



VOLUME 41

# Montana Ghost Town Quarterly

SUMMER 2011

## WELCOME



to PHILIPSBURG

## Montana Ghost Town Quarterly

The *Montana Ghost Town Quarterly* is published four times a year by the Montana Ghost Town Preservation Society, P.O. Box 1861, Bozeman, Montana 59771. Phone: 406-522-3856 e-mail: mtghosttown@yahoo.com http://ghosttown.montana.com Copyright © 2011, all rights reserved.

Founded in 1969, the Montana Ghost Town Preservation Society is a 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to educating the public to the benefits of preserving the historic buildings, sites, and artifacts that make up the living history of Montana. Opinions expressed in the bylined articles are the authors' and do not necessarily represent the views of the Montana Ghost Town Preservation Society.

### Summer 2011

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**2011 Convention Co-Chairpersons:**  
Gord Tracy & Mike Byrnes

# The Prez Sez

TERRY HALDEN

Your Convention Chairmen, Gord Tracy and Mike Byrnes have done a terrific job in putting together this year's itinerary. The list of attractions can be found on page 11 – and although this list has been firmed up, they inform me that a few other side trips are being pursued and may be firmed up between now and September. One of the changes for this year is a sit-down dinner at our banquet, which will be at the Old Works Golf Course. Gord had attended several functions there and can attest to the quality of the food and the service. The choice of menu you will be given is Rib Steak, or Roast Chicken, or Vegan for anyone who is a vegetarian. Orders will be taken at the table. Although the cost of food has risen considerably (as you are no doubt aware, when you do the family grocery shop) we have managed to retain the overall cost for the convention at \$70.00, which it was last year.

On a separate sheet, in this newsletter is a form for you to fill out and mail back to our secretary, and I would urge you to get it back to us by mid-August at the latest, as we have to let the Golf Course know how many people will be coming for dinner. Our membership year runs from July to June, so everyone's membership dues (except Life Members) are now due for renewal. Included on this form is a space for your membership renewal. If you plan on coming to the convention, please renew your membership at this time by using this handy form, and if you can't make it to the convention (we'll miss you) please fill the personal details at the top of the form and send it in with your membership renewal dues. Again you will note that the cost of a year's subscription has not increased, despite the rising cost of printing this newsletter and the cost of mailing it to you.

Talking of the newsletter, when I started to put it together in early April, I had no articles whatsoever. In a panic I sent out frantic e-mails to two trusted sources, Tom Lowe and John Stoner and they both came through with two articles each. John's second article about Old Center City will be in the next newsletter. Thanks guys. I must also thank Warren Winn in Libby for doing an awful lot of research on the Viking / Gold Hill mining camp south of that city and sending it to me along with photos he took last year when he

visited the site. From the info I was able to write the history of the camp. Brian Shovers at the Montana Historical Society in Helena, who saw the draft of this article made the comment "It's informative to read about the 'bonanza' mines that never go anywhere, which I suspect was much more typical than Marcus Daly's Anaconda mine".

The above illustrates for you the trials and tribulations of putting this newsletter together. If any of you have information or a personal story about some aspect of Montana's history – jot it down and e-mail it to me at [terryhalden@hotmail.com](mailto:terryhalden@hotmail.com) as I would be glad to have it for inclusion. If any of you are visiting Montana's ghost towns this summer, take some photos and e-mail them to me. Our ghost towns are deteriorating at an alarming speed, thanks to weather, neglect and vandalism, and what is there today, wasn't there in the same condition last year and may not be there next year, so your photo is unique, and I would love to see it. Likewise, if you have any old photos of places in Montana, please scan them and send them to me – even if you are not sure of the location in the photo as we love trying to identify locations of old photos.

**See You In Anaconda!**

**Terry**

### New Members

Secretary Margie Kankrlik reports the following **New Members** have joined our Association since the last newsletter. Please make them welcome.

Bud and Rachel Jarvis, Bozeman, MT  
Velma Luke, Whitefish, MT  
Michelle McDowell, Whitefish, MT

Paul and Arlene Wylie, Bozeman, MT  
Jean Timmermeister, Spokane Valley, WA  
Cynthia Doll, Polson, MT

M.G.T.P.S. Board Meeting,  
April 9, 2011

The meeting was called to order by President Terry Halden at the Pioneer Museum in Bozeman, MT. Board members in attendance were: Loretta Chapman, Terry Halden, Margie Kankrlik, and Gordon Tracy. Board members unable to attend were: Mike Byrnes, John Ellingsen, Tom Lowe, Dick Lee, Rosemary Lee, Meg McWhinney, Jan O'Brien, Maria O'Brien and Nick Shrauger.

Minutes of the October 23, 2010 board meeting were approved as printed in the Winter newsletter. Secretary/Treasurer Margie Kankrlik gave the Treasurer's report, which was accepted by the board.

Membership in the club and on the board was then discussed. Nick Shrauger, Jan and Maria O'Brien have not attended board meetings for several years. Questions were raised as to appropriateness of their being on the board. It was decided that Terry should contact these members to determine their level of interest in remaining on the board.

