



MONTANA  
**GHOST TOWN**  
PRESERVATION SOCIETY

preserving history for the next generation

**VOLUME 54**

**NEWSLETTER**

**FALL 2022**



Quinlan School

Photo by Jolene Ewert-Hintz

**A BIG WELCOME TO ALL OF OUR NEW MEMBERS!**

Sandra Archer, Bozeman MT, Kara Karstetter, Kalispell MT, Jeanie Marshall-Pride, Bozeman MT, Sue Shockley, Bozeman MT, Tony Novotny & Karen Baker, Belgrade MT, Lark Robart, Albuquerque NM, Dana Werner, Poplar MT, Austin Allison, Lubbock TX, Dustin Schillinger, Butte, MT, Tim & Lori Harmon, Billings MT, Lori Taylor, Malta MT, Donald Waite, Liberty Lake, WA, Sandy Bailey, Pony MT, Deborah Cuyle, Milbank SD, Dana Doney, Belgrade MT, Jon Carpenter, Bozeman, MT, Ted Hildebrant, Anaconda, MT

## Montana Ghost Town Quarterly

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Founded in 1970, 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 M. G. T. P. S.

### FALL 2022

**President:** Brad O'Grosky  
**Vice President:** Mark Hufstetler  
**Secretary / Treasurer:** Connie Griffin  
**Website Administrator:** Cindy Shearer  
**Facebook Administrator:** Jolene Ewert-Hintz  
**Grants Administrator:** Cindy Shearer  
**Membership:** Connie Griffin  
**Newsletter Editor:** Jolene Ewert-Hintz  
**2022 Convention:** Brad O'Grosky  
**Directors:** Dan Hill, David Steindorf and Tammy Steindorf  
**Immediate Past President:** Terry Halden

Hello everyone, hope you're all doing well. It was nice to see 40 of you at the convention at White Sulphur Springs. The weather was perfect and everything went as planned with good speakers, great food and nice accommodations. Thanks to the people in WSS for helping to make it a success.

Terry Halden wasn't there and several asked about him. He and Barb were in Toronto for their golden wedding anniversary. I trust they had a good time, but were missed. We had several new members and hoped they enjoyed themselves as well.

We still have some projects and possible ones. The Gallatin County historic site replacement signs are still being determined, but many have been determined for replacement. A couple of possible projects are the Reese Creek School renovation and the Highland City structural support south of Butte. And after the convention there is interest in possibly fencing off the buildings at Castle.

We have three new board members, Linda Dutcher, Rita and Ray Reichman have joined the board and Rita will be secretary, Ray will be treasurer and Jolene will take care of membership. This relieves Connie of her responsibilities as she has done a wonderful job filling all three of those positions. A big and heartfelt thanks to her for doing all of that.

A couple of good historic readings are Ghost Towns and History of Montana and Ghost Hunting in Montana by Conrad. I think you would enjoy both of them as I certainly do.

Stay well and remember once it's gone , it's gone forever, Brad

### Montana Ghost Town Preservation Society Annual General Meeting Minutes-September 10, 2022

President Brad O'Grosky called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m. Brad thanked Bob & Kelli for the great food. Tammy Steindorf motioned to approve the September 11, 2021 Annual General Meeting Minutes. David Steindorf seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Connie read the Treasurer's Report. For the Fiscal year of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023, as of September 9, 2022 M.G.T.P.S. had an Income of \$2,505.00 and Expenses of \$1,334.01 for a Net Income of \$1,170.99. Cash Balances are Petty Cash \$160.20, Checking Account \$11,833.64, and Savings Account \$20,433.21. Tammy motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded. The motion passed.

Brad announced that Jolene Ewert-Hintz is the new editor of the M.G.T.P.S. newsletter. Terry resigned as the editor last winter. Both Terry and Darian have resigned from the board. Brad asked members to join the board, especially younger ones. He mentioned that he and Connie need replacements.

**Projects:** The Gallatin County Preservation Board is replacing old and damaged historical site signs. The board has approved to donate up to \$5,000.00 towards this project. More information is needed before proceeding.

**Possible Projects:** Reese Creek was founded in the 1860 by John Reese. The Reese Creek Community Center Board needs funding to re-cover (for preservation) the original barrel ceiling in the Schoolhouse/Community Center. Highland City, near Butte, needs funding for material to stabilize the buildings.

Brad said that next year's convention needs someone to run it. A member asked if a convention had been held in the Fort Benton area, he felt there are many interesting places to visit there. He also said the Union Hotel has new owners.

