness to cooperate with other agencies, public or private, to further an interest in mining history. A business session was devoted primarily to reports, and to the gathering of suggestions to help shape the direction the organization might take in the future. The Council welcomes all such suggestions from members.

Clark C. Spence
Champaign, Illinois

Organization Notes:

At the Leadville meeting of the MHA the following officers and council members were elected: President, Russell Elliott; Vice-President, Stan Dempsey; Treasurer, Duane Smith; Secretary, Robert Spude. The council includes the above four plus Clark Spence, William S. Greever, Otis Young, Ronald Brown, Michael Ostrogorsky, Carlos Schwantes, Elizabeth Jameson and Don Hardesty.

A nominating committee has been selected: Gene Gressley, University of Wyoming, is chair and members are Silvia Van Kirk, University of Toronto, and Don Bufkin of Tucson. A committee on the 3d International Mining History Conference planned for Denver in 1993 or 1994 is comprised of Michael Ostrogorsky, Robert Spude, and Jay Fell.

The association is seeking volunteers to serve on various committees. This month's newsletter includes a member questionnaire. Please complete the form and send it in.

The Mining History Association
Newsletter
Denver, Colorado

Distributed to association members; membership is open to all interested in the history of mining.

Dues \$10 per year

Please send dues to MHA, P.O. Box 150300, Denver, CO 80215. Submissions for publication in the newsletter are welcome. Write:

Robert L. Spude
editor

CALL FOR PAPERS

THIRD MEETING OF MINING HISTORY ASSOCIATION

BOISE, IDAHO

JUNE 5-6, 1992

The Program Committee for the Boise meeting of the Mining History Association invites proposals for individual papers or complete sessions (including chair and discussant) on any topic or aspect of mining in history. Sessions normally include two or three papers of twenty minutes each. There are no geographical or temporal limitations.

Proposals should include an abstract (not to exceed one page) for each paper, plus biographical information about each presenter and session participant. Please send proposals to the Program Committee chair before April 1, 1992.

1992 Program Chair:

Dr. Ronald C. Brown
Department of History
Southwest Texas State University
San Marcos, Texas 78666-4616

From the Archives

One library mining history researchers should not miss is the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. Not only does the library house numerous important collections, but also the grounds of the library are worth a month's stay in any season.

The following are some of the collections I have used seeking the intersections of mining law and the environment. The New Almaden Mine Collection is small, but the mercury mine's history is fairly well-known. The papers of the Savage, and Hale and Norcross Silver Mining Companies of Nevada are 12,000 in number and cover the period 1862-1901. The Nevada Porphyry Gold Mining Company papers are twentieth century and heavily correspondence. The Harriet Williams Russell Strong Collection has scattered nineteenth century mining materials. The William Rollin Morgan Collection contains some manuscript materials on hydraulic mining and the California debris case. Selim Woodworth's collection has some of the mining papers of the Blue Wing quartz mine in Calaveras County. The Robert Chester Turner Papers contain ample twentieth century correspondence and letterbooks to keep a researcher busy. The journals of Brigadier-General Walter Scribner Schuyler, President and General Manager of the Sierra-Alaska Mining Company of California, cover the period 1913-32. A host of other collections provide smaller glimpses of our mining history.

As many of these collections are currently uncatalogued, interested researchers are encouraged to contact the Manuscript Department at the Huntington. Since the research library is not a public institution, however, access to the collections must be arranged by application in advance. In general, its collections are made available to advanced graduate students, university faculty members, and responsible independent researchers engaged in detailed research requiring the use of primary sources.

Gordon Morris Bakken
California State University, Fullerton

USSR&MC Records

The inventory of the United States Smelting, Refining and Mining Company papers is complete. For a copy write Charles E. Hughes, 5228 S. Morning Crest Dr., Salt Lake City, UT 84123.

Galena, Illinois Records

Daryl Watson of the Galena museum brought to our attention the research potential of the Upper Mississippi lead-zinc districts. The museum has collections of company papers, documents related to such evolutions as our mining law, and information about nineteenth century technology. The environment of Galena is pleasant and not much different than Central City, Colorado; they both have gambling, except Galena's is on the riverboats downstream. Write Dr. Daryl Watson, Executive Director, The Galena/Jo Daviess County Historical Society & Museum, 211 South Bench Street, Galena, Illinois, 61036.

