



MONTANA
GHOST TOWN
PRESERVATION SOCIETY

preserving history for the next generation

VOLUME 43

NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2015



The mill at the ghost town of Comet.

photo: TERRY HALDEN

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.

WINTER 2015

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Membership: Darian Halden
Newsletter Editor: Terry Halden
2015 Convention: Darian & Terry Halden
Immediate Past President: John Ellingsen
Directors: Tom Lowe, and Gordon Tracy.

The Prez Sez

TERRY HALDEN

My first duty is to acknowledge, with extreme gratitude, a \$1,000 donation from the Louis L. Borick Foundation. A truly gracious act, that came as a complete surprise, just before Christmas. The money will be used to help us in our future plans in renovation, clean-up and preservation that are currently on the drawing board.

By now you have received a reminder that membership dues for 2015 should be remitted to our sec/treas. If, by any chance, you are a life member, or have already paid your dues for this year, please ignore the letter – keeping track of 250 members, even using a computer program, mistakes do happen.

Keep the weekend of August 1st and 2nd free as that is the weekend that we have tentatively set aside for a blitz at the Fort Maginnis cemetery. Cleaning up the undergrowth and laying a trail to the site. Further details will follow in the next newsletter.

Darian reports that Convention 2015 plans are well underway. As you can see on page 7, the host hotel will be the Holiday Inn just off 10th Avenue South in Great Falls, where we will have registration on Friday evening, starting at 5:00 p.m.; with hors d'oeuvres served at 6:00 and two guest speakers, one at 7:00 and the other at 8:00. Saturday will be a coach trip to Fort Benton, the 'birth place of Montana', where an entire day of attractions are being lined up, including a lunch. Returning to the Holiday Inn by 5:0'clock, where the banquet will be held Saturday evening along with guest speaker, Ken Robison. Mr. Robison is the historian at the Overholser Historical Research Center in Fort Benton, the historian for the Great Falls/Cascade

County Historical Preservation Commission and is a published author of several historical non-fiction books. He is also a noted authority on the Mullen Road, built in 1860 between Walla Walla and Fort Benton, and this will be the topic of his talk. Sunday we will car pool to Fort Shaw which is currently under re-construction as it was an important cavalry outpost during the Indian Wars of the 19th century.

In this issue of the newsletter, you will find the conclusion of Linda Dutcher's memorable article on the Stillwater Mining District, along with Chuck Flood's history of the Sand Creek Mining District. To round things off I would like to introduce you to a character by the nickname of 'Jew Jake' Harris, who made the last two decades of the 19th century, in north central Montana, to say the least, rather lively.

Regretfully, I have to report that after several years on the board, Mike Byrnes has resigned, although he will continue to be a member. Mike was partially responsible for last year's successful convention helping Don Black with the organization and he also ran, along with Gord Tracy, the convention in Anaconda a few years ago. Thanks Mike.

Until the next time.....

Terry

New Members

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

Pam Chute - Kalispell, MT

Dennis Seglem - Cut Bank, MT

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

October 25, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 1:05PM by President Terry Halden. Board Members also in attendance were Sally Griffin, Kathryn Manning, and Gordon Tracy.

Sally made the motion to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2014 Board Meeting as they were printed in the Quarterly Newsletter. Gordon seconded it. Motion passed.

Sally then gave the Treasurer's Report. For the period July 1 – September 30, 2014, we had income of \$6,435.00 and expenses of \$8,019.16. For the recent convention, we had income of \$6,395.00 and expenses of \$7,115.43, for a loss of \$720.43. Gordon moved that we accept the Treasurer's Report and Katy seconded. Motion passed.

The only correspondence we received was a letter from Don Black giving his resignation from the Board effective immediately.

Membership: Terry reported for Darian that we have 250 members. Reminder cards for 2015 dues will be sent out in November.

Facebook: No report

Webmaster: Katy brought her computer and she showed us our new website and how it is developing. Terry suggested putting color photos from the convention on it. We will have a portion of our newsletter on it. Terry will get a list of links to Katy to be included. Sally will check with Paypal to see how to set up an account so members can pay their dues on line.

Projects: Darian has been working on a project to clean up the Fort Maginnis cemetery. There are four notable people in Montana history among those buried there. The government now owns all the land in the area so no landowners can keep us out and prevent working on the project. It would need to be set up as a site for the public to see. There would have to be signs, good access, and some pamphlets printed and available at local motels etc.. The clean-up work could be done next spring by 2 ladies who live in the area and are descendants of Teddy 'Blue' Abbott who is buried there. Motion was made by Gord and Seconded by Sally 'That we look into the proposed project further' Motion passed.

The project to supply a printer to the library in Chinook is on hold because we haven't heard back from them.

Newsletter: It is at the printers. The new logo is on the front page.

Old Business: The 2015 convention will be held in the Holiday Inn, 1100 Fifth St. S., Great Falls. 20 rooms at \$89 each have been blocked off for our people attending. On Saturday we will have a bus rented to go to Fort Benton. There are 5 museums there. Ken Robinson of Great Falls will be our speaker. His topic will be the Mullan Road.

We are continuing to look for new Board members.

Everyone present, as well as those who submitted their proxy, signed the amendments to our Articles of Incorporation. Sally will send them to the Secretary of State for filing.