Brad announced that due to fire danger and limited parking the trip to Castle (Ghost Town) would not be part of the convention. He urged members, that were going on their own, to carpool. Jerry Hanley thanked the board members for all their work.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m. Respectfully Submitted, Connie Griffin, Secretary/Treasurer

## Bringing History Back to Life, Part 3

### By Sonya Ratcliff Rosenthal, and contributions from Mary Kay Stephan Nye

In Part 1 we introduced the 2 stone buildings in Marysville and transition over time. Part 2 provided some commentary on the restoration efforts of the buildings. Logically we are now here for Part 3, the backbar.

There are several stories intertwined in Part 3, hopefully you will enjoy the surprises and twists.

My story starts like this:

Marvin Ratcliff (Dad) worked for Anaconda Copper Mining Company (ACM) in Butte between 1970 – 1976 and during this time ACM was actively expanding the Berkeley Pit for open pit copper mining. The pit expansion removed homes, businesses, schools, churches, bars, and all other features of a community to make way for mining. During this expansion, there were opportunities to salvage items of interest from the buildings. From my 8-year-old knowledge of the expansion, I understood that Dad paid \$1 to salvage items from a building before it was demolished.

When the pit expansion approached Meaderville and McQueen, one of the buildings that Dad salvaged items from was known historically as the McQueen Bar, later referred to as a soda fountain/drug store, and then its final use was to store Clover Club products. More information on the building is further in this article. In 1970 the building had an 18' long pink-painted backbar, a single lane bowling alley and pressed metal ceilings.

In Part 1, I shared that the family lived in an early 1900 era 2-story railroad house near the Butte Civic Center. I mentioned that it had a small single car garage and a small workshop out the back. I am not exaggerating when I say a *small* garage and a *small* workshop. I have no idea how the backbar, sections of the bowling alley, and the ceiling tiles fit into the

spaces, nor how there was still room to work on restoring the backbar, making furniture from the bowling alley, storing all the other salvaged treasures and then butchering game. I have no recollection of ever helping with the backbar, however, my younger brother remembers going into the bar and seeing the bowling alley on the left and the bar on the right: we suspect dad did all the restoration. See Photo A of the interior of the garage. Note that the mirrors are not on the backbar, thus allowing it to 'fit' into the garage.



Photo A: Dad, elk and backbar in small garage

My parents were about to purchase some land around Butte and we were having fun designing a house for the backbar to be a key feature in it. However, at that time, ACM was focusing their attention on copper mining in Chile instead of Butte. Before we could set up a really cool house, we left the copper mines of Butte and were relocated to the silver mine in Park City, Utah. By that time, Dad had removed most of the pink paint from the backbar and had gold gilded the Corinthian styled capitals (the top of each of the round columns). There was a purposeful family decision to leave some of the pink paint on the two ends - this allowed a retention of the 'soda fountain' history as well as to recognize the huge effort to restore the backbar to its initial glory. Plus those areas were up against the garage walls and could not be easily reached. ☺

We were in Park City for 3 years and early on Dad built a decent sized 'out building' to host the backbar. We then moved to Nye for the platinum/palladium exploration, Dad built an outbuilding for the backbar. Same thing with the move to the gold hills of Helena – a new outbuilding for the backbar. In each location the backbar was fully assembled. And in each location the family used what we called 'The Golden Gate,' for family birthday parties, wedding celebrations, and any excuse to enjoy the beautiful piece of furniture and the comfortable space. 'The Golden Gate' name is from another salvaged piece of Butte history; being a sign from the Golden Gate block dated 1912.

Photo B shows a celebration or two over the 50 years of family use. It is surprising that for all the use we had of 'the Golden Gate,' we do not have that many photos.



Photo B: Family celebrations

Okay, so now comes more fun.

It's time to relocate the backbar from the Helena family outbuilding to our stone buildings (initially a General Store, then later the Cotton Club Saloon and Dance Hall) in Marysville. We had purposely ensured that while restoring the stone buildings that the

backbar would fit through the front doors and that there would be adequate ceiling height. From 2004 onwards it became an optional 'next destination' for the backbar once my parents changed their living style.

It's time for the 5<sup>th</sup> move of the backbar by my family. We focused on coordinating the best time of year for the 12-mile move, what trailers were needed, and having plenty of people for the task. After much consternation, we chose a day in May 2021 for perfect weather. We rounded up a couple of trailers – including a long flatbed that had been 'waiting' a long time to finally do some work. How many people were needed? Well, Dad said that with most of the moves it was just him and maybe a friend, or my young brother that dismantled and reassembled the backbar. He claims that they did not use any real mechanical means to help with the process.

On the chosen May day, we woke up to 8" of new snow. Really! Since we had everything ready, physically and mentally, we decided to proceed, knowing it was going to be a slower day.