More Preservation News

The Friends of Kennecott, Alaska report that their \$200,000 State Grant went far to complete emergency stabilization on the buildings within this National Historical Landmark. The show-case twelve-story, wood-frame concentrator building received roof work; the next phase will focus on removal of hazardous materials. Donations to aid the landmark's preservation can be sent to the Friends of Kennecott, Historic Preservation Fund, 3018 Alder Circle, Anchorage, Alaska 99508.

Rodman Paul Award

The recipient of the Mining History Association's Rodman Paul Award for 1991 was W. Turrentine Jackson. Clark Spence presented the award at the association's breakfast at the Western History Association conference in Austin, October 17.

Dr. Jackson, Professor Emeritus of the University of California-Davis, has published a number of works on mining, including *Treasure Hill, Portrait of a Silver Mining Camp* (1963), *Twenty Years on the Pacific Slope, Letters of Henry Eno from California and Nevada, 1848-1871* (edited work, 1965), and *The Enterprising Scot, Investors in the American West After 1873* (1968).

He also was an advocate of mining camp preservation and through his firm, Jackson Associates, prepared Cultural Resource Management reports for government agencies, parks, and museums. His lifetime of research notes -- especially indexes of hard to find journals from California to England -- are now part of the university collections at Davis, available to all.

SOUTH OF THE BORDER

Nothing warms the heart of a mining historian like an old mining town, and Leadville was an inspired choice as the conference venue. The biggest shock was gasping my way up to the second floor of the Delaware Hotel, lesser shocks came from my peers South of the Border.

Mining historians don't always see the big picture, one reason why conferences, newsletters and the like are such useful ways to make contact with other like-mined souls. There are valuable hints about archival collections, insights from other people's research, and the recognition of larger patterns that had never been clear before. For example: I have been gathering information for quite some time about a particularly colorful mining financier, one J. Whitaker Wright.

I was pleased to use the Leadville conference as an opportunity to expand my research on Wright. In the stock characters of the mining world, Wright occupies the territory somewhere between the Horace Tabor that Duane Smith described at the banquet and the less reputable types that Clark Spence told us about in his presidential address. Originally from England, Wright travelled to the States in 1866 to work as an assayer, and by the time of the Leadville boom had risen to a position of some prominence. He came to Leadville a little late to capitalize on the first opportunities, but in late 1879 brought the Denver City mine, (I was alerted to this when I discovered the "Wright Shaft" on the map of the old mines I bought at the tourist center.) Further local information came from our bus tour guide, a fount of information.

Wright subsequently returned to England, where he befriended the rich and famous, making a fortune by speculating in West Australian gold mines. During the Boer War at the turn of the century, he lost heavily as mining stock plunged with the closure of the South African mines. His financial empire crashed and he later was charged with fraud. When he was found guilty and sentenced to a seven year jail term, he swallowed cyanide in the court. In any event, I was able to learn some fascinating new details about Wright during my time in Colorado.

At the conference, Duane Smith shared some of his knowledge of Leadville and Tabor with me, while Bob Spude seemed to spend the next two days in Denver rummaging in his basement for yet another New Mexican reference to pass on (Wright opened his first big mine at Lake Valley, New Mexico).

There are of course some disadvantages to freeloading off of other's knowledge in this manner. I think I am now committed to a paper on Wright for next year's conference!

Jeremy Mouat
Athabasca University
Canada

Some of Jeremy Mouat's recent publications may be of interest to readers: "Creating a New Staple: Capital, Technology, and Monopoly in British Columbia's Resource Sector, 1901-1925," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, vol. 1 (1990), pp. 215-237 on government involvement in zinc mining and the rise of COMINCO; and "The Genesis of Western Exceptionalism: British Columbia's Hard-Rock Miners, 1895-1903," *The Canadian Historical Review*, vol. LXXI (1990), pp. 317-345 about a troubled period for labor and unions and reflective of similar activities in Idaho and Montana.

Conferences

The Second Conference on the History of Mining in Latin America will be held in Santiago, Chile in March 1992. For more information please write the MHA.

The Historical Metallurgy Society held its annual conference in Glasgow in recognition of the centennial of the cyanide process, perfected there by John Stewart MacArthur and the doctors Forrest. Information about the society can be obtained from J. K. Almond, Redlands, 61 High Street, Eston, Middlesbrough, U. K., TS6 9EH.