New Business: All new business had already been discussed earlier.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:18PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sally Griffin,
Sec/Treas

OBITUARY



LORETTA ANN CHAPMAN

We are saddened to learn that Loretta passed away November 8 2014. She was born in Bozeman on December 10, 1934 to Gertrude Chapin and Paul Lee and was educated at Bozeman High School, where she met her future husband, William Scott (Bill) Chapman. They were married on January 22, 1954, and eventually moved near Gardiner, where they lived for the next 60 years. They raised four children, Linda, Margo, Dave and Doug. Loretta served in the Girl Scouts, taught skiing at Eagle Mount for many years and was a licensed pilot (and it is rumored that she drove her car like she flew).

Loretta was also a director on our board for many years, serving as our treasurer/secretary for a few of those years. She also organized a successful convention for us in Gardiner a decade ago that many of us will remember. She survived a brain aneurism in 2007 and a year ago was diagnosed with leukemia. We were told that she had beaten the disease and that she and Bill would be able to attend our past convention in Lewistown, but sadly, that was not to be.

Our condolences go out to Bill and the rest of Loretta's family, as her smiles and comments will be missed by many of us.

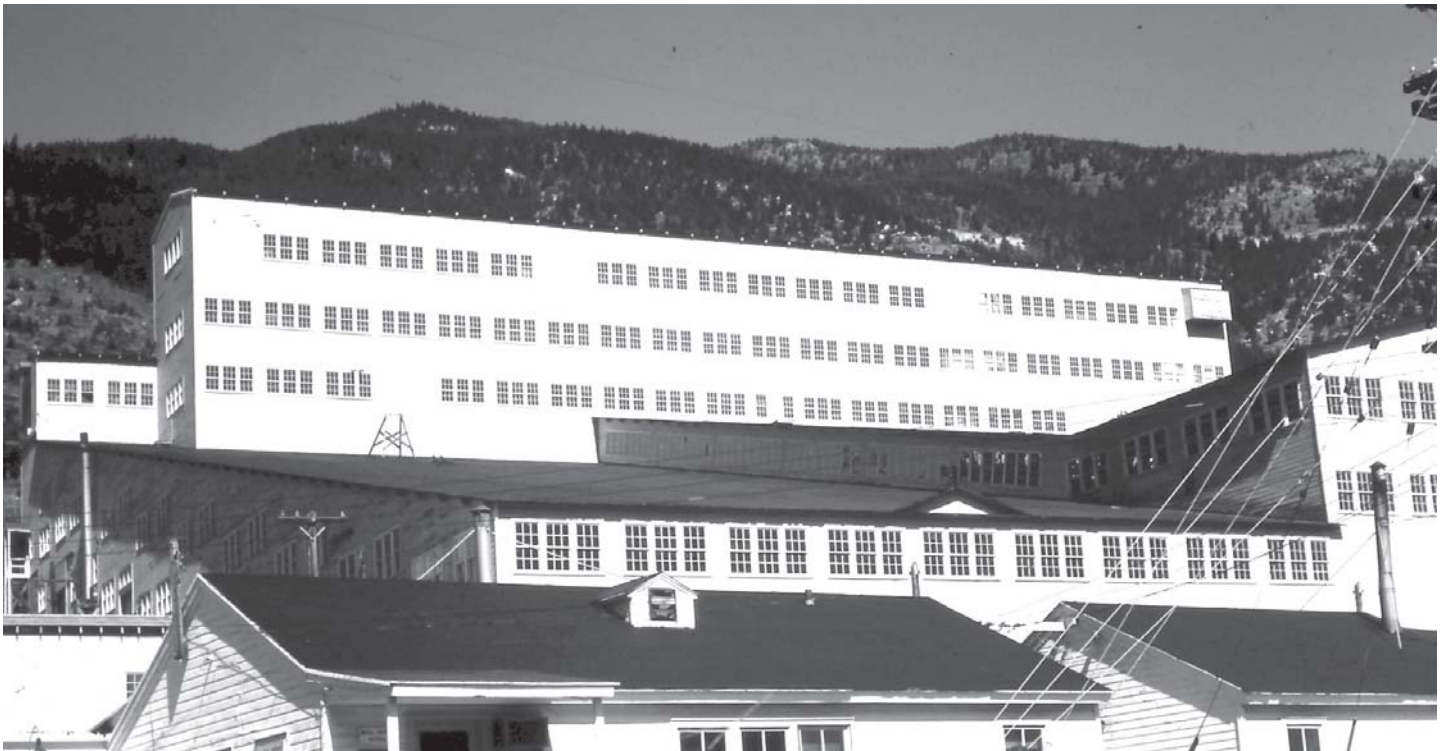
THE

STILLWATER

MINING DISTRICT

PART 2 of a detailed history by.....

