

Montana Ghost Town Quarterly

VOLUME 43

FALL 2013



Charter Oak mine and mill, which we visited during our recent convention.

Photo: DARIAN HALDEN

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. e-mail: mtghosttown@yahoo.com www.mtghosttown.org Copyright © 2013, all rights reserved.

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 2013

President: Terry Halden
Vice President: Mike Byrnes
Secretary / Treasurer: Sally Griffin
Website Administrator: Jolene Hintz
Facebook Administrator: Darian Halden
Recruitment: Don Black
Projects: Sue Howe
Membership: Darian Halden
Newsletter Editor: Terry Halden
2014 Convention: Don Black
Immediate Past President: John Ellingsen
Directors: Loretta Chapman, Richard Lee, Rosemary Lee, Tom Lowe, Jan O'Brien, Marie O'Brien, and Gordon Tracy.

The Prez Sez

TERRY HALDEN

First of all, I'd like to thank all of our members, who attended our recent convention in Helena, for their overwhelming vote of confidence in re-installing me as your President for another two years.

From the comments given to me I understand that everyone had a good time at the convention and I think the four guest speakers we lined up were excellent and well knowledgeable in their fields. A photo collage of the convention is on our center pages.

Also welcomed in this edition of the newsletter are two new (at least to us) authors: 1) Chuck Flood is a long time member from near Seattle, who every year makes a pilgrimage to Montana to do research on ghost towns. He writes a humorous article about his two year search for the elusive ghost town of Champion. He has promised me, at a future date to submit a more detailed article of the history of Champion. 2) Jerry Hanley is a resident of the Lewiston area, where we will be at our next convention. Jerry submits an article about the naming of Gilt Edge – not Giltedge – as related, in crisp vernacular of his grandfather, George Wielglenda, who was present when Bill 'Limestone' Wilson, discovered the mine, named it, and subsequently the town. Returning author Linda Dutcher has submitted an excellent article about the Copper King mine, high in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, but because of space, I was forced to hold it over until the next newsletter.

Now, for some good news. Two members of your board who were absent from the convention this year were Loretta Chapman and Dick Lee. Loretta has been suffering with Lukemia, but I am happy to relay the excellent news that after treatment, she has now been diagnosed as free and is regaining her strength. We hope to see her at future conventions. Many people were asking about Dick as they had heard he suffered a medical

problem whilst he was on vacation in Seattle. After a ten day spell in hospital awaiting an operation, Dick has now been discharged and is recovering at home in Bozeman.

All of our members, who visit ghost towns each year, take photos, or do some research are invited to submit their photos, and/or article to me at terryhalden@hotmail.com and I will see they get in a future edition of the newsletter. I am always looking for new interesting photos or research.

Terry

New Members

Membership Chairperson Darian reports the following **New Members** have joined our Association since the last newsletter. **Please make them welcome.**

Clarene Dysart, Missoula, MT

Kevin & Donna Heaney, Gallatin Gateway, MT

Richard & Kathy Hnatiuk, Lethbridge, AB, Canada

Carol Painter, Manhattan, MT

Lynn Weed & Danene Thornton, Bigfork, MT

Barbara J. Smith, Helena, MT

Barbara K. Varnum, Kalispell, MT

Bill Peterson, Helena, MT

M. G. T. P. S. BOARD MEETING

August 24, 2013

The meeting was called to order by President Terry Halden at the Pioneer Museum in Bozeman, MT. Board members in attendance were: Don Black, Mike Byrnes, Margie Kankrlik, Sue Howe, and Gordon Tracy.

Minutes of the May 4, 2013 board meeting were approved as printed in the Summer newsletter. In Secretary/Treasurer Sally Griffin absence, Margie Kankrlik took the minutes. Margie then read the current financial statement. Sue made the motion to accept the financial statement as presented, Mike seconded and the motion passed.

Mike then reported on the Robber's Roost project. The Board thanks Mike and his team for their coordination and completion of this project.

OLD BUSINESS

Don reported on the status of the 2014 convention to be held in Lewistown. The Yogo Inn has given the club a nightly rate of \$80 and everyone is encouraged to reserve their room as soon as possible as the Choke Cherry Festival is going on the same weekend.

The discussion on T-shirts and logo was tabled to the next meeting as Darian Halden was not in attendance.

NEW BUSINESS

The slate of officers to be presented to the club at the annual meeting are: Terry Halden, President, Mike Byrnes, Vice President, and Sally Griffin, Secretary/Treasurer. Don made the motion to accept the slate, Gordon seconded the motion, a vote was taken and passed.