Have you ever dismantled a backbar or put one together? This one comes into 14 pieces plus the 3 mirrors. It really is a simple step by step process. What is not simple is that the 2 top pieces are so heavy and so awkward – I have no idea how Dad and my brother disassembled, moved, and reassembled this several times. We were able to round up 4-6 20-year-olds and then us oldies, and it was still a huge challenge. See Photo C of carrying one of the top parts. Of course – Dad would not consider us removing his 'adit' – so we had the extra challenge of navigating through the wood columns and beams.



Photo C: Lifting a section of the backbar

There we are – got all the backbar sections out. Lots of photos, laughs, teasing, and planning during this process. With the sections all outside and laid out on the ground– we could give the wood a nice clean and some long needed oil. The top section is mostly hollow – the wood on the back is specially built up to support the mirrors. And note that the sections were embossed with Roman numerals to match up for the reassembly. We added extra location information to make sure it was reassembled correctly.



Photo D: Roman numerals in the column

I mentioned the snow. That hints of a chilly day. And the need to get the wood stove going to keep our fingers warm. And because we are all so intelligent, we stored the 2 smaller mirrors and 2 stained glass windows in the room with the wood stove. The large mirror went straight out to the horse trailer for its protection. Once we were ready to load up the small mirrors we appreciated our lack of intelligence – what do you think happens when a cool mirror is too close to a hot wood stove? Yes, cracked. In 3 pieces. These mirrors were moved at least 4 times and were never damaged – it’s on our watch and we break a mirror. You saw it coming though.

Ta da! We pushed through the very long day with changing conditions from snow to mud and then sun-burning weather and we reassembled the backbar. We need to convey that there were very many conversations about where to assemble the backbar in the stone building – even up to the last minute. We concluded that assembling it on the Saloon Side and under the metal ceiling tiles that the backbar rested under while at the McQueen Bar would be

most delightful.

The backbar has been reestablished as it was in the family’s outbuilding with the mirrors and the stained glass. Dad made the 2 stained glass dragon windows in the 1970s’. Here is one window in our Butte living room.



Photo E: Stained glass in Butte house

Have you read Paul Snyder’s book ‘Make Mine a Ditch!’ Well, in about July 2021, Paul’s book was available at the World Museum of Mining; we enjoyed the education on backbars and got mesmerized with all the beautiful photos and stories. And of course were saddened that our backbar and its story was not in the book. Dad also read the book and reminded us that *his* backbar is very similar to the Montana Bar in Miles City, circa 1900. Dad had saved a postcard that he collected years ago of the Montana Bar to validate the similarities after his visit there.

Two events happened in July - August close to the same time. The first is that the World Museum of Mining hosted a presentation on the history of Meaderville / McQueen. Great stories and information were shared – and I was able to meet Ron Petriz who was doing research on those neighborhoods that he grew up in. He shared a photo of the page of the research conducted by Ann

Stajcar Simonich in her book *Butte's Croatian-Slovenian Americans*. It is included here with permission from Butte Archives on Ann's behalf.

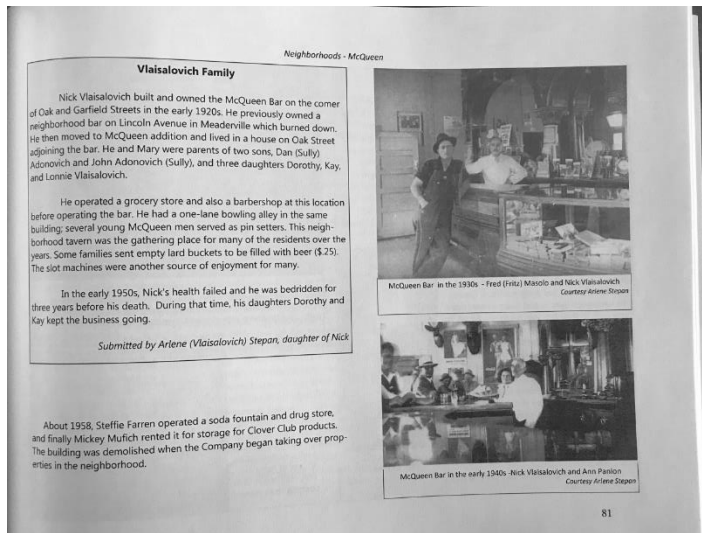


Photo F: Ann / Ron article on the McQueen Bar

The second event is that we hosted a wedding for a couple from Great Falls and some of their guests are very familiar with wood, they identified the backbar as being made of quarter sawn white oak and they know Paul Snyder! I connected with Paul Snyder after the wedding season and after Dorothy (Dot/Mom) passed, and made sure that Dad could join us in Marysville to talk about the backbar.