LINDA DUTCHER



The Mouat Mill was put on a stand-by basis in 1946 and 1948 partly due to political pressure. It was reopened because of the cold war in 1953. It was acquired by the Anaconda Minerals Company in 1967, sold for salvage in 1972 and finally burned to the ground in 1973. Photographed in 1964, by RUSSELL R. DUTCHER

POST WORLD WAR II

In 1946, after 5 years in the 10-year contract, the Benbow and Mouat-Sampson leases were cancelled. The War Assets Administration's took control of the remaining mining and facility assets. Their task was to recover as much of the taxpayer's cost as possible. Priority to purchase the remains was given to Federal agencies, cities and counties. The Bureau of Reclamation sought 75 of the Benbow and Mouat buildings: 35 for employee housing in Billings and 40 for construction camps in Big Sandy and Chester. Benbow buildings also went to Billings to the Polytechnic Institute. Further Benbow buildings, some which had cost \$125,000 were offered by sealed bid February 11 through March 4, 1947. They included 12 four-room houses, 11 three-room houses and various buildings at the mine site. Bids were accepted August 12 through September 2, 1947, for the mill building and associated facilities, thus removing the entire surface facility that had been constructed from 1941 to 1943. At the Mouat site, it was announced in late 1946, that the .

Mouat Mine was put on "stand still basis" through January 27, 1947 as several large concerns including the American Chrome and Magnesium Company were interested in taking over the property. Twenty two of the buildings had already been dismantled. The WAA accepted bids for 78 Mouat buildings between July 31st and August 21st of 1947. This included 23 three-room houses, 30 two-room duplexes, four bunk houses and 21 other various industrial facilities. Due to political pressure, a subsequent invitation in 1948 for bids to dismantle the concentrating facilities was cancelled. The 12-story mill was to be "held in a standby condition".

In 1947-1949, M. W. Mouat and his wife May Paula, as trustee, were embroiled in lawsuits with the Government. About this time the Russians started their campaign to close down chrome exports to the United States. However, renewed activity in the Stillwater complex would only result if the Mouat litigation was settled. In the early summer of 1950, amidst the "Red Scare" and the Korean Conflict, Representative Wesley A. D'Ewart "demanded the government take steps to open the

chrome mine” in order to comply with the government policy of stockpiling minerals ensuring military preparedness. By August the United States authorized the repurchase of the Stillwater properties. In April, 1952, the Defense Minerals Products Administration signed a contract with the American Chrome Company of California to produce 900,000 tons of concentrates. After rehabilitation of the Mouat Mill and reconstruction of housing for 250 workers, the Mouat Mine reopened in 1953 as the American Mine. By 1961, 920,000 tons of concentrates had been milled and placed below the mill awaiting future use. However, the contract was not renewed. In 1973, President Nixon ordered strategic stockpiles eliminated, and the chromite was sold to Metallurg, Inc., New York. It took seven years to truck it from the Nye area. It “graced Columbus’s eastern skyline” beginning March of 1979 until 1996 when efforts began to have it shipped out. AMC acquired the mill in 1967 and sold it for salvage in 1972. The following year it burned to the ground.

After his wife died in 1950, Bill Mouat was still residing on what would have been Seventh St. and Spruce Avenue in Nye City where he had lived since at least 1913. He died in Columbus August 19, 1958 at age 77.

THE SEARCH FOR PLATINUM GROUP METALS

The search for platinum resources was stimulated in the late 1960’s due to a dramatic increase in price and demand from Japan for platinum jewelry. Demand in the United States increased after 1974, when the metal was used in the

now required auto catalysts. While the presence of the deposits was known in the early 1930’s, there was little interest in them. It was Princeton geologist Edward Sampson, upon returning from exploring platinum and chromite occurrences in South Africa, discovered similar rocks in the Stillwater region in 1930. For the next several summers Sampson studied the area along with graduate students Joseph Peoples and Arthur Howland. In 1933, Joe Peoples introduced the term “Stillwater Igneous Complex” to describe them. In 1961, Johns-Manville geologist H. Keith Conn, mindful of research done in the South Africa by Sampson also explored this region. Conn was hopeful there might be a similar zone in the Stillwater Complex” and by 1967, Johns-Manville began the soil sampling. A technique for soil testing developed by a Canadian firm allowed Conn to identify platinum in soils. Core drilling began in 1972 and an initial discovery called “Camp Zone” for the nearby Brass Monkey field camp was made due to efforts Don Miller and Dr. Stan Todd. The zone was named “J-M Reef” in recognition of the Johns-Manville Company. Further work was developed in 1974 with an adit driven into a wall near the West Fork of the Stillwater River to acquire a large sample and study mining conditions. Results were favorable and J-M began to accelerate their exploration and claim staking, by 1975 they held all but 1.5 miles of the 28 mile reef. In 1979, J-M joined with Chevron USA, Inc. to form Stillwater PGM Resources. The Anaconda Minerals Company began negotiations in 1982 with Stillwater PGM Resources. The resulting J-M – Chevron - Anaconda partnership chose the name embraced nearly a full century ago by Jack Nye: Stillwater Mining Company.



The Stillwater Mining Company's mining complex today.

Photo courtesy AUTHOR

STILLWATER MINING COMPANY

SMC continues the tradition of innovation and community commitment initiated by both their predecessors and organizers. Exploration and mining over 150 years meant a district bored with tunnels and disruptions of the surface. When intensive exploration in the 1960's and 70's crossed with the beginning of the "environmental alarm wave" the companies involved agreed on a plan of cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service and the Montana Fish and Game Department for water, erosion and reclamation studies of road, drill site, trenching and tunnel sites in order to "develop effective and practical environmental procedures."