## OLD BUSINESS

At the last meeting a discussion was held on making a donation to Fort Connah Preservation Association. An estimate of costs for materials to restore the second building was presented, totaling \$3,500. After discussion, Gordon Tracy made a motion that the club donate \$2,500 toward this restoration with the understanding that the Montana Ghost Town Preservation Society be recognized. Loretta Chapman seconded the motion, a vote was taken and the motion passed. Margie Kankrlik was instructed to issue a check for \$2,500 to the Fort Connah Preservation Association as soon as possible.

Gordon Tracy spoke about this year's convention which, the base has been moved from Philipsburg to Anaconda. A list of hotels in the area was announced and it was decided that headquarters for the convention would be at the Anaconda Golf Course. Most of the activities have been scheduled and Gordon and Mike Byrnes will finalize the details in the coming weeks.

Mike Byrnes was unable to attend so the update on the Coolidge activity was postponed to the next meeting.

Terry Halden then stated he had a copy of "Hanging the Sheriff" produced by Meg McWhinney. Meg has given us permission to copy and sell this documentary. The board agreed it could be a minor fund raiser for us. We were unable to watch the production during the board meeting but a few copies will be made so those in attendance can see the quality of the work and maybe have some marketing ideas for it.

## NEW BUSINESS

Terry Halden then discussed the idea of a new book, Reflections 2. The first book, Reflections 1, consisted of reprinted articles from the newsletter from 1972 to 1986. This book would reprint selected articles from 1987 to 2001, along with pictures of the subject matter. Gordon Tracy made the motion to continue work on the book, Loretta Chapman seconded the motion, a vote was taken and the motion passed.

Terry Halden then asked for suggestions for possible convention sites in 2013. Lewistown and Helena were suggested. Terry will bring this subject up at the 2011 convention for a decision and approval.

Terry Halden then introduced Karin Ludeman, a long time Ghost Town member. She made a presentation on the Fort Maginnis Cemetery near Lewistown, MT. The wife of Granville Stuart, an ancestor of hers, is buried there along with other notable individuals. The cemetery is in disrepair, is surrounded by state land, and generally forgotten. Karin and her sister have taken it upon themselves to preserve this historical cemetery. She asked if the Ghost Town group would be interested in helping. A discussion was held and everyone agreed that it would be appropriate to assist with this project. The board asked Karin to detail the work that needs to be done, approximate cost associated with each task, and report back to the board at its next meeting. Karin agreed to do the research.

The death, this past Thursday of John DeHaas, the last of our founders, was brought up and it was agreed that either a wreath be sent the church on Monday or a donation of \$100 be made to any charity that John's obituary notice designated.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Next scheduled meeting, July 16, 2011 at 1:00 pm.

Margie Kankrlik  
Secretary/Treasurer

## OBITUARY.....Mary Jane Morin

Mary Jane Morin passed away in Missoula on February 3. She was a long time member of our society and a founding member of of the Western MT Ghost Town Preservation Society. Mary Jane was born on March 2, 1917 and at age of one month she moved to the now ghost town of Garnet where her father, Samuel Adams had two mines, a general store and a carpenter shop and her mother, Jennie Adams was the post mistress. She lived in Garnet until she was ten years old before moving to Missoula. In later life, every summer she could be found in Garnet giving visitors a first hand account of what life was like in Garnet during its heyday. She will be sadly missed.

# McINTIRE, BROADWATER COUNTY

By JOHN STONER

McIntire, Montana, began its existence on February 18, 1913, and ceased to exist on February 15, 1917, according to United States Postal records. The "town" of McIntire was, of course, in existence a little bit longer than the Post Office ... but not too much longer. It consisted of a single frame store building that sat adjacent to the homestead buildings of William McIntire, located about midway between Three Forks and Radersburg.

It all began when William McIntire and his wife Minnie came to the "North Bench" country (a term used by the Three Forks people to describe the southern end of Broadwater County) to homestead, probably in 1910. Filing on 160 acres in the southwest quarter of section ten, Township three north, Range one east, and filling the required residency and farming requirements, a patent (number 312516 and signed by President William H. Taft) was issued on January 30, 1913.

About the same time William McIntire arrived and filed for a homestead, a brother(?) named James H. McIntire and his wife Lillie also filed on a 160 acre claim about one mile northwest of William. This claim was located in the northwest quarter of section eight, Township three north, Range one east. James received his patent on January 6, 1913.

During the three years required to "prove up" on the homestead claim, William had constructed a house and several outbuildings. It was probably not until late in 1912, just prior to "proving up" that the store was built. William evidently came to Broadwater County with more ready cash than most homesteaders at that time. It would have taken considerable cash to build a first rate looking store (as evidenced by a photograph), not to mention to stock it. A book "Headwaters Heritage History" on page 306 says: "*Wm. McIntire opened a store at his farm in November of 1912. He sold groceries, dry goods, clothing, boots, shoes, hats, caps, mittens, flour, feed, produce and farm implements.*" Another bit of evidence that indicates he had more money in the bank than most of his neighbors at the time is that he had his water well drilled rather than by digging it by hand.