A discussion of using Skype to allow board members throughout Montana to attend the meetings resulted in a veto of the idea.

Terry reported that the Society now has a connection to Wikipedia.

Terry reported that Board member Tom Lowe runs the Bannack Association Face-Book page and it is updated frequently so that people can follow the restitution progress following the massive flood in Bannack.

Mike made the motion to allow the club to give to Terry Halden \$300 for his attendance at the upcoming Montana Historical Society meeting. Gordon seconded the motion, a vote was taken and passed.

A discussion ensued on how to become THE source of ghost town information on the internet. A better presence on our web site was suggested. Chuck Flood is an enthusiastic member of the club, has web experience, etc. and it was suggested he be approached concerning our website. Terry will follow up.

The next item to discuss was the need for Director and Officer's Liability insurance as well as liability insurance for the convention. Sally Griffin has two applications from insurance companies and the estimated cost of D&O insurance is \$900 to \$1200 per year. A discussion ensued on the need for D&O Insurance and liability insurance. The topic of D&O insurance was tabled until next meeting. Don proposed and Gord seconded a motion that Sally be given authority to purchase 'Events Liability Insurance' to a

maximum of \$1,000 premium cost, to cover our exposure at the upcoming convention. The motion passed.

The last item was the resignation of Margie Kankrlik as Director of the club, effective August 24, 2013.

There being no further items to be discussed, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Margie Kankrlik, Acting Sec/Treas.

M. G. T. P. S. Annual General Meeting

September 7, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:55PM by President Terry Halden.

Terry asked that the minutes of the September 15, 2012 General Meeting by approved as printed in our newsletter. Gloria Hardin moved and Margie Kankrlik seconded. The motion passed.

Secretary/Treasurer Sally Griffin gave the Treasurer's Report. There was a question as to whether we could actually be considered a non-profit organization with that much money. President Terry said that since our annual income is only around \$2,000, we are well within the limits. Gordon Tracy moved and Richard Riley seconded that the Treasurer's report be accepted. The motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

Terry announced that Margie Kankrlik has resigned from the Board of Directors. We are grateful for her many years work and service to the society. Terry then announced that we are looking for new Board Members, and he was hoping some people would be interested.

Last year the Ghost Town Society donated \$1,000 to the town of Bannack. Vice President Mike Byrnes led a group of people who made various repairs at Robbers Roost. The group did an excellent job, and we really appreciate Mike's leadership for this endeavor.

NEW BUSINESS

Don Black presented a slate of officers for upcoming two-year terms. They are President – Terry Halden, Vice President - Mike Byrnes, and Secretary/Treasurer – Sally Griffin. It was moved and seconded to approve this slate of officers and the motion passed unanimously.

The 2014 convention will be at Lewistown. Don Black is in charge. It will be at the Yogo Inn and it will be the same weekend as the Chokecherry Festival. Don encouraged us all to get our reservations in early.

The location for the 2015 convention has not been decided.

There were nine people who were attending the convention for the first time. They introduced themselves and were given a round of applause..

We found out that High Country Engraving can make members' badges for a reasonable charge. Contact them directly if you are interested.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15PM.

Respectfully submitted, Sally Griffin, Secretary/Treasurer

The Naming of GILT EDGE

by JERRY HANLEY

The following is copied verbatim from an undated hand written paper by George Wiegler. George was a long time friend of Bill Wilson and both were long time residents of Maiden Montana. Jerry Hanley, George Wiegler's grandson is also a Maiden resident and found this paper in the family archives. Wiegler sometimes wrote in slang too add character to a story. George was not one to embellish fact – consequently, the story is considered to be factual.

“Ol’ man Culpepper air rite – Gilt’ Edge is kayekt named fer the famous mine of thet name what brung the Cyanide Process fer treetins ores into this cuntree n wuz the makins of other fameus mines like Kendall, Barns King – Ruby over to Zortman n – Little Ben near Landusky. Cumberland hear at Maiden, also helped the Spotted Horse n Maginniss Mines hear what already had a repitasion.

Mr. Wm. E. (Limestone Bill) Wilson moaren onct told me how he cum to naime the mine aster a famus brand o’ tools, what had the name o’ “Gilt”-Edge witch was A – 1 – in kwality and he knowed his mine was evry bit as good er bettur – He uster get all burnt up two men peepul wood say Giltedge. Sorta runhin it altogether ziff twus all one word stead of 2 sed it shoed lack of respect fer them thet wuz developing the country n naming places ware they could live n work n have a Poast Office ware male cud cum witch wuz all to their benefit.