Successful voluntary measures were taken in the Stillwater Valley to minimize impact on Bighorn Sheep. These included a habitat study by Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, fencing the top of the tailings pond to give sheep access to the native grasses planted on the slopes and a medicated feeding program to control lungworm disease. In the interest of maintaining water quality, a program going beyond required monitoring has been established for an area extending up to a mile outside claim boundaries. In 2000, an unprecedented, legally binding "Good Neighbor Agreement" was adopted by the SMC, Stillwater and Sweetgrass Counties providing for citizen participation in third party oversight and decisions about mining operations that could impact local economies and environments, and open lines of communication for early resolution of disputes that might arise.

SMC currently produces and mills ore from the J-M Reef in their Stillwater and East Boulder facilities. After 1990 they also began processing the mill concentrates locally at their new smelter and refinery in Columbus. A PGM matte is produced which must still be refined elsewhere to obtain pure metals. The coarser half of the waste material from the mills is eventually returned to the mine while the remainder is pumped to tailings ponds which will be re-vegetated when no longer in use. In 1988, a boring machine of the type heretofore used for water and subway tunnels was put into operation drilling adits. This saved one-third the cost of conventional drill and blast methods while improving safety for miners. Beginning in 1997 the Stillwater Metals Company took another significant step forward. The loop was closed when they began recycling spent auto and industrial catalyst materials in the original smelter in Columbus using state-of-the-art sampling and analytical techniques. A growing proportion of recycled PGM will be required to comply with increasingly stringent global emission regulations. Stillwater County and surrounding areas have received an economic boost from having a major industry develop based on a mineral deposit that was destined in the end to bring riches. The county's taxable valuation has experienced double digit increases in a number of years since 1984. Unemployment rates have declined (SMC currently employs over 1,500), highways and bridges have been completely rebuilt; schools, classrooms and sewer systems have been improved, and new businesses, public facilities and services are now part of the community. Services and facilities that can suddenly be impacted by large-scale mining developments, including schools, roads, water and sewage systems, housing, law enforcement and fire protection are included in the Montana Hard Rock Minina Impact legislation of 1981 in which 'Up-front' payments are required to deal



Another view of the Stillwater Mining Company's mining complex.
Photo courtesy S.M.C. website



Stillwater Mining Company's East Boulder mine in Sweet Grass County.
Photo courtesy of S.M.C. website.

with socio-economic repercussions. Other substantial payments by SMC have been outright grants. As former Stillwater County administrator John Beaudry was quoted saying in 1990, "The beauty of the impact plan and other mining-related legislation is that money is set aside to pay for the impacts if the mine closed. While it's going, we've maximized our efforts to diversify the economy and there are other strengths besides the mine." SMC has estimated that the deposit has a 30 to 40-year life, about 20 million ounces of PGM reserves mined at a projected rate of half a million ounces per year.

CONVENTION 2015

FRI SEPT 11 ~ SUN SEPT 13

Great Falls

Fort Benton

Host Hotel:

HOLIDAY INN, 400 10th Avenue South, Great Falls. (406)727-7200 / (866)363-3925
Rooms have been reserved at \$89.00 per night - mention M.G.T.P.S. for reserved rate.
Numerous other motels in the city are also available.

Tentative Schedule:

Friday evening: Registration / Hors d'oeuvres/ 2 guest speakers, Great Falls, Detective Dan Smith, who will talk on the early establishment of policing, and a second speaker, awaiting confirmation.

Saturday morning: Coach trip to Fort Benton: visiting numerous historic buildings and locations, including the refurbished trading post of Fort Benton, and the new Museum of the Missouri Breaks; Lunch included.

*The interior of the Fort Benton trading post.
Photo from the Internet.*



Saturday Evening: At Holiday Inn, Banquet, Annual General Meeting and guest speaker, noted historian, Ken Robison, who will talk about the Mullen Trail.

Sunday: Guided tour of refurbished Fort Shaw, U.S. cavalry fort, where Colonel Gibbon's troop started out, to join with Custer, but arrived at the Little Big Horn two days after the fight.

The short history of the **SAND CREEK MINING DISTRICT**

BY **CHUCK FLOOD**

The decade following the rush to Alder Creek found prospectors swarming practically every creek, gulch, gully and ravine for miles around in search of the next big bonanza. By the late 1860s major discoveries had been made at Rochester, Pony, Red Bluffs and Sterling, and location stakes marked countless smaller strikes around the area.

One of the horde of wandering fortune-seekers was John A. Pashley. According to a story later told, in about 1872 Pashley noticed promising-looking outcrops at the head of Sand Creek, a small perennial stream which rises in the foothills south of Sappington and flows north to join the Madison River. Apparently the colors weren't enough to hold Pashley's interest at the time; he moved on, 1884 finding him a resident of Radersburg, where that year he was granted a patent for a new type of rock-drilling machine.

In 1892 Pashley decided to return to the Sand Creek area and on April 29 located two promising lodes which he named the Good Friday and Fiddler's Green. He quickly followed up with discovery of the Chile (also called Chili) lode, located a half mile west of the Good Friday. News of the discoveries was almost immediately known at Pony, about nine miles away. Miners rushed to the scene; within two weeks fifty men were working the ground.

In the first days of the rush to Sand Creek miners simply commuted from Pony, at that time a thriving town complete with a newspaper - the Madison County Monitor, which documented the early phases of life at Sand Creek. Within a few weeks, tents had been pitched at the new site; by end of the year permanent buildings - residences and mining structures - were being built and a mining camp was starting to take shape.