The location of his store was ideal. Whether or not it was by pure chance, or by design, is hard to say. The McIntire store sat at the crossroads leading to Three Forks, Radersburg and Toston, and served a vast area of homesteading families. The Post Office was located within the store building, which was the normal procedure at that time. The Post Office alone drew customers for the store from far and near.

William McIntire went far beyond selling just groceries and dry goods. By scanning the Miscellaneous Book No. 1 found in the office of the Broadwater County Clerk & Recorder, one will find notes and contracts filed between the McIntire store and its customers for items like "Saxton Roadsters" (horse drawn buggy) "Thrashing Outfits", "Deering Binders," and even "pianos." By the same token, a review of the early Lien Books in the Clerk & Recorder's office reveal that many of the McIntire store



William McIntire in front of his store.

Photo, courtesy Author

customers were behind in their payments. In viewing these old legal records it becomes evident that by late 1916 William McIntire was in deep financial trouble. He had simply extended too much credit to the surrounding homesteaders. Not only were the big items going unpaid for as the lien records show, but undoubtedly the over the counter dry goods and grocery sale tabs were piling up too.

The final straw for William McIntire came in early 1917. On the seventieth day of January his grocery supplier, the Bozeman Wholesale Grocery Co., filed a lien against him for past due accounts. William's brother (?) James pulled up stakes about the same time, but unlike William, he sold his patented homestead on the same date the Post Office closed, and it is assumed the two families left the country together.

William's patented homestead and the store remained abandoned for three years while the taxes went unpaid. At this time Broadwater County assumed ownership of the property and one year later on January 13, 1921, a Sheriff's Tax Sale was held with the Hennepin Mortgage Co. purchasing the property for a sum of \$544.80. (See Deed Book - 26, page 36)

The book "Broadwater Bygones" says: "*The post office of McIntire and store stood out on the prairie for several years but soon the dry boards were torn down and salvaged and roads were changed until, today, no evidence remains.*"

A visit to the old McIntire site by Mike Castleberry and me in early March of 2004 proved quite rewarding. The "no evidence remaining" as quoted in Broadwater Bygones is somewhat misleading as much evidence remains. Surprisingly the water well casing still stands above the ground even though the site of the house, outbuildings and store are now under cultivation. The store building, and perhaps the house, once stood on concrete foundations

## The United States of America,

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

WHEREAS, a Certificate of the Register of the Land Office at **Bozeman, Montana,** has been deposited in the General Land Office, whereby it appears that, pursuant to the Act of Congress of May 20, 1882, "To Secure Homesteads to Actual Settlers on the Public Domain," and the acts supplemental thereto, the claim of **William McIntire** has been established and duly consummated, in conformity to law, for the **southwest quarter of Section ten in Township three north of Range one east of the Montana Meridian, Montana,** containing one hundred sixty acres,

according to the Official Plat of the Survey of the said Land, returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE by the Surveyor-General:

**NOW KNOW YE** That there is, therefore, granted by the UNITED STATES unto the said claimant the tract of Land above described; **TO HAVE AND TO HOLD** the said tract of Land, with the appurtenances thereto, unto the said claimant and to the heirs and assigns of the said claimant. **Consent** subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights, as may be recognized and acknowledged by the local customs, laws, and decisions of courts; and there is reserved from the lands hereby granted, a right of way thereon for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I, **William H. Taft**  
President of the United States of America, have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand, at the City of Washington, the **THIRTIETH**  
day of **JANUARY** in the year of our Lord one thousand  
and no hundred and **THIRTEEN** and of the Independence of the  
United States the one hundred and **THIRTY-SEVENTH**

By the President: *William H. Taft*  
By *W. D. Kellogg* Secretary,  
*W. D. Kellogg*  
Recorder of the General Land Office.

RECORD OF PATENTS: Patent Number **312516**  
4-1000-21

as they were found broken apart and pushed into a nearby coulee. The immediate area around the water well casing was littered with broken glass and pottery shards ... some of the glass having turned very purple in color. A metal detector turned up an abundance of the usual homestead yard trash and junk, from nails & bolts to metal harness parts and tin ware. Of course the buildings are long gone but nevertheless McIntire, Montana, can still be found.

The former location of McIntire and all the land a naked eye can take in while turning a complete circle, looks today much like it did before the coming of the homesteaders in the early 1900's, meaning there's nothing to see but prairie, sagebrush and foothills in the distance. The land surrounding old McIntire is now being dry land farmed, but most of the land towards the west ... once dotted with a homestead shack on every 160 acres... has reverted back to its original dry and somewhat desolate conditions.

A 1914 Broadwater County map in the Broadwater County Museum shows the McIntire area heavily populated with homesteaders. It's no wonder William McIntire would have had an abundance of customers, and more so if he was willing to extend credit, which he apparently did.

Simply put, 160 acres of that dry desolate landscape was not productive enough, even in the best of years, to support a family ... let alone the purchase of a piano!