Aspen needs a Jaw Crusher

The Aspen Historical Society is developing a museum in the 1889 Holden Lixiviation Works' sampler on the edge of town. The mill ruin was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The sampler is still standing and will become the center for the society's mining and farming museum. They are looking for a jaw crusher for the building and will install machinery and exhibits to explain the famous ski resort's mining past (as described in Malcolm Rohrbough's *Aspen, History of a Silver Mining Town, 1879-1893*). If you have information, contact president Carl Bergman, Box 1365, Aspen, CO 81612.

Mining History Association

Welcome to a new year, a new series of newsletters and another annual conference. This year's conference will include formal papers, a banquet, lunch speakers and tours. Members have asked that the association also include time for individual presentations on preservation/museum/archive/research activities of approximately ten minutes per person. Please let us know what other activities you want.

We are compiling a list of member interests. Please help us by completing the following:

I am interested in (give type of mining--coal, copper, gold, all):

My period of interest is: pre-1800, 1800-50, 1848-1910, 1900-

I recommend contacting _____
to speak at our conference or to write an item for the newsletter.

I am interested in giving a paper or writing an item for the newsletter. Topic of choice:

I recommend the following as a good location for the MHA annual conference:

I recommend the following museums/historic sites for tours or descriptions in the newsletter:

I am interested in reviewing books on the following topics (give three fields of interest):

I am involved with mining through:

Archeology _____	Historic Preservation _____
Geology _____	Museums _____
Metallurgy _____	Research _____
Teaching _____	Industry _____
Books _____	Other _____

This is your notice for dues for 1992 for the

Mining History Association

During 1992 the Mining History Association will hold its third annual conference at Boise, will continue to inform its members on mining history topics through its newsletters, and has plans to initiate a journal with articles, book reviews, and historic preservation/museum/archive essays. Please fill out the dues form and mail it along with a check for ten dollars to the Mining History Association, P. O. Box 150300, Denver, Colorado 80215.

Enclosed is a check for the \$10 membership fee. Mail the newsletter to:

MHA Journal

The MHA Council is reviewing the possibility of publishing an annual journal. A quality journal would include essays on history, preservation, museums, and archives plus illustrations, book reviews and a documents section. Members are asked to check the appropriate line below whether or not to increase the dues to pay for the journal. Also, indicate whether you would be willing to donate to the MHA for the journal account:

___ I do not support an increase in dues

___ I support a dues increase to \$25

___ Enclosed is a donation for the journal publication fund

A Trip to the Champion Mill, Leadville, Colorado

After thoroughly enjoying the Mining History Association Conference this year in Leadville, we still had a day for exploration before we had to fly back to Chicago. Several years ago we had purchased the book *Ghosts of Lake County* by John Aldrich (1986) which contains several photographs of the Champion Mill. This mill was on our list of must-see mining sites in Colorado. We asked around at the conference to see if anyone had visited this site, and what the road conditions were like. Silvia Pettem said that she and her husband Ed Raines had been there several years ago. She said the road required a four-wheel drive vehicle, and that the mill was an hour drive past Half Moon Campground which is located southwest of Leadville. Since we had rented a four wheel drive vehicle in Denver, we decided with our friend Art Williams, who also attended the conference, to try to get to this mill and photograph it.

The Champion Mill is a large structure which was very much intact, and best of all still had some of its machinery inside. The Mt. Champion Mining Co., incorporated in 1910, had gold ore that contained a little silver, and an occasional shoot carrying some copper and lead. Values were mainly in the sulphides, which assayed up to \$200 per ton. Thirty men worked in the mine which consisted of 3 drift tunnels with a total workings of 10,000 feet. Ore was transported to the mill located in Half Moon Valley by a 6100 foot aerial tram.

Sixteen men worked at the 100-ton amalgamation-concentration mill. The mill had a No. 4 Samson Jaw Crusher, a 24" Symons Disc Crusher, a grizzly, trommel screens, a Hardings Ball Mill, a Denver Works tube mill, two Drag classifiers, six amalgamating copper plates, a Dorr Thickener, a Wilfley table, a Tucher elevator, a Richards pulsating classifier, five Deister concentrating tables, and two Callow cones. The Mt. Champion Mining Co. closed the mine in 1918. The mine has been operated sporadically since 1918.