Reninds me of the time back in 1900 were we lost our Post Office here n them Guverment guys wusn’t goin to give it back lessn we changed the name n Frank White sent in the nam Prospect – boy you shuda herd Bill – prospect – Prospect, who wantsta live in a plase called Prospect stead o’ fair naim like Maiden – upshot was Bill writ up a petishun witch we uns all sined n sent them guvrment guys bak to Washington n twant long til Maiden was back on thair maps again n furze we air.”

The following version by Jerry, deciphers and simplifies his Grandfathers slang, and reads:

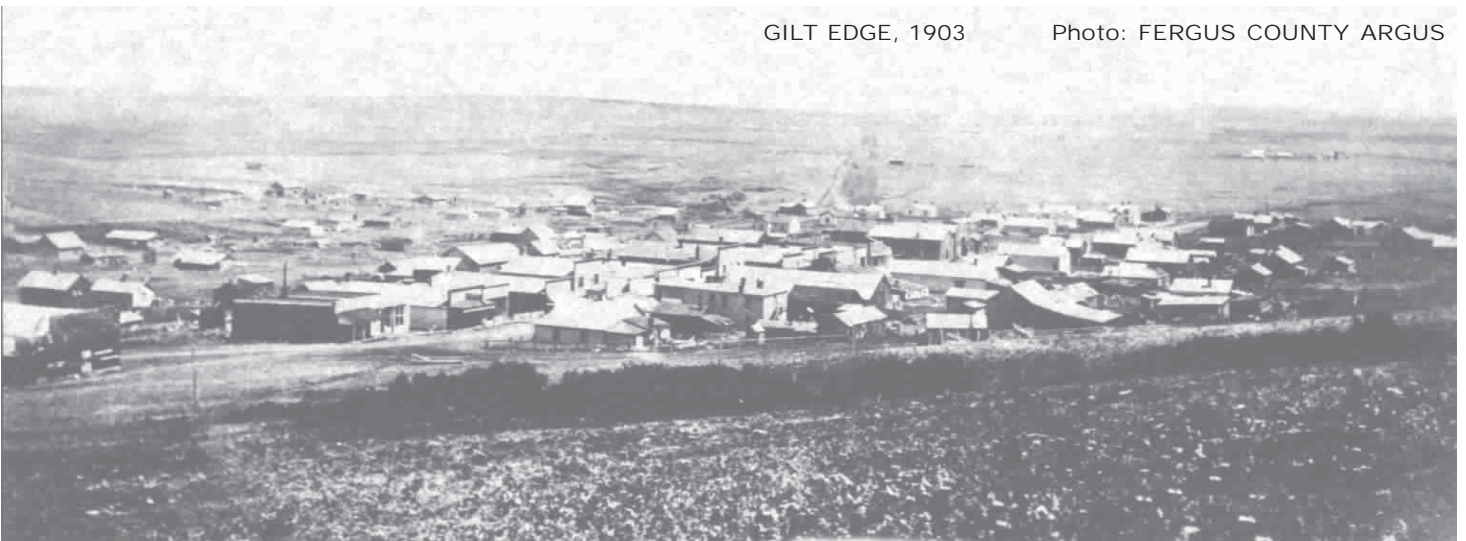
“Old man Culpepper is right – The town of Gilt Edge is named for the famous Gilt Edge mine that was the first mine in the area to use cyanide process to treat ore. The process also helped in the development of other mines like Kendall and Barns King, and the Ruby at Zortman, and Little Ben at Landusky. The process was also used at the Cumberland at Maiden. The Spotted Horse and Maginniss, already had good reputations and the cyanide process only enhanced them.

Mr. Wm. E. (Limestone Bill) Wilson, more than once told his me how he came to name the mine after a famous brand of tools called Gilt Edge. These tools were high quality in Bill’s opinion and he knew his mine was also of high quality. Bill would get mad when people would say or write Giltedge by just running the two separate words together. He said it showed a lack of respect by those who were developing the country and naming places where they lived and worked and could have a post office which was to their benefit.

All of this reminded Wiegler of a time in 1900 when the Maiden post office closed and the government wanted the name changed before reopening it. Frank White (another long time Maiden resident and who may have had something to do with the post office), submitted the name of Prospect. Bill was upset at the suggestion and said why would you want to live in a place called Prospect when you already have the fair name of Maiden. Bill started a petition that residents of Maiden signed. The government guys went back to Washington. Not long after Maiden was back on the map and forever it is.”