Under the circumstances it is easy to see why William McIntire failed. In fact he probably would have failed without extending credit, not that he didn't have the customer base, but the lack of buying power ... or good old hard cash ... just wasn't there.

He wasn't the first homesteader merchant to go broke, nor was he the last.

## OBITUARY..... John N. DeHaas Jr.

On April 7, 2011, we lost one of our founding members with the death of John N. DeHaas Jr. John was born July 4, 1926 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and moved to Fort Worth, Texas with his family, where he completed his education, including earning a Bachelor's degree in Architectural Design and a Master of Education degree from Texas A & M University. John was teaching in Texas when he met and married Bernice Wallace in 1950.

The following year he was offered a one year position, which ended up becoming a life-time career, with Montana State College (now Montana State University) in Bozeman. He was also a registered architect and designed several homes in Bozeman.

He became fascinated with the history of Montana, especially its ghost towns, visiting most of them and documenting them with his expert use of the camera. His photographs won many awards.

In 1969 John got together with Dr. Robert Chadwick, mining geologist at M.S.U., McKinley Anderson, attorney, and Bert McCroskey, instructor in architecture at M.S.U., with the idea of forming an organization. It became a reality and the Montana Ghost Town Preservation Society was formed, receiving its charter from the state of Montana in 1971. He was an active member on the board of the Society until just before his passing.

We will miss John, and extend our heartfelt condolences to Bernice and her family.

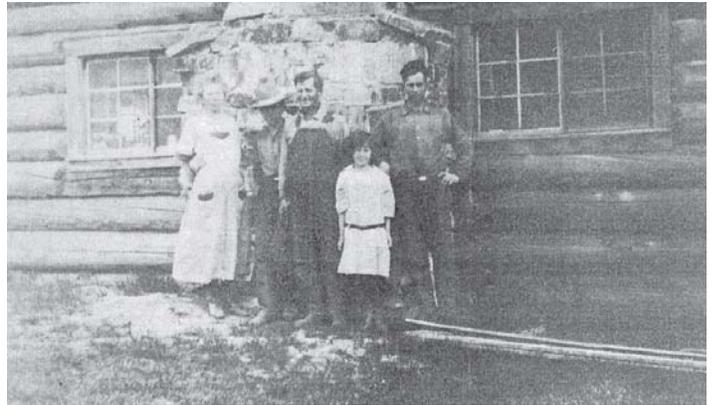
# The HISTORY of the VIKING / GOLD HILL MINE

By Terry Halden, researched & photographed by Warren Winn

Sometime in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, an unknown prospector was checking the Silver Butte stream, a tributary of the Fisher River, south of Libby, when he discovered some color. Naming his find the 'Old Bullion' he moved on and never returned. In December 1891 Herman Hildebrandt relocated the mine and christened it the 'Gold Hill'. But he soon learned that because of its remoteness, the cost of freighting in mining supplies and hauling out ore required a heavy capital expenditure. As a result no development occurred until 1909 when he either formed or sold out to the Gold Hill Mining Company. The June 10, 1911 issue of the Mining World states: "*Perry Heater, manager of the Gold Hill Mining Company, with a force of seven men is clearing space on the company's mill site on Vermillion Creek, 4 miles from Trout Creek, to install a 10-stamp mill in the near future. The Gold Hill Co.'s property consists of seven claims, located along a porphyry dike, with an average width of 35 feet. The work has been carried on systematically for the last two years, under the direction of Mr. Heater, and consists of inclines, tunnels and drifts to demonstrate the continuity of the ores. With an intermediate tunnel into the hill, giving a depth of 300 feet, the average values are \$8.50 in gold. Stooping will continue to be the principal work for the present*". There are no more references in the various mining magazines of the day and it is to be assumed that further exploration did not come up to expectations and the effort was abandoned.

Fast forward to the 1930's and the great depression; according to the Libby Writers group book, 'In the Shadow of the Cabinets', the Herbert Fowler family were homesteading on the Silver Butte stream and had been since the mid 1910s. "*Mark Fowler, the oldest son liked to prospect and found a quartz vein of ore containing gold two miles above the Fowler ranch*". The area was literally pock-marked with prospect holes, left by early gold seekers. When he re-located the 'Gold Hill', long time abandoned, Fowler had some ore samples tested and with the favorable results that he got he went about looking for investment capital to further the development of the mine. He got three men from Great Falls interested and they formed a company known as the Viking Mining Company, incorporated on June 11, 1934 with A. B. Dirks as President, Robert Smith as Vice-President, and attorney J. B. Gergen as Secretary-Treasurer. The company was capitalized at \$50,000.

The financial arrangement between the company and Mark Fowler, and if he was given any 'up-front' money, is unknown, but it appears that he allowed the investors to bank roll the development with him to receive 10% of the net profits from the renamed, 'Viking' mine.



Left to Right: Mary, Earl, Herbert, Jean and Mark Fowler, in front of their homestead on Silver Butte meadow.

