



Summer 2012

Mining History News

Quarterly Newsletter of the Mining History Association

Going Back to Prescott

Many MHAers are interested in specific places: old mining camps, historic glory holes, and the heavy industrial world of operating mines. For me, it all began in Prescott, Arizona in the 1960s. Exploring from there one learned of a rich and most decidedly colorful mining region. At the June 2012 conference, we all had a chance to experience and hear about this special place thanks to Bill Hawes, conference organizer, and Bob Metz, program chair.

Sharlot Hall Museum, one of the best little museums in the West, hosted our opening conference reception under the pine-shaded 1864 Governor's log "mansion," built when Prescott was the center of a placer gold mining rush. Through efforts of pioneer daughter Sharlot Hall and many others since, much of Prescott and its mining history has been preserved. Director John Langelier told us of their next initiative, the restoration of the 1890s Porter locomotive of the Congress Gold Company. The good work continues. Many in the MHA are involved with their own similar preservation projects or local historical societies.

The Jerome Historical Society's table at the conference was popular (not just because of the bag of free pins, post cards, and collector's items), but the real thrill was seeing their good work in the preservation of the Audrey headframe, part of the UVX bonanza operation (see photo next page). They have illuminated the shaft, which all had a chance to visit during the Friday tour of the headframe, the adjacent Douglas Mansion at the Jerome State Park, and, thanks to our friends at Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold Corporation, the former



MHA President Bob Spude leans on a stack of copper anodes at Bagdad while members listen to the Freeport McMoRan guide in the background. (Photo courtesy Jay Fell.)

United Verde glory hole and open pit. Geologist Paul Lindberg introduced us to the possibility that more high-grade sulphide ore lay below.

On Sunday two buses of MHAers followed the saguaro-lined road to the big Bagdad operations of Freeport-McMoRan. A welcome crew of blue shirted Freeport staff gave us a royal tour of the SX-EW plant, with its high stacks of copper anodes, the active open pit mine, and the truck shops. Richard Travis of Freeport provided an overview history. At the pit overlook, staff provided access to piles of operation grade ore. Quite a few MHAers wobbled back to the bus, much heavier on the return ride home.

Prescott, Jerome, and Bagdad are all part of the heart of mining history's ongoing story. We at the MHA feel that much of the heritage of such places is worth recognition. During the MHA

"Prescott..." (continued on page 2)

"Prescott..." (continued from page 1)

council meeting on Thursday, June 7, your officers agreed to move forward and initiate an MHA Heritage Award, broadly defined. The \$1,000 award will recognize an individual or group for a past accomplishment in historic preservation, archives or curation, oral history, traditions preservation, or related efforts. I have asked Mark Langenfeld, past president, to head up the award committee, which will flesh out its parameters and work toward selecting our first recipient. Again, thanks to our 2012 conference organizers and workers. It was great to go home to Prescott.

Robert L. Spude
Santa Fe, New Mexico
 spudes@msn.com

Mining Company Helps Museum Preserve Geological Collection

Cripple Creek was a brawling mining camp when two USGS geologists, Whitman Cross and R.A.F. Penrose, Jr., arrived to survey the mining district and conduct geological investigations in 1894. During their work these field geologists created a collection of representative rocks. This rock collection played a key role in the early scientific work on the district. These rock specimens were used to produce the early geologic maps of the area, and served as the basis for a USGS report that brought an increased interest in the gold camp and additional capital to develop and expand the mines, thus contributing directly to the success of Cripple Creek.

Now this collection is cared for by the Cripple Creek District Museum. In addition to this unique collection put together by the most important mining men of their day, there is an entire rock, mineral, and ore collection that is being conserved, cataloged, photographed, and the associated information entered into the museum's collection database.

A grant request was made to the Cripple Creek & Victor Gold Mining Company to provide funding for archival materials to preserve this historic collection. In May 2012, the company presented a check to the museum to ensure this important work continues. The preservation and cataloging work is being done by three members of the Lake George Gem and Mineral Club: Steven Veatch, Dr. Bob Carnein, and John Rakowski, all professional geoscientists.



MHA members view the restored Audrey headframe in Jerome, AZ. The shaft has been covered with glass and illuminated hundreds of feet down. The headframe site is now a free park. (Photo by Bob Spude)

2012 Election Results

Terms begin June 2012

President: Bob Spude

**Vice President/President Elect:
 Roger Burt**

**Council (2012-2015): Dawn Bunyak, Ginny
 Kilander, Noel Kirshenbaum**

Nominating Committee: Mark Vendl

Call for Papers

2013 Mining History Association Annual Conference

The Mining History Association will meet in historic Galena, Illinois, June 6-9, 2013. The Program Committee (Duane Smith and Mark Vendl) invites proposals for individual presentations or complete sessions (including chair) on any topic or aspect of mining history. Sessions include three papers of twenty minutes each. There are no temporal or geographic limits.