For the first few months, mining was limited to locating claims and doing the preliminary work needed to establish ownership and determine assays values. Common practice was to sink a shaft to hit the vein, and then drift along the vein until rich ore was found. Samples would be assayed to determine whether the ore was worth processing; a few tons would be extracted and set aside and the process would be repeated. Though assay results were promising - averaging \$80-100 of gold per ton of ore - little real development work was done in 1892; the only ores being worked that year were from the Good Friday, which Pashley was processing in an arrastra he built on Willow Creek.

The ore-bearing formation extended in a line running nearly east-west for several miles on either side of Sand Creek. Reports described the geology of the area as being "gneiss, with a belt of quartzite to the west, and west of that blue limestone; veins run east-west; marked by big veins of white spar, often standing up several feet above the gneiss and can be followed with the eye for many miles" (these



Cabin remains, illustrating the desolate surroundings of the Sand Creek Mining District. Photo courtesy AUTHOR

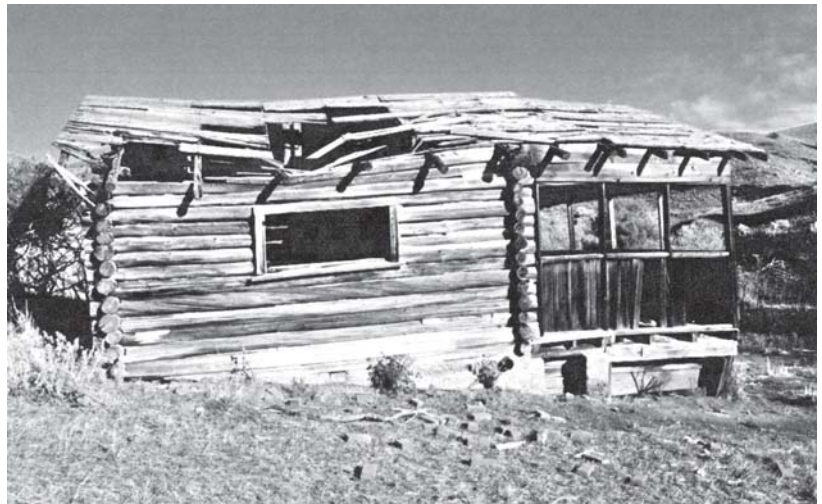
outcrops are still visible today along the Old Yellowstone Trail southwest of Willow Creek). At ground surface the vein was but a few inches wide, widening to as much as four feet at a depth of 50 feet.

By spring 1893 Sand Creek was booming. The major mines - the Good Friday, Chile, McVey, Amethyst, Excelsior, Gold Bug and Duncan among others - were producing paying quantities of ore extracted from shafts as deep as 100 feet. A good road had been completed from Pony down Sand Creek to the railroad at Sappington, and miners had the option of having their ores processed at the mill at Pony or via railroad to as far as Omaha. By year's end, plans were floated to build at least three mills in the Sand Creek district itself.

Sand Creek was a gold camp, discovered at an opportune time for Montana mining. The bottom had dropped out of silver due to repeal of the Silver Purchase Act. Silver mines shut down or severely curtailed operations; towns dependent on those mines shrank in size or were practically depopulated - Granite and Champion, for instance. Miners tossed out of work brought their skills to the more stable gold-based economy of Sand Creek.

In addition to actual mining, money was being made through sales of claims to speculators. A reporter for the Anaconda Standard commented, "...about 15 out of 20 of the mining locations around Sand creek are not valid. The locators did not or could not find the veins, so they located blindly, and let it go at that, holding the ground for a rising market on the strength of the strikes made in the neighborhood through the energy and perseverance of some other fellows." But enough successful claims were located to attract interest from outside capitalists. Several mines were bonded to the Bi-Metallic Mining Company of Granite. Well-known Butte mining impresario Rod D. Leggat, who had been heavily involved in the Red Mountain City-Highland City area in the 1870s, held an additional 16 properties under bond.

A good-sized business community developed at Sand Creek. As early as May, 1893 Frank McGovern had opened the International Hotel - originally housed in a large tent, soon replaced by a two-story frame structure which also included a restaurant. The Isdell Mercantile Company of Pony celebrated the opening of their branch store at Sand Creek with a grand ball there on June 14. That same month Woodward and McVey, of Willow Creek, were in Sand Creek looking for a site for a general merchandise store of their own. Of course Sand Creek had saloons - the Columbia Saloon owned by John Connors and another kept by G.C. Halo - as well as a blacksmith shop and livery stable.



The only cabin still standing at Sand Creek.

Photo courtesy AUTHOR



The stone building remains, likely the powder storage building at Sand Creek. Photo, courtesy, AUTHOR

In June the Monitor reported that “*about a dozen new buildings have been erected at Sand Creek during the past week ... it now has the appearance of a mining camp in fact.*” A.J. Merryman was surveying and platting the surface grounds of the Yucatan and Rattlesnake claims for town lots; in July W.D. Manley platted an addition to the Sand Creek townsite.