Photo, courtesy LIBBY WRITERS GROUP

The Viking Mining Company employed Oscar V. Miller as project manager. He was an accomplished assayer, a noted mining engineer and had experience in running small mining operations in the Libby area. He immediately went about his job, for as the Western News reported in mid-1934 "*Compressor machinery was moved in and erection of a 35-ton ball mill and flotation units was planned for later this year. With the recent discovery of six parallel veins, the largest being four feet in width and extending a distance of 3,000 feet on the surface with it averaging \$38.60 per ton*".

Obviously the initial capitalization of \$50,000 was not going to go too far and the company was forced to down-size their initial mill size estimates, for in the July 23, 1936 issue of the Western News, an article stated: "*Present activity has consisted in the installation of a 10-stamp mill. The mill is now about completed and its expected a trial run will be made within the week.*"

After two years of virtually no production, things were about to take a turn for the better. The March 15, 1937 issue of the Mining World ran a feature that was a copy of an article that appeared in the Feb 18, 1937 edition of the Western News. The news from the 'Viking' mine was "*Oscar V. Miller, the superintendent of the Viking Mining Company reports that it has recently shipped the first gold bullion to be produced by the cyanide method in the Libby District. The ore is crushed by a Blake Jaw Crusher and ground to a 25 mesh in the 10-stamp mill. Free gold is caught in Pierce amalgamators and the pulp passed over Deister Herstrom tables to extract the concentrates, which are then treated by the cyanide method. According to Superintendent Miller, very rich ore is being uncovered during the present development work, which is averaging \$170.00 per ton.*"

For some unknown reason, Miller was fired by the company shortly thereafter and replaced by Frank Humphrey. Miller was a conservative manager, aware of the precarious financial predicament of the company, and planned accordingly.

Possibly he was too conservative for the mine owners and now that the mine was producing, they wanted some bigger results. Humphrey, upon taking over, obliged them by purchasing more sophisticated equipment at a cost of \$31,000 whist there was a corresponding increase in wages as extra men were hired for the increased production.

There was another report in the local paper of March 17, 1938 where Humphrey indicated that a new vein of ore had been discovered and the mill was now working at a capacity of 60-tons a day. But the company was still in financial straits. Pay roll was often missed and the

employees, who were grateful for just having a job during the depression, could not complain for fear of being fired. The vein of ore that tunnel number 4 was following suddenly disappeared in a fault in the strata. Tunnel number 5 was dug in an attempt to locate it, but, (as was later discovered) it was dug parallel to where the vein was anticipated to be and missed it entirely. This was over 500 feet of blasting through solid rock with no payload at the end. The result was that sometime in late 1939, or early 1940, the company closed down, sold what they could salvage of the mill equipment and walked away from the 'Viking'.



ABOVE: Remains of the Viking mill in 2010.

LEFT: Some of the machinery left in the mill.

Text continues with more photos, next page.....

After no production in 1934/35, little in 1936, the meager production of 1937 (1959 tons of ore), did the 'increased production' of 1938 do anything to stem the red ink the company was apparently drowning in, especially considering Humphrey's massive mill equipment purchases in late 1938. But was the company losing money, or, just to avoid taxes and its commitment to the Fowlers, was this some creative book-keeping? Official company records indicated concentrates were only shipped to A.C.M. Co. in Anaconda, but employees remember concentrates being trucked to A. S. & R. Co. in East Helena, Pioneer Smelters in Seattle, Washington and to mills in Wallace, Idaho.

'In the Shadow of the Cabinets' maybe says it best "*Mark sold it (the 'Gold Hill') to a group from Great Falls who put in a small mill and worked it for a couple of years until it ran out of ore. It paid for the mill, the crew's wages and some extra. Some say they were wise in not trying to find more ore there. Others tried and went broke. They had good luck selling their mill and other equipment*".

But did Mark Fowler sell the 'Gold Hill' to the Viking Mining Company of Great Falls? Supporting the theory that the mine was only leased to the company is the fact that on February 28, 1941 the 'Gold Hill' lodes, No's 1, 2, and 3 were officially plated by Gertrude Z. Fowler (the wife of Mark?) with a listing of three cuts, two tunnels and interest in three improvement tunnels with a value of \$28,307.50. Of course, with the abandonment of the mine by the company, Mark would have been the first to know about it and could have waited until the New Year rolled around and merely 'jumped the property'.

A cabin and storage building found at the Viking property.



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## IN THE WAY OF PROGRESS

by JOHN PHILLIPS

The gold rush that began in California in 1849 did not stop there, but continued for nearly fifty years, as each discovery seemed to lead to another. The mass immigration that followed depleted the resources of the land and threatened the very existence of American Indian tribes who depended on these lands. In July 1862 the epicenter of the gold rush moved east of the Rockies to Bannack and southwest Montana. New trails were opened and the effected tribes sometimes resisted encroachment on their lands harassing, stealing stock, and occasionally attacking. Native American resistance though was often countered by violent retaliation by settlers and the military, which was demonstrated by the rush to Bannack and southwest Montana.