Visiting this mill is well worth the effort. It is reached by driving south of Leadville on Highway 24 to Halfmoon Gulch Road. Take Halfmoon Gulch Road 12.5 miles to reach the mill.

Mark and Karen Vendl
LaGrange Park, Illinois

Preservation News

John Elliott of The Mineral King Preservation Society has just completed a draft historic context for the Mineral King area. The context is part of the nomination of properties to the National Register of Historic Places. The Society is active in preserving the mining history of this scenic area within Sequoia National Park. For a copy of the context or for membership (\$10) write Ora Kay Peterson, Executive Director, Mineral King Preservation Society, 2936 S. West Street, Visalia, CA 93277

A draft of *National Register Bulletin 42* on the nomination of Historic Mining Properties to the National Register of Historic Places is available for review. The bulletin was written by Bruce Nobel and Robert Spude with the assistance of Donald Hardesty. For a copy write National Park Service, RMR-PR-NPP, 12795 W. Alameda Parkway, P. O. Box 25287, Denver, CO 80225.

Thanks

The Leadville conference was a grand success because of the efforts of individuals like Carl Miller of the National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum in Leadville. A tip of the hat to him and his staff.

This month's newsletter includes items from people across the nation. Thank you for your submissions, comments, and questions.

Memorabilia

We have received the mailings of two firms that sell mining camp memorabilia. Individuals interested in being placed on their mailing list should write: Russell Filer, 13057 California Street, Yucaipa, CA 92399 or The Syzygy Gold Mining Company, P. O. Box 210, Cripple Creek, CO 80813-0210.

Tours

James Thorburn of Atalaya Tours, Ltd. of the U.K. has sent a flyer about their "The Mines of Iberia" tour, 1992. The itinerary includes the Almaden mercury mines, Rio Tinto copper operations, and ruins from Roman and Prehistoric times. For more information write them at Ceinionfa, Penglais Terrace, Aberystwyth, SY23 2ET, U. K.

Book Notes

Nellie Snyder Yost sent *Keep on, Keeping on*, about Betty Ann Herrick's growing up years in the copper camp of Bingham Canyon, Utah. The volume is a delightful, personal view of 1930s Bingham Canyon, its school, theater, camp shops (legal and illegal), families, and The Mine, which eventually swallowed the town. The book provides a girl's view of a copper camp similar to the boys view described in MHA president Russell Elliott's *Growing Up in A Company Town: A Family in the Copper Camp of McGill, Nevada*. For a copy send \$4.95 to Nellie Snyder Yost, 1505 West D Street, North Platte, Nebraska 69101

The Montana College of Mineral Science and Technology has published a guide to the historic mining sites of Butte by Brian Shovers, Mark Feige, Dale Martin, and Fred Quivik. *Butte and Anaconda Revisited: An Overview of Early-Day Mining and Smelting in Montana*, prepared for the Society of Industrial Archeology 1989 tour of Butte, has been upgraded and revised. Copies may be obtained by sending \$5 to the MT Bureau of Mines and Geology, Butte, MT 59701.

Mining History Association
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Retired, Lead, South Dakota mining engineer Joel Waterland has published a series of books on the mines of the Black Hills. They contain capsule histories of the major mines and mills; his second volume contains an excellent glossary of mining terms, with illustrations. The volumes, privately printed in Rapid City, are: *The Spawn & The Mother Lode, the Placer, Conglomerate and Precambrian Mines of the Central City, Lead and Deadwood Area* (1987), *Gold & Silver or Sweat & Tears, the History of the Bald Mountain, Ruby Basin and Garden City Mining Districts. Black Hills of South Dakota* (1988), and *The Mines Around & Beyond, the History of the Deadwood, Two Bit, Galena, Elk Creek, Box Elder Creek, Custer Peak, Carbonate Camp, Ragged Top, Iron Creek and Tinton Mining Districts. Black Hills of South Dakota* (1991).

Member Charles Wallace Miller, Jr. has sent the flyer for his *Staking Your Claim! The Tale of America's Enduring Mining Laws*. Westernlore Press, P. O. Box 35305, Tucson, AZ 85740. price: \$31.95 plus \$2.50 postage.