A few new businesses appeared in Sand Creek and existing businesses changed hands over the next few years. Polk’s Montana State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1900 lists two hotels at Sand Creek, owned by J.C. Falkman and Mrs. A. Miller. Charles Sherwood’s general store undoubtedly housed the post office, which opened on January 25, 1897 with Sherwood as postmaster.

The 1900 census enumerates over a hundred persons living in the Sand Creek district, which apparently included Sappington. The two hotels were still listed in the 1902 edition of Polk’s Gazetteer; saloon-keeper John Connors had taken over the livery stable, and L.J. Browning of the Butte Badger Mining Company had become postmaster.

Within a few years it was over. Sand Creek lost its post office in October, 1902. Businesses closed; people moved away. The 1910 census shows hardly anyone from 1900 still in the area. The mines continued to operate intermittently on a low level up to the 1940s, according to the Montana DEQ, but Sand Creek’s glory decade had passed.

Today Sand Creek is located on property controlled by the KG Ranch of Three Forks. The general location of the townsite is on the east side of Sand Creek (the stream) three miles south of the railroad crossing at Sappington. Remnants of the town - foundations, cellar pits and wooden debris marking the sites of buildings - are strung along the creek for a distance of more than half a mile. A stone wall and somewhat-intact cabin can be spotted from Highway 287; hidden beneath the highway berm is a stone-front building, possibly a powder magazine, built into the side of the hill. The KG Ranch manager is knowledgeable about the town and, on request, permission is granted to visit the site - no trespassing otherwise.

Madison County Monitor, May 6, 1892 - the article that announced the Sand Creek discoveries

Sand Creek Gold Mines.

Considerable excitement was caused in Pony on Friday last by the report of a rich find being made at the head of Sand creek, about three miles from Sappington. On Saturday a number from Pony visited the scene of the excitement and found the country alive with prospectors from Sappington, Three Forks, Harrison, Willow Creek, and their immediate vicinity. Those who went from Pony say that the lead, which was uncovered at the grass roots, is very rich in gold, but the greater portion of them believe that it pinches out at a very shallow depth. The original locator, whose name we were unable to obtain, is from Radersburg and has located the Good Friday and Fiddler’s Green lodes. We are informed that mines in that vicinity were successfully worked in the 60’s, and that an arrastra was built near their for the treatment of the ores.

The Enigma of a Man Called 'JEW JAKE' HARRIS

by TERRY HALDEN

The words of a song sung by Marty Robbins, 'We don't know where he came from, we don't know where he went, and we haven't seen him since' could well apply to the character, known throughout Montana in the last two decades of the 19th century as 'Jew Jake' Harris.

There are indications that Jacob Harris was in Fort Benton as early as 1876 although he was only first officially recorded in the 1880 Federal Census when he was mentioned as living in Fort Benton, being 29 (which would make his birth date as being 1851), born in Prussia, with both his parents as being Prussian. When he came to these shores, with or without his parents, is unknown, but checking immigration records for thirty years might produce that information. He was later described as *'having a six foot stooping figure, with a black moustache, pale face and jet black hair and eyes. He was a professional gambler, devoting his talents to poker playing, in which line he was an expert. He was quiet, inoffensive and a loyal friend when sober, but when in liquor he would fight at very short notice if he had the idea that he was being imposed on'*. Where and when he got the nickname of 'Jew Jake' is unknown, but from his first mention in the local papers, he was always referred to by that title, often having the surname omitted.

His first altercation with the law came on the night of July 14, 1886. That evening he was in Spurgeon & Crowder's saloon in Great Falls, where he met an old friend of his named Matthews who was playing pool with a character named Henry Smith. An argument erupted when the inebriated Smith made an error which should have cost him the game, but chose to ignore it. 'Jew Jake' interceded on behalf of his friend, by holding a match to illuminate the rules of the game that were posted on the wall. Smith stomped away muttering that he would get even. Just after midnight, he returned and marched toward 'Jew Jake'. Someone yelled a warning that he had a razor in each hand. Our hero pulled out his 'Bull Dog' 41 calibre and after warning Smith to drop the razors, shot him once with the bullet entering the right side just above the hip bone. As Smith dropped, a razor fell away from each of his hands. Harris expressed regret at shooting Smith and gave instructions for Smith to be taken to the Pioneer hotel, where Harris would have Smith's needs attended to. He even offered to pay for a doctor who was summoned. Harris then gave himself up to the law, but was released when the facts of the incident were determined to be self-defense. At first it was suspected that Smith, who was in great pain would die, but after surgery the July 28 1886 Riverside Press of Fort Benton reported *"Jew Jake' is very much broken up about the affair and regrets exceedingly the necessity which compelled him to shoot. He attends personally to the wants of Smith and scarcely leaves his room. The chances are that Razor Smith will recover'*. By August 14 Smith was listed as getting about on crutches.

The follow summer it was reported that 'Jew Jake' was trying his gambling skills 'down the river' in Dakota territory, but that it was not to his liking and soon returned to Montana, eventually taking up residence and pursuing his gambling profession in Helena.

This was where he got into his second altercation with the law, when on the day after Christmas 1888, he was in the Headquarters saloon when he got into an argument with another gambler named Jack Galvin and to enforce his point, he slapped Galvin across his face. Galvin left, but returned and plunged a Bowie knife into the left side of 'Jew Jake', breaking off two of his lower ribs. They struggled for control with Harris besting his assailant and gaining ahold of the knife, but his weakened condition prevented him from doing anything he might have had a mind to. Galvin ran away and was soon arrested and charged with assault. When Harris recovered sufficiently, Galvin was put on trial and on May 15 1889 was sentenced to 18 months in the penitentiary.