A common theme in the journals of immigrants and residents as they traveled between isolated communities or Salt Lake was fear of Indian attack. While most traveled without incident on occasion tribes inhabiting the travel routes reacted with violence. In January 1863 a miner, William Bevins reported to John Kinney, Chief Justice of Utah Territory that he and seven other miners were attacked

by a group of Shoshone on the road between Bannack and Salt Lake, and one of the miners was killed. Bevins also reported that a short time before the same group of Indians killed 10 miners traveling from Bannack to Salt Lake. With tensions already at the boiling point Colonel Patrick Conner attacked the supposed perpetrators near Preston, Idaho in what became known as the Battle of Bear River or the Bear River Massacre. During the battle the military suffered 27 dead and 40 wounded, but estimates of Indian casualties range as high as 400, including 80-90 women, plus old men and children. In another incident a wagon train led by James Fisk in 1864 attempted to cut overland from the Missouri to the Yellowstone River and then to the gold fields, but near the North Dakota and Montana border they were attacked and kept under siege by a group of Sioux for sixteen days. Before being rescued by soldiers from Ft. Rice, Fisk tried to ransom a woman being held captive but to no avail and nine men were killed and three mortally wounded. In response the immigrants left behind hardtack laced with strychnine killing some 25 Indians.



In a less dramatic way residents in the gold rush towns of southwest Montana felt the impact of Native American resistance by disrupting communication, particularly mail service with the east. Several Bannack residents mention in their letters delays in the mail and the possibility of mail having to come and go via Panama-San Francisco-Portland because of Indian trouble along the overland routes. Mary Edgerton commenting on the inconvenience of a lost trunk wrote, "We do not know but that the Indians have confiscated it. If they have, think what a nice time they will have parading around with our corsets and hoop skirts on – to say nothing of the 'lots' of other things that are in [it]."

It was not uncommon for Shoshone, Bannock and other tribes to come into Bannack and trade or camp nearby as they passed through the region. In most instances these meetings passed peaceably but on some occasions their mere presence created fear. Granville Stuart reported in Oct. 1862 that Winnemucca and 200 Piute came to the "Beaverhead mines...as these Indians are a treacherous band it is feared that they will make trouble so a party of us are going to start over there to help if it becomes necessary," James Morely reported the same incident "two hundred Indians rode into camp causing a stir among the miners, although they seemed peaceably inclined." Later, in February he mentions Indians bringing in stolen horses. The journal of James Morely recorded regular interaction between Native Americans and residents of Bannack and while most of the time these meetings went peaceably on occasion the extreme prejudice on the part of the settlers resulted in horrible acts of violence.

During the winter and spring of 1863 residents recorded a couple of violent attacks directed at Bannock and Shoshone visitors. On January 20, 1863 James Morely reported, "desperadoes shot some Indians, 'sheepstealers,' camped near Yankee Flat." The next day he reported that three Indians, including a child, and one white man were killed and others were not expected to survive. The Indians had peacefully camped there for 10 or 12 days before Charlie Reeves, William Moore, and Billy Mitchell, fortified with

courage from the saloons, carried out the atrocity. What seems out of character for the time was that the community decided to act. A "posse of 30 or 40 men started in pursuit" and captured the perpetrators on Rattlesnake Creek and returned them to Bannack for trial. With no regular legal mechanisms in place a Miner's Court was created and judge and jury selected. The men were found guilty of manslaughter and banished, because "killing Indians was not considered murder." Following the trial "a purse of about One Hundred Dollars" was collected from among the towns people for Moore and Reeves and they departed. The biggest problem with the verdict was there was no one in Bannack to enforce it and Moore and Reeves eventually returned to town.

In April 1863 Bannack residents recorded another atrocity in which Lemhi Shoshone Chief Snag was killed and scalped. While there are several different accounts of why Snag was in town, including visiting his daughter and returning a captive white child, they all agree he was there peaceably. Edwin Purple reported that Buck Stinson and Haze Lyons confronted Snag in the street and "one of them put his six-shooter to his head and deliberately blew his brains out." As Snag's companions fled someone shouted, "that the Indians were murdering the whites [and] many of the best disposed citizens rushed into the streets...and commenced firing" at the fleeing Indians. After the murder it was reported that Cyrus Skinner came out, scalped Snag and had the bloody trophy hanging in his saloon.

The gold rush brought to a head the clash of cultures in the American west and the gold strike on Grasshopper Creek in July 1862 brought it to southwest Montana. James Fergus noted on May, 3, 1863 "There is no doubt but the Indians have murdered and plundered a great many whites. But so far as my experience goes during the past winter the whites have been the aggressors and the Indians have behaved their selves by far most like civilized people. Many of the rowdies here think it fine fun to shoot an Indian." An unfortunate outcome of the gold rush was the detrimental impact it had on Native American people and the violent encounters that resulted.

**HO! FOR THE STATES!**  
**20th of September, 1865.**  
**600 Passengers Wanted.**

**A** FLEET of Mackinaw boats will leave the mouth of the Yellowstone Canon, for the States. The boats are from thirty to thirty-five feet long; sharp at both ends, and built so as to be proof against all injury from obstructions to river navigation.