And now my Dad's story. Paul asks how / why Dad salvaged the backbar. Dad says he came home from work one day and asks Dot (Mom): "Do you want a backbar?" Mom responds with "Yes, I have always wanted a backbar." So, Dad salvaged the backbar. Not sure if at the time Dad was aware that Mom was being sarcastic, Mom only enjoyed a sip or two on special occasions and that was that.



Photo G: Dad (sitting) and Paul discussing the backbar

And now the 2022 story. I went back to the article that Ron shared from his research in January/Feb and realized that Scott and I know one of the names, Stepan. After some emails, we validated that very dear friends of ours in the Butte area are the relatives of the past McQueen Bar owner! This was fun news to share with Dad just before his passing.

With our friends, Mary Kay Stepan Nye, Ed Stepan and their spouses, we schemed on a date for them to bring their aunt/uncle to the Marysville Steak House for a yummy dinner with a surprise stop to see the backbar. It took a little convincing to get them to come into a building not on their scheduled visit, I reassured them it was fine - come in and look around. So, Arlene and Ivan Stepan came in and were polite at admiring the restored building, and then Arlene walked to the archway between the two buildings, saw the backbar and said, "That's my grandfather's backbar!"

Ivan and Arlene met through connections at the McQueen Bar. Ivan used to frequent the bar. Arlene's Aunt Kay thought that Arlene should meet Ivan. She had arranged for them to meet at a picnic organized by the McQueen Bar at Pipestone. They met at the picnic and the rest is history. They celebrated 66 years of marriage this year. They both worked at the bar at different times. As a young boy, Ivan was an employee there - setting the pins in the bowling alley and odd jobs like washing the ceiling tile. Arlene's grandfather (Nick Vlaisalovich) owned and worked the bar. Arlene and her family lived across the street from the bar and she used to stock the soft drinks, and she showed us exactly where the cash register was (sitting on the counter at the left side of the large mirror).

Ivan and Arlene shared the interesting history of the bar during her grandfather's ownership: Her grandfather's family had moved from Meaderville to McQueen after a bar her grandfather owned in Meaderville burned down in a fire. Arlene's grandfather built the building that housed the McQueen bar in 1920's. The original building had just a simple counter in the back. Initially, the building was used as a neighborhood grocery store and had a one-chair barber shop that her grandfather would cut hair at. It was not known when the new backbar was

put in, probably sometime in the '20's. After prohibition, but during the depression, Nick converted the grocery store to a bar and one lane bowling alley.

What a treasure for us to be able to allow history to continue through the use of the backbar that was almost destroyed and in a building that was restored right at the brink of being demolished.

When you are in Marysville, please enjoy the restoration and preservation of many buildings and homes, visit the museum, learn about the local gold mining history, tour the cemetery, enjoy a steak dinner and stop in to say howdy!

## Gallatin County Historical Signs, Part 4

By Brad O'Grosky

Well here is the last installment of the Gallatin County Historic Site Signs. There aren't many ghost towns left in the county except for Maudlow and maybe Chestnut, but there was Gallatin City. Lombard is gone as is Storrs. I hope you enjoy searching for these signs and the sites. -Brad

### Maudlow

This northern Gallatin County railroad town is on Sixteen Mile Creek. It was named for Maud Harlow, wife of the Milwaukee Railroad president, Richard Harlow. Maudlow was born with the coming of the Montana "Jawbone" Railroad, the forerunner of the Milwaukee Railroad. At one time there was a depot, section house, hotel, barbershop, pool hall, saloon and a store. A post office operated intermittently from 1898 to 1979. A two-story school, now on the National Historic Register, had as many as 39 students in 1921. The school closed in 1975. With the coming of the railroad in 1907, it was an important wool shipping station until the 1950's. A shearing shed was built nearby and bands of sheep from this area were sheared here. With the 1979 railroad abandonment, Maudlow became a ghost town.

(Taking take Dry Creek Road north from Belgrade to the Dry Creek Church and then the gravel road to Maudlow where the sign is at the entrance to Maudlow. The trip is about 30 miles)

### Menard

Menard, named for Teleford Menard, was the terminus of the Milwaukee Railroad branch-line from Bozeman. The railroad was called the "Turkey Red Special" for the variety of wheat raised here. Built in 1913, it had daily passenger service from Bozeman that soon became weekly and discontinued in 1915. The branch-line continued as a



In the late 1950's, her grandfather leased the building to a family, Stephe and Phil Farren, who used it as a drug store and soda fountain. They painted the back bar light pink to house the soda fountain. Later, the building was rented to Mikey Mufich, who used it to store Clover Club products. In 1967, Arlene's grandmother sold her house and bar building in McQueen to build a new home and move to the flats in Butte. In 1972, the building was purchased by the ACM, who sold salvage rights before they razed the building.