GILT EDGE, 1903

Photo: FERGUS COUNTY ARGUS



Ghost Camp of Glendale is Revived

from The MINING TRUTH, June 5, 1930

Revival of a "ghost camp" by a new mining operation is a fascinating story that can now be told with increasing frequency in the West. This particular narrative deals with the old camp of Glendale, Beaverhead County, Montana, and the revival now in progress because of the activities of the Foundation Company of Utah. This concern was interested in the field by George B. Conway of Helena, and is directed by Basil Prescott of San Francisco. It is expected more than 200 men will be employed on the old Hecla Consolidated mine before the summer is over.

It was in the summer of 1873 that Billy Spurr, prospector, lost his horses. Searching for them through the wilds of Trapper gulch he came upon out-croppings of galena ore and located and named the "Trapper Lode." To him it meant the end of a long trail of hardship and the realization of his prospector's dream. But he sold his rights in the new claim for a song and gambled his money away in the saloons and gambling dens of the mining camps.

Those who bought the claim from Billy Spurr took out some high grade ore which assayed nearly \$1,000 to the ton. It was freighted to Corrine, Utah, then the nearest railroad point, and shipped to Swansea, Wales for treatment.

Prospectors stampeded to Trapper gulch and located valuable ore in many places. One man, prospecting alone on the mountain at the head of the gulch, saw a mountain lion and returned to his partners to get assistance and guns to kill it. They failed to locate the animal but the mountain from that time has been known as Lion Mountain.

Trapper City grew up near the location of the first mine, but as Lion Mountain was explored it was found that the deposits there were more valuable and gradually the center of population shifted to a new camp on the mountain known as Lion City, which became the home of several hundred miners, a few merchants, gamblers, women, and a still fewer number of families.

Ore was still freighted to Corinne, Utah, and refined at Omaha, but in 1875 Charles L. Dehler and Noah Armstrong erected a 20-ton furnace at the crossing of the stage road over Trapper Creek. The name of the new camp was decided between Clinton and Glendale by the flip of a coin. Glendale won and became the new city.

Two years later Armstrong acquired the Cleopatra, True Fissure, Atlantus, Hecla, Cleve, Avon, Franklin and other claims and organized the Hecla Consolidated Mining Company. He interested Indianapolis and Philadelphia capital, but little money was needed, as the product of the mines paid for the development and the opening up of the necessary roads.

Ore was hauled to the smelter at Glendale by bull and mule teams. The smelter was enlarged and the base bullion it produced was shipped to the southern terminal of the Utah & Northern railroad, then built from Salt Lake City to Montana. Each trip was shorter than the previous one, as the end of the track was constantly moving northward.

Teams which hauled ore to the railroad were used to haul supplies for the community until 1882, when the terminus of the railroad was established at Melrose. The bullion was made into 90-pound bars at the Glendale furnace and at times thousands of bars were stacked in the smelter yard awaiting transportation to the railroad and to Omaha where the metal was refined.

In 1879 E. C. Atkins became manager of the new company and he was succeeded in 1881 by Henry Knippenberg of Indianapolis.

The real success of the company began with the Knippenberg administration, and a one per cent dividend was paid each month to stockholders for the next 12 years. The payroll often went as high as \$715,000 a month and this was one of the most important factors in the development of Beaverhead County and southwestern Montana. George B. Conway of Helena, who two years ago became owner of the mine, came to Montana in 1881 with the Knippenberg administration. For some years he was secretary of the Hecla Company.

At the time of its greatest prosperity Glendale had a population of nearly 2,000. There was a Methodist church and a school with 200 pupils of which John Gannon was principal. He later became territorial superintendent of schools. There were three hotels, two dry goods stores, seven or eight grocery stores, 13 saloons, a bank, two shoe stores, two drug stores, a jewelry store, a confectionery, a brewery, a weekly newspaper, The Atlantus, and a lumber yard owned by William Thompson, father of William Boyce Thompson, wealthy New York broker and mine promoter.

The Hecla Company had mines on Lion mountain, iron mines in Soap gulch, its concentrator at Greenwood and a large number of Italian charcoal burners scattered through the mountains to make charcoal for the furnaces. When the railroad came to Melrose, coke from Pennsylvania was used for fuel.

The company and the town continued in a heyday of prosperity until 1905, when litigation caused the mine to shut down. It had produced \$18,000,000.

With nothing upon which to rely for support, Glendale died. The smelter was dismantled. The buildings remained, but for years they have been vacant and not a soul has called Glendale his home. A few picnickers from Butte have occasionally visited the place. From time to time the mine has been operated, but those who worked resided nearer the mine than Glendale, site of the old smelter.