**FARE**—From Virginia City to St. Joseph, Mo., \$40 00; from the place of embarkation, \$30 00.

Experienced navigators of the Yellowstone and Missouri will act as pilots, and the whole will be in charge of a man well acquainted with Indian affairs.

Tickets for passage can be obtained from A. M. Torbett, at the Clerk's Office, Virginia City, and at Taylor and Thompson's, Helena.

**TERMS**—Ten dollars in advance, and the balance on embarkation.

Tickets must be secured by the 1st of September.

R. C. KNOX & CO., Proprietors.

August 4th, 1865. 50-1m

# MINING BOOM RESULTS in the ELECTRIFICATION of BANNACK

By Tom Lowe



In 1895 the F. L. Graves electric powered connected bucket gold dredge was built along the bank of Grasshopper Creek. This was the first electric powered gold dredge built in North America. Electric power was supplied from a turbine that sat on the south side of the creek at the east end of town. Water from a ditch high on the hill side was piped down to the old Pelton wheel generator. Although the dredge had electric motors and lights the residents of Bannack had to make due with oil lamps and candles for light.

During the 1930s our country was in the Great Depression. Jobs were difficult to find in most areas and images of long soup lines in the cities come to mind. The Bannack area however, was in the midst of a mining boom. Great sums of money were invested in bringing mining technology to the area.

According to a front-page article in the Dillon Examiner of December 17, 1930, The I. B. Mining Company brought power to the Bannack area to provide electricity for the Gold Leaf Mill on the "Sleeping Princess" property, located about one mile below Bannack. According to the article "*Twenty miles one hundred and five feet, as straight as the crow flies, this line goes up and down the steep mountains from 5,400 feet to nearly 8,000 feet, and down to 6,000 feet at the mill. The ultra modern line runs up and down the steep, rocky mountains so much that the poles seem to be playing hide and seek*"

The Gold Leaf Mill has long since disappeared. All that remains of this once impressive cyanide leaching mill is the concrete foundation along the south side of Grasshopper Creek below Nugget Hill. According to long time gold miner and local resident Ernie Sorel, the old mill was destroyed in the late 1980s. A controlled burn by a mining company got out of control and the mill was consumed by fire.

In 1931 E. L. Honska brought power to the Hendricks mill across the creek from Bannack. Prior to this the mill was powered by a steam boiler. About this time power lines were extended to the town. At last the town of Bannack finally had electricity for its residents. It must have been a real treat for the folks of Bannack to be able to flip a switch for instant light once their homes were wired for electricity. This was quite a development for a remote location like Bannack to have electric power before the REA was created. The Rural Electrification Administration (REA) was an agency of the United States Federal Government created on 11 May 1935 through efforts of the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt to bring electricity to rural families in America. The REA's task was to promote electrification in rural areas, which in the 1930s rarely were provided with electricity due to the unwillingness of power companies to serve remote areas. Bannack was ahead of most isolated rural areas in the country in getting electric service. If not for the very active mining operations

in the area Bannack would have had to wait quite a while before getting electricity.

The following is a portion of a front page story in the April 17, 1931 issue of the Dillon Tribune: "*The Company's activity includes the town. Bannack's main street is wide and clean. Houses desolate for a decade and a half have been repaired and electrically lighted. The shades of Henry Plummer and his robber crew must pause in wonder if they visit the scenes of their brigandage, when they see Bannack's main street at night and the lights a hundred times brighter than candles which burn in every home.*" The article goes on to say the population is now 200 men, women and children with 60 to 70 men employed at the mines. Even though jobs were plentiful this was in fact during the depression and many more job seekers were in town. "*The company office is daily swamped with men rustling jobs, and there are already more there than can be put to work. Some are living in tents. Men who probably have not seen the inside of a church for years are using the edifice at Bannack for a dormitory – the nights are cold along the Grasshopper diggings.*" The story continues "*a couple of hotels, several eating places, a soft drink parlor or two and yesterday a grocery store started. A baseball team is busy practicing and shortly will be ready to take on all comers. Horseshoe pitchers are at it from early morn to dewey eve.*"

Large scale placer mining using draglines and wash plants was also occurring along much of the creek at this time. Those men that could not find work at the larger operations for wages often went out with simple tools to sluice and pan the gravels for what gold they could find. It may not have made them rich but at least they could find enough gold for their grub. During the depression Bannack was experiencing another mining boom.

The lives of Bannack's residents were improved with the arrival of electric power. Besides convenient, bright electric lights, refrigerators were a big improvement over the old-fashioned iceboxes. Being able to tune into the world with a radio was a marvel. One former resident reminisced that they would sometimes bring a projector and movies out from Dillon and show movies in the schoolhouse. The old mining camp of Bannack had entered the 20th Century!

Today, the old electric power line that provided power to the mills and the town has been removed. The old line was so difficult to maintain that a new line has been rerouted over more accessible terrain. The new line follows part of the old stage route from Bannack to Virginia City and passes in the ravine behind Road Agent Rock. Road Agent Rock got its name as it was purported to be used as a hiding spot for members of the outlaw group known as the "Innocents". The road agents would hide their horses behind the rock and use it as a place to rob unsuspecting travelers. Today you can still see remnants of the old stage road in front of the rock.