Proposals should include title of presentation, an abstract (not to exceed one page) for each presentation, plus biographical information about each presenter, including mailing/email address. Please note, speakers must register for the conference in order to give their presentations. **Please send written proposals to the program session committee by November 15, 2012.** Submissions should be made by email attachment.

Mark Vendl, for the Program Committee
mkvendl@gmail.com

Publicity Opportunity for MHA Authors!

Have you written a book on some aspect of mining history that you think your fellow members might find interesting? **The MHA Newsletter runs an annual column in the Fall issue with announcements of books on mining history written by our members** in the past year or two. These announcements supplement, but do not replace, our traditional list of publications and book reviews in the annual *Mining History Journal*, and serve as an additional way to bring your work to the attention of our membership.

How to participate:

Send the complete bibliographic information (author, title, publisher, publisher location, year, number of pages, binding, price, and ISBN) plus a 100-150 word summary of the book (like you would use for a dust jacket) to Eric Nystrom, Newsletter Editor, at eric.nystrom@rit.edu. Works of popular history, academic studies, poetry, fiction, and art are all welcome, as long as they concern the broad themes of mining history of interest to our society. The Newsletter Editor reserves the right to edit all content. Submissions will be accepted throughout the year and printed in the Fall newsletter, which appears in September. **Authors must be members of the MHA.**

Submissions for the upcoming Fall newsletter will be accepted until **September 1**-- send your details right away!

Western History Meeting Features MHA Members

Bob Spude notes that the Western History Association is meeting in Denver, October 4-7, 2012, and a number of MHAers are active participants. MHA treasurer Jay Fell and former MHA president Duane Smith will lead a Sunday tour of Central City and the region's mining country; former MHA president Jeremy Mouat will chair a mining oriented session with past board member Elizabeth Jameson providing commentary; while newsletter editor Eric Nystrom will comment on a paper and others will present. The program also includes the annual Mining History breakfast on Friday. More information about the conference and a program can be found online at:

<http://www.westernhistoryassociation.org>

Transitions

Patrick R. Harvey, Santa Fe, NM
(December 2011)

Collamer Abbott, Vermont Mining Historian

Johnny Johnsson

Vermont copper mining historian Collamer M. Abbott died April 8, 2012 at the age of 92 at the VA Hospital in White River Junction, Vermont. Newspaper obituaries emphasized his general biography as a newspaper reporter and writer, who had some early photographic accomplishments that were rediscovered during his later years. However, many people knew him more for his accounts of local mining history.

A native of Wilder, Vermont, Collamer obtained his bachelor's degree in English at the University of Vermont before enlisting in 1942, serving in army field hospitals in the Aleutian Islands and France during WWII. He earned his master's degree in Journalism at the University of Wisconsin and was briefly an English professor in Vermont, but what he really liked to do was write, and that is what he did, mostly for local newspapers. However, for several decades of his life Collamer immersed himself into researching and writing about the fascinating history of Vermont's copper mines and the Cornish connections between mining districts in the Appalachians. His favorite site was the Ely Mine in Copperfield, Vermont and the colorful stories of the copper-mining barons, their Cornish captains (i.e. Thomas Pollard, *Mining History Journal*, 2004), and the miners striking for their withheld pay. For a few years these Vermont mines were significant, until surpassed by the great copper districts of Michigan, Montana, and Arizona.

Collamer was of tough New England stock, humble, and of limited means. He mostly worked alone and in his own way, but was glad to enthusiastically share with anyone who was interested enough to listen. In the 1960s he would often wander the Vermont countryside on a bicycle exploring the copper mining sites and nearby farms and villages. He took excellent photographs, but never thought so himself. He conducted long-distance research ordering microfilm and books; poking around the various archives available to him for E&MJ articles and *AIME Transactions* reports, as he dug in and uncovered the mostly unknown history of Vermont copper. He tracked down relatives of interesting mining characters and found private archives of mining history materials. These he ended up donating to the University of Vermont (UVM) Archives along with his research materials and manuscripts.