In November 1890, in an effort to get rid of 'tin-horn' gamblers, the city of Helena passed an ordinance reducing the amount of a bet that could be made in a card game from \$12.50 to \$5.00. However, three professional gamblers were exempt from this new law, Al Owens, 'Society Red' and 'Jew Jake'. The idea behind this law was to deter itinerant gamblers, who when they won big, would pay off their debts (sometimes) and leave town, with nothing for the house, whereas the permanent gamblers were paying the saloon proprietors for their seat at the table.

'Jew Jake's third altercation with the law was his last, for a while. On Sunday, November 15, 1891 he was on a train excursion to the mining camp on Neihart, where patronizing the local saloons was his main reason for the day trip. On the way back to Great Falls, Harris and his friends became loud and boisterous and Great Falls City Marshal George H. Treat interceded and knocked Harris down with the side of this pistol. Treat, who was also a Cascade County sheriff and a deputy U.S. Marshal, was within his jurisdiction in doing so. When Treat got off at Great Falls, Harris, who felt he had been abused, got off behind him and started shooting. One shot hit the marshal in the back, another ricocheted and hit a rancher, Joseph Lessard in the eye and a third nicked the leg of 7-year-old Arthur Marks. Going down, the marshal drew his gun and fired with the bullet shattering the left knee of Harris. At this point the fight was over. The victims were taken to hospital and Harris was carted off to jail where he was charged with two counts of assault and one of attempted murder. Marks was none the worse for wear as the bullet had passed right through the flesh of his leg. After treatment in the Falls a special car was put on the next Helena bound train for him where it was reported he slept the entire trip home. He was never heard from again. Lessard's injuries were not as severe as first indicated and he too recovered completely, dying in

1913 in Warm Springs, Montana. The bullet in marshal Treat had hit his sacrum and was embedded in his spine. It was removed and he too recovered in time. In early December Harris was released under bond and sent to Helena in the baggage car of a train to be treated by his surgeons Dr. M. Rockman and Dr. W. Tracy. At first they thought they could save his leg, but by the end of the month it was apparent that amputation was necessary and it was done a third of the way up the thigh bone.

His trial the following year was repeatedly delayed because of his slow recovery and did not get underway in Great Falls until March 1893 when he was found guilty of assaulting marshal Treat and sentenced to one year in the penitentiary. The other two cases of assault were dropped by the D.A. Harris served his year and was released the following May. He had learned his lesson and was, from there on, a changed man, having *'completely quit the use of liquor'* according to a July 24 1894 article in the Anaconda Standard. He had re-located to the new town of Landusky in the Little Rockies and had become close friends with the town's founder Powell 'Pike' Landusky. November of that year saw Harris in Great Falls showing off rich samples of gold ore from the region that was reported to assay at \$5,000 to the ton. Harris soon had his own saloon in the burgeoning town and maintained order in it by using a shotgun as a crutch.

Harris and the west were changing – no more wild west, out of control mining camps, Landusky was being settled by families. A church and a school were planned. But that did not sit well with the wild cowboys of the area and on the morning of December 27 1894 they struck. It happened in Jew Jake's saloon. Whilst Lonnie Curry and his cousin Jim Thornhill kept the saloon patrons at bay with drawn guns Harvey 'Kid' Curry preceded to pistol whip 'Pike' Landusky. Finally it was over and as 'Pike' got up he reached into the pocket of his overcoat for a handkerchief to wipe his blooded face, 'Kid' Curry shot him twice, claiming 'Pike' was reaching for a gun. 'Pike' was dead before he hit the ground. 'Kid' Curry left the area but his brother and Thornhill stayed and were

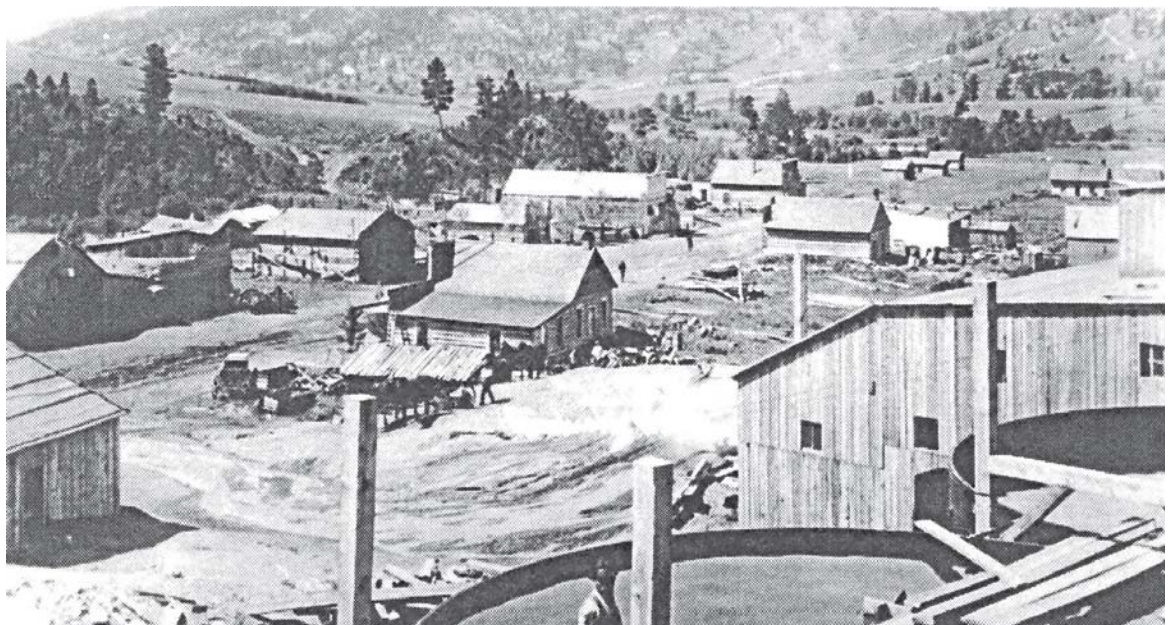
subsequently charged with accessories to murder. By the time their trial came up, the wild cowboy element had taken over the area and witnesses were too frightened to say anything against them and, of course, the charges were dismissed. Weekends in Landusky became a thing to avoid as cowboys 'shot' up the town in their wild sprees. It was said that on a Saturday night in Landusky you could swing a pint cup in the air and catch a quart of bullets.