About 1924 the Hecla Consolidated Mining Company was reorganized, with Harry A. Stone, of Philadelphia as president. Three years later Geo. B. Conway of Helena became owner of the mine. He operated it for a year and has now sold it for a half million dollars to the company which plans to revive the old prosperity of the district.

We apologize to Lee Silliman, our guest speaker on Friday night as none of our photographers took a picture (one was helping him with his excellent power point talk).



Saturday morning, some of us took a guided 'train' trip around the historic sites of Helena. The rest of us had a guided tour 'behind the scenes' as to how the Montana Historical Society operates. We then switched tours.



ABOVE & RIGHT: Climatized storage for many objects

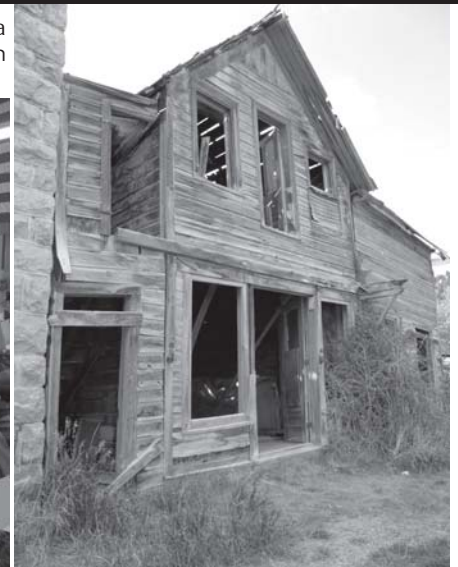


ABOVE: Mining artifacts in storage.
LEFT: A Spanish cannon and gun carriage, captured by a local resident during the Spanish / American war in the Phillipines. Begs the question: How the devil did he get it home?

**Convention, 2013
Helena**
Thanks to: Darian Halden,
Gloria Hardin and
Terry Halden
for their photos.



LEFT: Earl Fred relates the history of Marysville to a rapt audience (BELOW) and afterwards he takes us on a guided tour of the mining town (RIGHT).





At our Banquet, our guest speaker ELLEN BAUMLER captivates her audience with her illustrated talk on 'Children of the Montana Mining Camps'. Terry Halden thanks the attendees for voting him President for another two years.



On Sunday we visited the mine and mill at the Charter Oak property that was active in the early half of the last century.



Before a guided tour of the property, Terry Beaver gave everyone a history of Charter Oak and mining and milling in general.

This is a 'ghost town' isn't it?

SEARCHING for CHAMPION

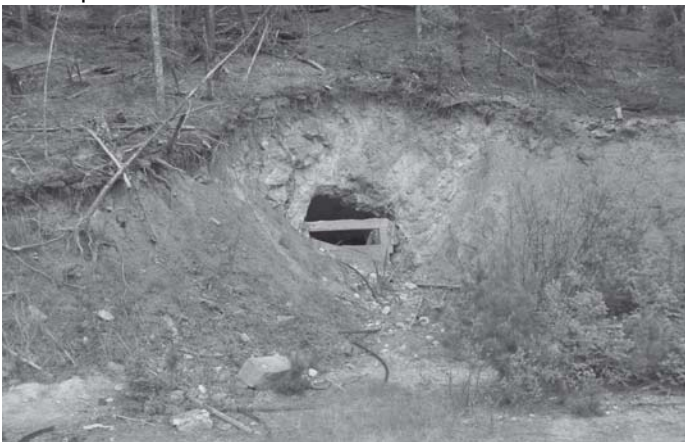
by CHUCK FLOOD

One bright beautiful June Montana morning my wife Debbie and I headed out in search of Champion. Three trips and a year later, we found it.

Champion isn't the best-documented of Montana's ghost towns, but I thought I had done my homework before we went looking for it. My principal sources of information at the time were Muriel Sibell Wolle's classic 'Montana Pay Dirt' and our president Terry Halden's 'Ghost Towns and Mining Districts of Montana.' I had also located a USGS topo map which showed a Champion Mine east of Racetrack. Champion seemed an easy place to get to, so off we went from our time-share at Fairmont Hot Springs.

We easily located the road east from Racetrack that led towards the Champion Mine and after passing a few scattered homes and ranches we were in the foothills of the Rockies

At about 9 miles from Racetrack the road came to a fork. The right (southern) branch headed steeply upward; we could see it high on the ridge above us. The other branch, to the east, looked more likely. In less than a tenth of a mile we dropped into a clearing - actually more like a boggy meadow - and there on the hill on the south side of the meadow was the opening of a mine. This seemed to be Champion.