Short articles in reputable journals were the primary result of Collamer's mining history research and writings. He also gave some informal talks, presentations, and field tours for those who could keep up with him. He did publish one monograph, *Green Mountain Copper: The Story of Vermont's Red Metal*, which was a compilation of a series of newspaper articles he had written in 1973. It was based upon a longer 500-page unpublished "Green Mountain Copper" manuscript that he had completed by 1964 (which I was probably the first person to have read). He finished a similar manuscript called "Appalachian Copper" covering a broader front from Ducktown to Quebec, again never published. You had to either get these

works from him, or dig into his collection at UVM. Most people were interested in what he had to say about mining history, but seldom took the time to read what he had written or do any research themselves. That's why Collamer took so kindly to the likes of me, young and energetic and willing to listen to his recounting. He also inspired Matt Kierstead, who became an industrial archeologist and the lead author on multiple comprehensive site reports for the EPA on the Vermont copper mines. Moreover, while Collamer was still mobile in the 1990s and early 2000s, we wandered around the Elizabeth, Ely-Copperfield, and Pike Hill copper mine sites looking at evidence of 1830s copper smelting, or great roast bed retaining walls and smelter flues, ruins of Westinghouse and Heckscher smelting campaigns, WWI foundations, WWII mill buildings, etc. Fortunately, we were able to see these features before extensive EPA cleanup erased them, and even add our understanding to Collamer's interpretations. Everything we observed on the ground would have meant little had not Collamer already uncovered the archival materials and put them into meaningful order, providing clues as to what happened where, when, by whom, and why.

I am grateful for Collamer's pioneering mining history work in parts of the Eastern US, as it formed a basis for my own research and writing. In the 1960s, he developed several excellent biographical articles on Isaac Tyson, Jr., which enabled me to make the connection between Tyson's chrome and copper mines in Maryland with his copper mines and iron furnaces in Vermont some 30 years later. As a result we were able to get Tyson inducted into the National Mining Hall of Fame in 1996 as the founder of the chromium industry. He befriended me to the Tyson descendants, and through my later research it turned out that my great-great grandfather was secretary of one of the Tysons' mining companies and the Baltimore Chrome Works. Imagine finding a letterbook in the attic of a Tyson family home in Vermont with copies of correspondence to your own ancestor back in Baltimore! Collamer introduced me to Bob Spude and the MHA and consequently I attended my first conference in 1997 in Michigan. Collamer encouraged me in my own research and writing and always wanted me to continue the stories he had never done. I have been able to do some of that.

Collamer's mining history was relatively early in the scheme of things, underappreciated and almost unknown beyond his turf. He was not an academic or professional, but he was studious and tenacious. A prolific letter writer, we corresponded a lot and I would call him from time to time and always make a point to visit him, explore when we could, or in later years just sit and talk in his little apartment. Beyond mining, Collamer had always been interested in good, classic literature such as Herman Melville, local sports and skiing, and local history of the plain folk in the Upper Connecticut Valley. Collamer is missed, but his influence on mining history is continued by those of us who now carry the baton.

CFP: NAMHO in Wales, June 2013

The National Association of Mining History Organizations (NAMHO), a British umbrella organization of regional mining history groups, announces a call for papers for its 2013 conference. Titled "Mining Legacies: examining the impact of historic mineral working and ore processing on land, landscapes and perceptions of place," the conference will be held at Aberystwyth University in Wales, June 28-July 1, 2013. The conference will combine traditional scholarly papers with the opportunity for field visits to relevant mining sites in the Ceredigion uplands.

Over the last four thousand years mining has left a footprint on the environment, leaving both visible and hidden legacies for today and the future. Evidence of past mineral extraction can be prominent in the landscape as spoil heaps, discharges, dressing floors, mine entrances, derelict buildings, rusting machinery, transport infrastructure and settlements. Other remains are less visible, such as earthworks indicating sub-surface remains and subterranean workings, and heavy metal residues, sometimes dating back thousands of years, captured in polar ice caps or peat deposits. Less tangible still are the socio-economic, political and cultural impacts of mining, such as in the sense of place and identity, the development of heritage and alternative economic pathways, and the moral dilemmas of current and future mineral exploitation that these historic sites have often provoked and represented over time. Papers are invited on all aspects of the mining legacy.

Investigating, in some cases, rectifying and also promoting the post-industrial landscape can inform our knowledge of mining over the last four millennia. This conference aims to bring practitioners from a variety of academic disciplines, industry, the public sector, heritage charities, and independent researchers together and provide a stimulating platform for the transfer of knowledge and expertise.