Talk about reliving history! We all exchanged our stories around the beautiful backbar and over a great meal at the Marysville House. And I have no doubt that Mom and Dad were looking down and cherishing the stories and warmth of history being created.



L to R: Ed Stepan, Rachel Stepan, Mary Kay Stepan Nye, Ivan Stepan, Arlene Stepan, Rose Nye, Bob Nye, Sonya Ratcliff Rosenthal, Scott Rosenthal

freight line until 1978. Earlier there was a railroad depot, store, grain elevator, post office (1915-1946), blacksmith shop, and dance hall. A school from 1927 to 1934 was



Photo by Jolene Ewert-Hintz

remodeled and became a house. Previously serving the area was the Mountain View School (Cracker Box) and the Meadowlark School (Horse Shoe Basin). The following stations or sidings were on the branch-line: Lux, Camona, Brewer, Wisner, Bush, Springhill (also called Cramer or Sexton), Erlice, Huffine, Torbet, Edilou, Hillman and Accola. These so-called "stub trains" picked up milk, cream and eggs at their many stops.

(The sign is on the Dry Creek Road at Menard)

### **Missouri River Headwaters**

Approximately 2 miles north on the Trident Road (#286) is the confluence of the Jefferson and Madison Rivers. A mile further downstream you can view the Gallatin River merging to form the headwaters of the Missouri River, the longest U.S. River (approximately 2500 miles). In 1804 at the bidding of President Jefferson, Lewis and Clark and several men came up the Missouri River from St. Louis, Missouri. In Mandan (now in North Dakota) a young Shoshone girl named Sacajawea, her husband Charbonneau, and baby Pomp joined the group. The expedition continued following the Missouri River and arrived at the headwaters of the Missouri River July 1805. For many years Indian tribes traveled through the Missouri headwaters and the Gallatin Valley to and from buffalo hunts. The chert (fine grained quartz crystals) mine located across the Missouri River at the mouth of the Gallatin River was used by Indians for making arrows, tools and trading with other tribes.

(The sign is less than one mile east of the I 90 overpass on Highway 205, which is the old Highway 10)

### **Old Town (Three Forks)**

In 1864 James Shedd built the first bridges near here across the Madison and Jefferson Rivers. The settlement which grew around them was known variously as Bridgeville, Shedd's, Bridges, Madison City, Madison House and Old Town. It was advertised as the home station for the Bozeman, Virginia City and Helena stagecoaches.

Asher Paul and Michael Hanley bought 160 acres from Shedd. A townsite named Three Forks was surveyed on this tract and recorded October 31, 1882. The same year a post office was opened but subsequently moved (in the dead of the night) to the present site of Three Forks. In 1882 a new hotel (2-1/2 stories, 75-100 guest accommodations) was built to replace the Madison House which burned in 1881. In 1909 this building was moved to Three Forks and added to the Sacajawea Hotel.

(The sign is off the I 90 exit at Three Forks then west and north about 1/2 mile on the gravel road south of the Dunbar Mansion)

### **Pioneer Museum (Old County Jail)**

#### **Gallatin County Historical Society**

The Pioneer Museum, located next to the Gallatin County Courthouse at 317 West Main, was the former county jail. Along with many museum exhibits showcasing the history of Gallatin County is a historical research library, the photo archives, and one of the largest collections of books on the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Built in 1911, the building served as the jail until the new facility was built in 1982. Many of the old jail's features have been preserved, including the gallows, isolation and holding cells, and a visitor cell along with a food pass-through from the former adjoining Sheriff's residence. The balcony railings were once the old cell bunks. The Gallatin County Historical Society was organized in 1977. The day the prisoners were moved to a new facility on January 26, 1982, the Society took over the old jail, preserving and renovating the building. The museum is free and open to the public.

(The sign is in front of the Country Kitchen at Four Corners)

### **Reese Creek**

Reese Creek was named for the John E. Reese family who filed for a homestead under the Homestead Act of 1863-1864. Early settlers arrived from the Salt Lake area via the gold fields of Virginia City. This community had blacksmith shops, a cheese factory, L.D.S. church, general store, cemetery and a log school (1879). Reese Creek was one of the first areas in the Montana Territory to raise grain. Courts (1/2 mile north) was the post office from 1890-1901.



Photo by Jolene Ewert-Hintz

The 1903 school operated until 1957 and is now the community center. To the southeast is the 1860's

Springhill community. The swift-running Ross Creek in Springhill provided the power for a flour mill, furniture



factory and the first government distillery in the Montana Territory. They have had a church since 1907 and a school that is still operating.