The unknown mine, discovered by the Author. Could this be the Independence mine? Photo, courtesy AUTHOR

But things didn't seem right. The ore bunker pictured in Terry's book was nowhere to be seen. The information given in Wolle, quoted from a contemporary newspaper article, described the town as being sited virtually on the crest of the Rockies, yet here we were in a low valley well below the crest. And given the population claimed for Champion in 1890, and the number of businesses it had, the town wouldn't have fit into the limited space of this meadow (by the way, Wolle does not seem to have actually visited Champion; her contribution to its history is to quote portions of an article in the July 18, 1890 issue of *The New North-West*, a newspaper published in Deer Lodge).

A look around revealed a few boards and logs, probably from now-vanished buildings, near the mine adit and a small stone foundation part way up the hill to the west, about a hundred yards from the mine. There was nothing to indicate a town of any size.

I had neglected to bring along a copy of the USGS map (who needs maps when you've got a GPS?) so I wasn't able to discover my mistake until we returned to the condo. I powered up my laptop and looked at the USGS map that I had downloaded and realized that I had missed a critical turn-off. The road we had followed had taken us to the South Fork of Dry Cottonwood Creek instead of our intended target. No problem, I thought, the correct road should be easy to find.

On another beautiful morning three days later, I headed off again - solo this time; while Debbie has patiently endured miles of bad road leading to ghost town sites, on this day she decided she had more interesting things to do at the condo. Go figure.

Back up to Racetrack; back onto the road heading east; this time I took the turn that the USGS map said would lead to the Champion Mine. In about a half hour the road came to an end, more or less; to the right, an abandoned road led into the woods; on the left, another track proceeded up a short but steep hill to a mud wallow; and directly ahead, a trace of the road I was on climbed up a rocky grade - and there was the ore bunker pictured in Terry's book. This must be the place.



The ore bunker, built in 1921, as it looked in 1965.

Photo: Great Falls Tribune

I looked around as much as the “Keep Out” signs would allow; located a stone foundation just downhill and south of the ore bunker, and the shell of a concrete building a few hundred feet west. But once again, there was no sign of where a town would have been. A closer reading of the newspaper excerpts in Wolle’s book said that the townsite was actually past (east) of the Champion mine, which meant it would be farther up the hill beyond the ore bunker and the “Keep Out” sign. Foiled again.

I stopped at the William K. Kohrs Library in Deer Lodge to see if they had any information about Champion. Unfortunately, it was a slow day at the library and the only person on duty seemed to be a volunteer not very familiar with the library’s resources. She did locate a copy of the book *Powell County: Where It All Began*, published by the Powell County Museum and Arts Foundation, but the information it had was derived from Wolle and added nothing new. I also stopped at the Powell County museum, but the only person there was a docent who couldn’t help. A visit to the Chamber of Commerce to try to determine whether there was a Powell County historical society turned up nothing.

Time to do some serious research.

The first helpful clue was in William Whitfield’s *Montana Ghost Towns and Gold Camps*. He describes the town (at least, the buildings he photographed) as being along the Old Champion Pass Road. So common sense told me to look for a location called Champion Pass, and possibly a New Champion Pass Road (if there was an old, maybe there was a new), and sure enough, there they were on the USGS map. Champion Pass is located about a mile east of where the Champion Mine is marked on the map. More importantly, another reading of the *New Northwest* excerpt in Wolle made it clear that the old road to Champion originated in Deer Lodge, not Racetrack as I had assumed, and that it approached the site from the north, passing several mining works until emerging into the large clearing where the town was located. Looking closely at the USGS map I could trace the road from Deer Lodge southeast to the Oro Fino Campground; just south of that point, the road forked - the east fork proceeding up to Champion Pass and then on down to Boulder River; the west fork continued south, then curved east past a couple of mines into what looked to be a cleared area right on the Continental Divide before continuing a half-mile or so east to Champion Pass. This must be the Old Champion Pass Road.

Both the USGS map and Google Earth seemed to show that access to the big clearing was possible by taking the road (the new road) past the Oro Fino Campground to Champion Pass, then backtracking west along a faint trail to the probable site of Champion. Further, I located a description of the Continental Divide Trail in that vicinity; it sounded like the faint trail shown on the map might be the CDT. If the trail was public access and went through or close to the townsite, I might be able to avoid the No Trespassing signs I had encountered when I approached from the west.

So on a bright June Montana morning, a year after our first attempts, we set off again. We found the road out of Deer Lodge; we came to the campground and took the correct fork in the road; we reached Champion Pass, where the Continental Divide Trail emerged from the forest to the north, crossed the road and plunged back into the woods headed southwest. Debbie stayed with the car, well-supplied with books and water, while I headed off to find Champion.