With the rerouting of the old power line, Bannack State Park is now being supplied by Vigilante Electric Coop instead of Northwest Energy. One benefit to the park is that the lines that provide our electricity now come in from the west instead of the east and have been buried underground. Bannack looks more like it did in the 1800s. The big power line that goes through the park on the south

side of Grasshopper Creek belongs to Idaho Power. Now that their line is fed from the sub station near the Bannack Cemetery instead of from the east end of the park, we hope to have that abandoned power line removed next year to clean up the view shed. Although we still have electricity here in the park, Bannack is once again free from most visible power lines.

## **MGTPS Annual Fall Meeting – Anaconda/Philipsburg**

**September 9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> 2011**

### **SCHEDULE (Subject to last minute changes)**

#### **Friday, September 9<sup>th</sup> 2011**

- 5:00 – 9:00 Registration & Reception, at Old Works Golf Course, 1205 Pizzini Way, Anaconda.  
Open Bar, Hors - d'oevres.
- 6: 00 / 7:00 / 8:00 Anaconda Chamber of Commerce will be conducting one hour tours of Anaconda (including the world famous Washoe Theater), in their Whites Vintage Touring bus. However, each tour is limited to 13 passengers and will be on a first come, first served basis. The cost is \$5.00 and is NOT included in your registration fee.
- 7:00 – 8:00 Board Meeting

#### **Saturday, September 10<sup>th</sup> 2011**

- 9:00 Meet at Old Works Golf Course for bus trip to Philipsburg. (Buses leave at 9:00a.m. sharp)
- 9:45 Walking tours of Philipsburg with local guides highlighting the history and architecture of downtown buildings.
- 12:00 Lunch at Silver Mill Restaurant & Saloon (Soup / Salad / Sandwich, INCLUDED)
- 1:00 – 3:00 Guided tours of Opera House Theater to see historical actors' signatures on the walls, etc.  
Self-tours of Philipsburg Mining Museum
- 3:00 – 4:00 Free time to watch the downtown displays in the Miners' Union competitions and visit local stores.
- 4:15 Buses leave for return trip to Anaconda.
- 6:00 Happy Hour Cocktails at Old Works Golf Course (No Host bar)
- 7:00 Sit-down dinner with choice of Rib Steak or Roast Chicken
- 8:15 Annual General Meeting
- 8:30 Guest Speaker – Steve Immenschuh, Sheriff of Philipsburg, who will talk on the history of Philipsburg

#### **Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup> 2011**

- 9:00 Meet at Old Works Golf Course for caravan to Deer Lodge
- 9:30 > Self-tours of Old State Prison, Car Museum, Powell County Museum & Grant-Kohrs Ranch
- 12:00 Lunch at Scharf's Restaurant. Open menu (NOT included in registration fee)

#### **MOTELS IN ANACONDA:**

MARCUS DALY, 119 W. Park Avenue (406) 563-3411 or (800) 535-6528

TRADE WINDS, 1600 E. Commercial Avenue (406) 563-3428

VAGABOND, 1421 E. Park Avenue (406) 5635251

Other smaller motels and B & B residences are available and can be located on the internet



## Montana Ghost Town Quarterly

MONTANA GHOST TOWN PRESERVATION SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 1861, BOZEMAN, MT, 59771-1861

### REVIEW:

#### Wyoming Range War - The Infamous Invasion of Johnson County by JOHN W. DAVIS

For those of you that have an interest in the history of Wyoming, our neighbor to the south, and in particular 'the Infamous Johnson County War', author John W. Davis' book will go down as the definitive account of the invasion, the incidents leading up to it and its aftermath.

In the 1880's Wyoming's cattle barons in Cheyenne were becoming increasingly aware of small time settlers coming onto the unfenced range. As a result they branded many as rustlers along with any cowboy who had the audacity to try and start his own herd. In particular Johnson County and the county seat of Buffalo were singled out 'as a nest of rustlers' who ran roughshod over the population. The cattle barons had a friendly press, control of the state cattlemen's association and the state legislature. It culminated in the spring of 1892 when the cattlemen imported fifty gunmen from Texas and organized an invasion of Johnson County armed with a death list containing names of local residents from the local sheriff, a local attorney, the editor of the local paper and others who had proven unfriendly to the cattlemen's cause. They even cut the telephone lines so there could be no advance warning and had the acting governor issue an order that the state militia could not be called out by any authority other than himself.

It went wrong and the townspeople rose up en masse and the invaders found themselves besieged and surrounded at a ranch south of Buffalo, only to be rescued by the cavalry at Fort McKinney. Many of the Texas gunmen eventually found refuge in Montana.

John W. Davis has practiced law in the Big Horn Basin of Wyoming for thirty years and is exceptionally qualified to research and write this excellent account of the Johnson County War. The book is available at the Montana Historical Society store in Helena or can be obtained at your favorite bookstore. Highly recommended.

Terry Halden