(Reese Creek is about 10 miles north of Belgrade on Springhill Road. The sign is in front of the old school which is now the community center)

### **Salesville (Gallatin Gateway)**

Salesville was named for Zachariah Sales who had a sawmill here in the 1860's. The post office was established in 1880, the school district in 1883 and a community church in 1885. An electric trolley came from Bozeman in 1908. High school students rode the trolley to Bozeman to attend high school. Businesses came and went – a livery stable, two general stores, a bank, hotel, drugstore, lumber yard, barber shop, blacksmith shop, three saloons, a dance hall, cheese factory, small newspaper and a grain elevator which burned in 1977. The town was most active around 1912. The Gateway Inn was built in 1927 by the Milwaukee Railroad. The railroad line ended here and then tourists were bussed to Yellowstone Park. At that time the town changed its name to Gallatin Gateway. The nearby cemetery is still called Salesville Cemetery.

(Near the service station and museum on Highway 191 in Gallatin Gateway is where you will find the sign)

### **Sappington**

Sappington was named for Henry Hiter Sappington who came from Sappington, Missouri in 1869. It was an early day stage stop for Harrison and Ennis ranches. Farmers, miners and railroaders lived in this most western part of Gallatin County. Earliest residents were Rev. and Mrs. L.B. Statler who built and lived in a stone house. At one time there were over 100 residents, a depot, a post office (1892-1957), hotel and livery stable. The Northern Pacific Railroad came in 1889 and the Milwaukee Railroad in 1908. The railroad tower was manned constantly to prevent trains from colliding as they crossed here. A school operated from 1910-1919. From 1920-1924 students rode the stub train to school in Willow Creek. The nearby Sand Creek School operated as early as 1900. Luzenac America (talc plant) started here in 1986.

(The sign can be found south of the junction of Highways 287 and 2. head south on 287. After crossing the Jefferson River and the railroad overpass it is just southwest of the overpass where the road goes to the talc plant.)

### **Sedan**

This agricultural community in the northeast corner of Gallatin County was settled in 1885-86. When the post office was established (1891-1915), it was called Sedan for a county seat in Kansas. A cheese factory built in 1910

operated intermittently until 1940. Above the cheese factory was the lodge hall that served as the community center (torn down in 1956). A general store operated from 1915-1925. Another store-gas station from 1935-38. A community church was built in 1898. The Woosley Sawmill furnished lumber for most buildings. Three schools served Sedan: first one in 1889, the second in 1906 became a teacherage in 1930, the third school 1921-22 incorporated East Flathead and Sunnyside (Sagebrush) School District and operated until 1967. This school is now the community center. A private phone service existed from 1900 to 1940. Electricity came in 1949. The Sedan Cemetery is on a nearby hill.



(The sign is in front of the Community Center.)

### **Southern Gallatin County**

This basin was settled by ranchers and homesteaders. Bannock Indians had encampments here as late as 1913. Near here is the West Entrance to Yellowstone Park, the nation's first national park (1872). West Yellowstone was founded in 1908 with the coming of the Union Pacific. Oregon short-line passenger service ended in 1961. (Railroad abandoned in 1980.) In 1908 a post office and military camp were located four miles inside the park at Riverside. From 1909 to 1920, the post office was called "Yellowstone" (West Yellowstone). The military managed Yellowstone Park from "Fort Yellowstone" in Mammoth until 1916. Beginning in the 1880's, horse-drawn stagecoaches were taking tourists through the park. Cars were permitted by 1915 and yellow park buses in 1917. Lionhead Ski Area located on Targhee Pass increased tourists to this area. Paiute Indian Chief Winnemmuca's two daughters, Sarah and Elma are buried in this area. Winnemmuca, Nevada was named for them.

(The sign is located west of West Yellowstone on Highway 20 near the MT/ID border.)

### **Springhill Community**

The first settlers arrived the spring of 1864, attracted by the steady flow of Ross Creek. By 1871 the town of Springhill was established around the Howell Flour Mill, a furniture factory, and Crane's Blacksmith Shop and Shingle

Mill, all powered by water. Also established here was the first government distillery in Montana Territory. For years Ryen's water wheel generated electricity for local use. By 1900 a post office and cemetery were part of the community. The Presbyterian Church was organized May 1886, and the church building was completed in 1907. The first dance hall was built in 1879. The present pavilion was built in 1907. Sixteen students attended a log cabin school east of the cemetery in 1879. The present school was built at the turn of the century and is on the National Historic Register. A strong sense of community continues. (The sign can be found in front of the Springhill School.)