But there was a quandary. The CDT seemed to be following a long-abandoned road, covered with windfall trees and branches. About 50 feet down the CDT, a faint dirt track branched off due west but didn’t seem to be much followed. Also, a newer, seemingly well-traveled road took off from Champion Pass at the same point but appeared to head too far back northwest to reach the place where I hoped Champion was. It also didn’t seem to be on the map nor visible in the Google Earth view. Which trail to take?

I chose the windfall-covered abandoned road. After about a quarter mile of fighting through downed trees and branches, the road dropped down to a creek and headed straight south. This wasn’t the right trail.

Back up the abandoned road to the faint dirt trace, and off I went again headed west. Within a hundred yards I saw a CDT marker attached to a tree, which gave me reassurance. About a quarter mile from Champion Pass I saw a large log structure a hundred feet or so north of the trail and noted it to visit on the way out. After a half mile the CDT came out of the forest into a meadow - a large meadow, 200 yards across and probably half a mile extending east-west. The view to the west was that the meadow sloped down from what was surely the Continental Divide. But the trail turned south back into the woods after crossing the meadow, rather than continuing west towards the divide. This didn’t seem right but I kept on the trail hoping it would turn west, which it did soon after re-entering the woods.

Things looked promising when the trail came upon a shallow, stone-lined mine pit. Another couple hundred yards and there was a larger tailings pile and a tumble-down log structure. At that point the CDT turned south, but an old road led north, apparently towards the large clearing. I chanced it and followed the old road. In a quarter mile it came upon the large, open area shown on the Google Earth view, on the west side of the Continental Divide.

The old road crossed the open area to a T with a road running east-west. Just at the T, this road was gated and signed. I wondered if the road was the same one I had noticed back at Champion Pass before starting out.

At the T of the old and new roads, a large stone foundation is located. A half-dozen tailings piles and pits are scattered about. East of the T, just north of the newer road, are more pits, what appears to be a foundation of a mine building, and at least four foundations, in practically a straight line, that I think mark Champion’s main street. A pile of bricks and several cleared areas, possibly once the sites of buildings, are along the same alignment. I had finally found Champion

By now I had been gone from the car for nearly an hour and a half, and having told Debbie I'd be back in an hour I needed to keep my explorations short. After taking photos and using my Garmin to get lat/long readings of as many features as I could find, it was time to head back.

Which route to take? That new-looking road heading east was tempting, but I could envision myself following it as it headed east and then north away from where I wanted to go. I decided to retrace my tracks back to the Continental Divide Trail and on to the pass.

On the way back I veered off to look at the large structure I had noticed north of the trail on the way in ... and there was the road passing right in front of it. This time I took the hint and followed the road out to the pass. Next time, I will know which route to take in.

We continued on the road down the beautiful Boulder River valley and reached I-15 at Bernice. On the way back to Fairmont we stopped at the North Star Diner in Butte for ice cream - we decided we deserved a victory prize.



The remains of Champion. A few bricks and foundations, all that remains of a flourishing mining town.

Photo: Author

CORRECTION: The Dredge at PIONEER

by TERRY HALDEN

A year ago I wrote an article about the remains of a dredge at Pioneer, in which I stated: 'Pat Wall purchased all the mining claims in the Pioneer District, in Powell County, along with the water rites, owned by Conrad Kohrs. **He then purchased a Yuba dredge, had it freighted up from California, on forty-two rail cars, assembled it and started dredging the small creeks in the area. Wall died, but his wife continued the operation'**..... Bold print: Not so.

I was recently doing some unrelated research and came across a Mining Truth magazine, dated November 19, 1931. The lead story was "Gold Creek (Pioneer) mined again after 73 Years". It went on to relate that Wall had purchased all the properties and was contemplating a dredging operation but had died. Consequently "*the Gold Creek Mining Company was organized by a group of Wisconsin men under the laws of Montana. The company has acquired title to 5,800 acres of mining claims which land was formally owned by Pat Wall and Conrad Kohrs. The Company has purchased a Yuba Dredge from the Yuba Manufacturing Company of San Francisco, at a cost of a quarter million dollars. This dredge is now under construction and many men have been employed by the company in constructing roads, building electric power lines and housing facilities and hauling some thirty car loads of lumber, machinery and equipment from the Milwaukee station at Gold Creek, a distance of five miles to where the dredge is being constructed. The work is scheduled for completion by spring, when dredging will start*".