For further information contact **Dr. Peter Cloughton**, p.f.cloughton@exeter.ac.uk (01437 532578) or **Dr. Catherine Mills**, c.j.mills@stir.ac.uk (01786 467583).

CC Museum Honored

The Cripple Creek District Museum, in the famous Colorado mining town of the same name, received word in July that it had been named among the top ten "Museums of the Year" by *True West* magazine. This is the fourth year in a row the museum has earned the honor. The complete list appears in the September 2012 issue of *True West*. Congratulations to our friends at the Cripple Creek District Museum!

Geological Society Seeks Northeastern US Mining History

The Geological Society of America Northeastern Section meeting is scheduled for March 17-19, 2013 at the Northeast Omni Mountain Washington Resort in Bretten Woods, NH. As part of the conference there will be a seminar titled "Mining History in the Northeast." This area covers from Maryland northward. Although the schedule will not be set for some months, this notice is being sent out to get you thinking about possible presentations. The oral presentations are generally 15 minutes in length and 5 minutes for questions. Anyone interested in getting more information may contact **Jeri Jones** at jonesgeo@comcast.net or go to the GSA website at geosociety.org and search under "Meetings."

Georgia Manganese Mine Deemed Historically Significant

The Summer 2011 *Mining History News* featured a story about the uncertain status of the Dobbins Mine site in Bartow County, Georgia. The historic manganese mine, which began production as early as 1867, was at the center of a long dispute over new highway construction. Historic preservation officers had to weigh competing (and contradictory) accounts of the historic value of the mine.

In July 2012, the Keeper of the National Register determined that the Dobbins Mine site was indeed historically important and intact enough to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The site was found eligible under Criterion A, "for its association with late 19th and early 20th century mining operations and for the role this area played in producing large quantities of manganese ore for the manufacturing of steel."

The determination of eligibility of the Dobbins Mine site is an important step toward its preservation, though eligibility alone does not automatically guarantee its placement on the National Register nor its protection from development.

Mining Memorials in a Canadian Town



One of two memorials located in Elliot Lake, Ontario. (Photo by Mike Kaas)

About 80 miles as the crow flies east from Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan/Ontario or the same distance west from Sudbury, Ontario is the town of Elliot Lake. Uranium was discovered there in the early 1950s and mining continued until 1990s. Several underground mines were located along a "Z" shaped formation in the Canadian Shield from above Elliot Lake to the north shore of Lake Huron. Among the fortunes made there was that of Joseph Hirshhorn, benefactor of the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden on the Mall in Washington, DC. Today, Elliot Lake is a haven for retirees who enjoy the nearby forests and lakes.

Two impressive memorials commemorate the Elliot Lake mining boom, the miners and others who made it possible, and the men and women who died as a result of an occupational injury or illness while working in the mines.

--Mike Kaas, Arlington VA

UK Historical Metallurgy Society Plans Non-Ferrous Conference

The Historical Metallurgy Society is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year with a series of conferences. In this Olympic year the Historical Metallurgy Society invites interested MHA members to a conference in Bristol, UK, on the real stories behind non-ferrous metals-- not just gold, silver, and bronze, but copper, zinc, brass and others.

This conference offers an opportunity to explore themes relating to the history and archaeology of all non-ferrous metals. With the SS Great Britain as a backdrop there will be a broad theme of communication: communication of ideas, metals as communication tools and the role of non-ferrous metallurgy in the slave trade.

The conference on the 6th of October will be hosted in the stunning Victorian surrounds of the SS Great Britain, the world's first great ocean liner. Registration for the conference will include access to the ship, refreshments, a light lunch and afternoon tea. The Bristol area is rich with non-ferrous archaeological sites, and on Sunday October 7th there will be an opportunity to explore Roman lead workings and post-medieval copper works with expert guides.

Registration information is available on the Historical Metallurgy website <http://www.hist-met.org>. For more information, see the website or contact **Eleanor Blakelock** at eleanor.blakelock@ironsmelting.net.

Australian Mining Historians to Explore Waihi, NZ

The Australian Mining History Association 18th Annual Conference will be held November 4-11, 2012, at Waihi, New Zealand. The theme of the conference is "Early Trans-Tasman Mining Links and Industrial Relations," though papers on all topics related to mining history are welcome. The conference also includes many field trips to surviving mine sites, a working open pit, and an operational gold mill now turned into a museum.