Finally in its Monday March 8, 1897 edition the Anaconda Standard stated *'Landusky, the mining camp in the Little Rockies, has been the scene of many shooting scrapes during the last three years and now after a quiet spell of a few months, the old fun has been renewed and the boys are at it again'*. It goes on to detail all the troubles over the years and lays the blame for everything squarely on the Curry crowd. It continued that on the previous Wednesday evening Lonnie Curry and a Wash Lamkin (who owned the other competing saloon in the town) were besieging 'Jew Jake' in his saloon. Over 100 shots were exchanged between the two parties and the battle raged for three hours. Miraculously no one was even scratched. All three were arrested when the county sheriff arrived. Harris' trial came up first and he was exonerated by managing to prove the fight started when some cowboy friends of Lamkin fired some shots at Harris's saloon and he merely returned fire. The result of the other two trials is unknown, but 'Jew Jake' had had enough of the lawless element in Landusky and quit. The following year his saloon in Landusky, mysteriously burned down.

Later that year 'Jew Jake' was reported by the press to be in Juneau, Alaska where he returned to his gambling past, staying in the Klondike area for several years, where he was suspected to have died. But Harris was a tough old bird and Spokane Press started giving reports of 'Jew Jake' operating a 'Bookie' business at various horseracing tracks in the area between 1902 and 1907. After that, in the words of the song, *'We don't know where he went and we haven't seen him since'*. Although an article in the Harlem Enterprise of October 5 1916 referred to him as *'the late 'Jew Jake'*.

Landusky, 1895, from the Internet.

There is no known photo of Jacob 'Jew Jake' Harris. The author even checked the Great Falls Police Dept. to see if they had a 'mug shot' in their archives to no avail



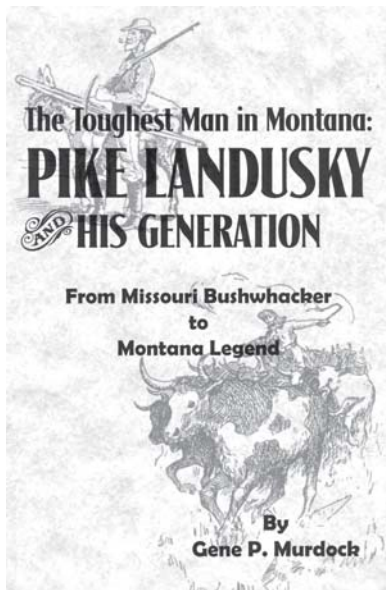


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REVIEW

'Pike Landusky & his Generation'

by GENE P. MURDOCK



Author, Gene P. Murdock, born in St. Louis, was an amateur historian who had a special interest in the Civil War as it related to the state of Missouri, and in particular St. Francois County where he resided most of his life. As a result he did considerable research into a local land owner, Sam Hildebrand, who was branded a southerner in a Union County and because of it did end up fighting for the South. In doing his research, he came across a young teenager working on the Hildebrand estate by the name of Powell Landusky who intrigued him and as a result he did some follow-up research on the man who came out west in the 1860's, according to Murdock, to avoid the same persecution Hildebrand had sustained. 'Pike' Landusky had an exciting history in Montana, eventually naming the mining camp, where on Dec 27, 1894 he was the first murder victim of Kid Curry. He sheds some interesting early history on 'Pike' but his research in Montana is, unfortunately, sadly lacking as he too often falls into the trap of repeating hearsay events to flesh out his history. For example, he has Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid in 'Jew Jake's saloon watching Kid Curry murder Landusky, basing his theory on one person's reminiscence published in 1931, who admitted that he left 'Pike' at the door to the saloon, and therefore could not have seen who the other patrons of the saloon might have been.

There are numerous other errors and omissions, but the book does offer a plausible reason as to why 'Pike' was murdered. The author, unfortunately, died before the publication of the book but his wife did the final edit and had it published in 2014.

Terry Halden