### Storrs

This was the site of the town of Storrs from 1902 to 1910. Storrs was a model coal company town laid out in blocks with painted houses having running water and electricity. Storrs had a post office (1904-1908) and a school (1904-1912). There was also a hotel, boarding houses, store and fire station. The town was built by the Anaconda Copper Mining Company for the workers who labored in the coke production plant and coal mines. At one time nearly 500 people lived in Storrs. Very little coke was produced because the coal was of poor quality. In 1908 the operation shut down. The plant burned down under mysterious circumstances. From 1899 to 1918 the Turkey Trail Railroad serviced this area. The ruins of 50 coke ovens, the coal wash plant foundations, the hotel foundation and a fire hydrant can be seen from the road.



Photo by Jolene Ewert-Hintz

(The sign is south of the town of Chestnut about 3 miles on Trail Creek Road.)

### Trident

In 1908 construction began on Montana's first cement manufacturing facility. In May 1910 the first cement was shipped to a hardware store in Missoula, Montana. The company-owned village of Trident was built before the plant was completed, and at its peak housed about 200 employees and their families. The village included a store, boarding house, hotel, school (1911-1965), post office, movie theater and pool hall. Only U.S. citizens were allowed to live in the village. Non-citizens lived in dirt-floor shanties down river from the plant in what was known as Wop Town (workers without papers). Cement is made from local limestone, shale and sandstone. Iron ore and gypsum are shipped in to supplement these raw

materials. The raw materials (except gypsum) are heated at very high temperatures (2500°F+) to form clinker which is then ground with gypsum to make the gray powder cement.

(You can find the sign by going north on Highway 286 between Logan and Three Forks near the entrance to the Trident plant)

### Upper Bridger



Photo by Jolene Ewert-Hintz

In 1883 Bridger Creek was called Cherry Creek. This community was settled by farmers and loggers prior to statehood in 1889. Several saw mills operated in the canyon. One, a military lumber camp, "Camp Baker" provided lumber to build Fort Ellis in the late 1860's. A log school built in 1886 was replaced in 1900. There was also a blacksmith shop and in 1907 a church. The ladies aid organization helped in many community projects. Construction started in 1934 on a boy's camp, the "Flaming Arrow Ranch" located five miles north. This ranch included "Silver Forest Playhouse" which seated 1,000 people. It had \$18,000 in advance ticket sales for a 1936 spring opening which was canceled when the builder died. In 1946 it became a dude ranch and in 1956 a Boy Scout camp. In 1938 a Northwest passenger plane crashed on a nearby mountain. Bridger Bowl opened in 1955. (The sign is about 10 miles north on Bridger Canyon road. Turn right on Jackson Creek Road, where it is in front of the old church.)

### Willow Creek (Philosopher's River-Windville)

The 1804-06 Lewis and Clark Expedition named this area "Philosopher's River." Later it was called Windville, then renamed Willow Creek for its many willows. As a girl, Sacajawea, a Shoshone Indian, was captured near here by Minnataree Indians. Later she accompanied and interpreted for the Lewis and Clark Expedition. This area was settled by many Civil War dissidents. The Sturgis Ranch was a stage stop. In 1864 the Mount Green Cemetery was platted. Willow Creek has had a post office since 1867. Private schools began in the 1860's and the public school district was formed in 1882. Montana's Southern Methodist churches were first organized here by

Rev. L.B. Stateler. In 1918 electric lights were provided by Mack and Black Garage. Both the Northern Pacific and Milwaukee Railroads came through Willow Creek. Montana's Initial Point, from which all Montana land is surveyed, is approximately 3 miles south. (The sign is near the Willow Creek and the elevator and railroad tracks.)

### **M.G.T.P.S. Board Meeting Minutes October 6, 2022**

President Brad O'Grosky called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Board members attending were Mark Hufstetler, Jolene Ewert-Hintz, Connie Griffin, Tammy & David Steindorf. Guests attending were Linda Dutcher, Ray & Rita Reichman.

Tammy motioned to approve the July 7, 2022 board meeting minutes. Jolene seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

For the Fiscal year of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023, M.G.T.P.S. had an Income of \$3,730.00 and Expenses of \$4,736.20 for a Loss of \$1,006.20. The Cash Balances are Petty Cash \$160.20, Checking \$9,656.45 and Savings \$20,433.57. Tammy motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report. Mark seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Connie reported that \$100 was incorrectly entered as an expense during the Fiscal Year of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. It affected 3 board meetings Expense and Net Income amounts. She apologized for the error. The correct amounts are: For September 29, 2021 the Expenses were \$5,910.41 and Loss was \$883.61. For January 20, 2022-the Expenses were \$6,645.80 and the Net Income was \$3,921.00. For April 7, 2022-the Expenses were \$12,541.49 and the Net Income was \$980.26. Mark motioned to open the meeting minutes to correct the amounts. Jolene seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **Membership:**

M.G.T.P.S. has 298 members, this includes 31 gift memberships. There are 33 new members this year, 12 joined after receiving gift memberships the previous year. Members that haven't renewed their dues for 2 years have been dropped from the list. The board supported continuing gift memberships for the year of 2023.