Waihi is located 150 kilometers southeast of Auckland and 70 kilometers north of Tauranga in the Hauraki District, on the east coast of the North Island of New Zealand, and has a population of about 4,500 people. Located at the base of the Coromandel Peninsula in a stunningly scenic part of the country, Waihi has a rich mining history.

As a result of the discovery of the Martha lode in 1880, Waihi became one of the most important gold and silver mine centers in the world and this history of mining is apparent everywhere. Waihi is still very much a gold mining town. Mining in Waihi spans three centuries, with the Martha open pit plus Favona and Trio underground mines currently operational.

For further information, see the AMHA website: <http://www.mininghistory.asn.au/conference/>

MHA Seeks Nominations for 2011- 2012 Spence Award

The Clark C. Spence Award Committee of the Mining History Association is accepting nominations for the best book published on mining history during 2011-2012. The committee considers books that meet the documentation and narrative standards set by the works of Clark Christian Spence, professor emeritus, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

To be considered, the book must focus on the history of a specific mining region, or a mining-related theme or topic, especially within the American West, or an individual or individuals prominent in the history of American mining. There are no temporal limits on subjects. The book must be published either in the year 2011 or 2012. A \$500 cash prize will be presented to the winning author or authors at the 2013 Mining History Association Annual Meeting.

Authors or publishers should send three copies of the nominated work to:

David Wolff
MHA Spence Award
301 Yellowstone Pl.
Spearfish, SD 57783

Two books shared the award for the best book in mining history published during 2009-2010. Congratulations to **Ronald Limbaugh** for *Tungsten in Peace and War, 1918-1946* published by University of Nevada Press and **Duane Smith** for *The Trail of Gold and Silver: Mining in Colorado, 1859-2009* published by University Press of Colorado. **Sheila Kelly** also received special recognition for her book *Treadwell Gold: An Alaska Saga of Riches and Ruin* published by University of Alaska Press.

Future MHA Meetings

Galena, Illinois: June 6-9, 2013

Trinidad, Colorado: June 5-8, 2014

Virginia City, Nevada (The Comstock Lode): June 2015

Rare Hoist Missing in New Mexico



Stover mine hoist, stolen in March 2012. (Photo courtesy Terry Humble)

MHA member Terry Humble passes along information that authorities are looking for a rare hoist stolen from a historic New Mexico mine. Some time in March 2012, thieves broke into the hoist house of the McGhee Mine in Hidalgo County, New Mexico (southwest of Lordsburg). They carted away the rare operating 1916 hoist made by the Stover manufacturing company in Illinois (pictured above), despite the machinery's weight of nearly four tons. A reward is being offered by the owner for its return. Any information should be sent to the Hidalgo County (NM) Sheriff's Office.

"Rock Hounds" Find Ore ... and Laughs

Industry website mining-technology.com informed its readers on May 29, 2012, that a new start-up company plans to use dogs to sniff out sulphide orebodies. According to the article, ore-sniffing dogs were used in Sweden, Russia, and Finland for geological exploration in the 1960s and 1970s, but after the demand for new nickel deposits dried up, the techniques for using dogs were largely forgotten. OreDog, a Swedish start-up company, has revived the old techniques and proposes to train dogs and their human handlers to find ore.

Such news provided rich material for Internet jokesters, as one might imagine.

Q. How do the dogs locate ore underground?

A. You tell them there are bones down there. And wait.

Another reader was unimpressed, noting "when they can find my keys, then I'll be interested."

[http://slashdot.org/comments.pl?sid=2884661, comments 40162989 / 40163103](http://slashdot.org/comments.pl?sid=2884661,comments%2040162989%2040163103)

Mining History Association
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First Class Mail

Upcoming Events

Western History Association Conference

Oct. 4-7, 2012

Denver, CO

<http://www.westernhistoryassociation.org>

Australian Mining History Association Conference

Nov. 4-11, 2012

Waihi, New Zealand

2013 Mining History Association Conference

June 6-9, 2013

Galena, IL

National Association of Mining History Organizations (NAMHO) Conference

June 28-July 1, 2013

Aberystwyth, Wales, UK

2014 Mining History Association Conference

June 5-8, 2014

Trinidad, CO

The *Mining History News* is published quarterly by the Mining History Association. It is sent to MHA members who also receive the annual *Mining History Journal*. The MHA is an organization of individuals interested in the history of mining and metallurgy. Submissions for the newsletter are encouraged and should be sent to Newsletter Editor Eric Nystrom at the MHA address or by email: eric.nystrom@rit.edu.

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Change of Address: Please send all address changes to Diane Dudley, Membership Chair, at:

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