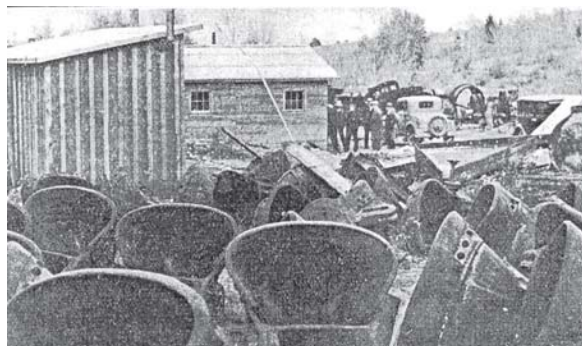
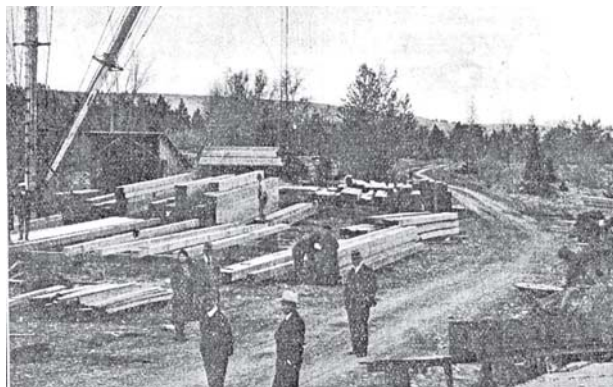
The magazine even had two photos of all the lumber and equipment, awaiting assembly, on the magazine's front cover

RIGHT: The remains of the dredge, 2012.

Photo:TERRY HALDEN

BELOW: The dredge material awaiting assembly, 1931.

Photos: MINING TRUTH MAGAZINE



FORT CONNAH - Update

Many of you will remember our convention in 2010 in Polson as one of better ones of recent years. On the Sunday we visited Fort Connah, a Hudson Bay trading post in the beautiful Flathead valley. The one building still standing is regarded as the oldest building in Montana. There was one other cabin there that the Fort Connah Restoration Society was wanting to repair, but for the lack of funds. (See photo on right as it looked in 2010).



After the convention we made a donation, large enough to purchase the needed materials, and the Fort Connah Restoration Society, all volunteers, have now completed renovations of the second cabin, including adding a stone fireplace as might have been there in the mid 1800's. At our convention in Helena, Betty Steindorf showed me the pictures of the work they had done on the second cabin.



They are shown here, so that you can see where your money was spent. I think you will agree, it was a great investment, and next time you are in the Polson area, stop in and see the addition for yourself.





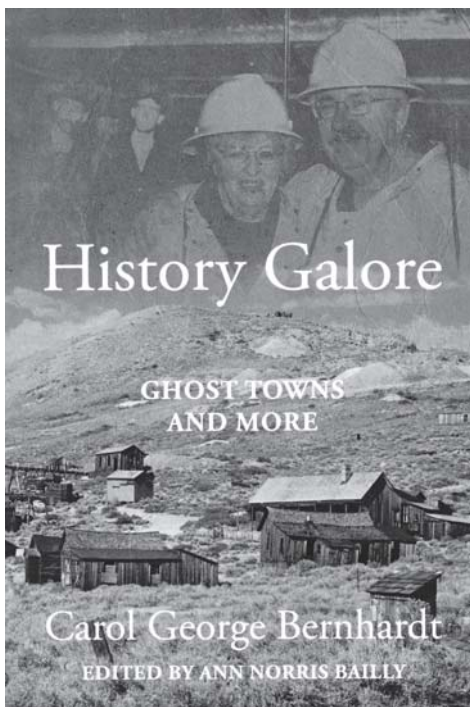
Montana Ghost Town Quarterly

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

REVIEW:

HISTORY GALORE - Ghost Towns and More

by CAROL GEORGE BERNHARDT



In 'History Galore, Ghost Towns and More', longtime member Carol Bernhardt recalls the many trips that she and her late husband, Dave Bernhardt (who many of you will remember) took, exploring ghost towns in Montana. Growing up in Laurel, Montana, Carol earned a degree in elementary education and taught in Billings, where she met and married Dave. Together, from reading ghost town books, they started exploring sites, talking to local people that they met, and taking photographs. Don't expect to find any new earth shattering information about the ghost towns listed in the book, but it is a quaint travelogue, often referring to data contained in the many other ghost town books that are readily available. The book is listed under 'Travel' by the publisher Outskirt Press and can be purchased at www.amazon.com

TERRY HALDEN