There was no correspondence to report.

### **Old Business:**

Jolene has started a new Facebook page for M.G.T.P.S. She reported that the page already has followers.

Mark has been able to convert the Reflections Vol. 2 pdf files into Microsoft Word and good quality has been preserved. He is able to make changes and hopes to have the project wrapped up by the end of the year. Mark motioned to form an ad hoc committee to decide in any changes to be made. Tammy seconded the motion. The motion passed. The committee will

consist of Mark, Jolene and Connie. When the revisions are complete, the final pdf will be sent to all board members to review before printing.

The 2022 convention was enjoyable and went smoothly. There was a profit this year of \$517.37.

### **New Business:**

Please send Jolene articles for the newsletters at [ghosttownsofmontana@gmail.com](mailto:ghosttownsofmontana@gmail.com). Jolene asked if the board had considered sending a digital version of the newsletter. There will be a line on the due's renewal postcard (that will be sent out in January of 2023) asking if members would like to receive a digital copy.



Photo by Connie Griffin

The 2023 convention needs volunteers to run it. Tammy mentioned having the convention in Livingston, this will include Wilsall and Sedan locations.

The Gallatin County Historical Society board member has toured and surveyed the historic sites for determination of which signs need replacing. Brad will have an update on the cost at the next M.G.T.P.S. board meeting.

Three people were interested in joining the board, Linda Dutcher, Ray and Rita Reichman. Tammy motioned to accept them as board members. David seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Dividing the current Secretary/Treasurer and Membership board position was discussed. Board members considering taking over the positions are: Ray-Treasurer, Rita-Secretary and Jolene-Membership. They are planning on getting together with Connie to go over what is currently being done.

### **New Projects:**

The buildings in Castle are being damaged by cows, putting up a fence around the main buildings would protect them from further damage. Tammy, David, Ray and Rita will look into contacting the owners of the buildings to see if they are interested and how much can be fenced. Upkeep of the fence will be considered if the project goes forward.

Cindy is meeting with the Reese Creek Community Center board about their ceiling preservation/recovering project.

Jolene has contacted the group that braced up a building at Highland City and the Forest Service to find out if M.G.T.P.S. can help preserve the building. She hasn't heard back from anyone.

Tammy motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. The motion was seconded. The motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted: Connie Griffin, Secretary/Treasurer

## Thanksgiving Day Murder at Elkhorn



Photo by Jolene Ewert-Hintz

The silver mines at Elkhorn yielded \$14 million and the mining camp once had more than 2,500 residents. Three passenger trains arrived weekly on the Northern Pacific's branch line.

In 1893, the Fraternity Hall Association built the town's architectural and social centerpiece. Fraternity Hall was aptly named: the town's various fraternal organizations, including the Masons, Oddfellows, and Knights of Pythias, shared its upstairs lodge room. Dances, traveling theatrical troupes, graduations, prize fights, and other public gatherings at Fraternity Hall bound citizens

together. The building's outstanding architecture blends the western false front with a sophisticated twist. A unique neo-classical style balcony is suspended above the entry. After the Silver Panic of 1893, the mine began to play out and operated only off and on until 1931 when the Northern Pacific removed its tracks. Fraternity Hall has endured time, neglect, and heavy snows to become one of Montana's most photographed buildings.

Although local lore says that an argument over a dance led to a murder at Fraternity Hall, the true incident actually began at a Thanksgiving Eve dance in 1889 at Gillian's Hall, Elkhorn's other substantial surviving building. A shortage of women compelled Thomas King and George Peters to dance together. Manager Mat Fogarty asked them to stop. The ensuing quarrel later became a huge free-for-all bar fight at Lloyd's Saloon. Taking their fight into the street early on Thanksgiving morning, King shot and killed Fogarty. Thomas King was hanged at Boulder for the crime in June of 1890, several years before Fraternity Hall was built. And this was especially noteworthy because King's hanging was the first in the new state of Montana. - Ellen Baumler

*Ellen Baumler is an award-winning author and Montana historian. A master at linking history with modern-day supernatural events, Ellen's true stories have delighted audiences across the state. She lives in Helena in a century-old house with her husband, Mark, and its resident spirits. To view and purchase Ellen's books, visit:*  
<http://ellenbaumler.blogspot.com/p/my-books.html>