



Winter 2010

Mining History News

Quarterly Newsletter of the Mining History Association

Inspiration In Your Own Backyard



*The 1906 Homestake Slime Plant is the last vestige of Deadwood's mining past, and is currently being converted into a casino.
(Photo by David Wolff)*

When attending Mining History Association Conferences, I take the greatest delight in touring mining country and visiting old mines and mills. Every mining area has its own allure, but I am always amazed by what I see in Colorado. I marvel at the ruins above Leadville as well as the beauty of Red Mountain Pass, just to name two locations. Then I wonder why I am not researching these wonderful places, and just how lucky Duane Smith, Rudy Davison, Ed Hunter and many others are who live in this dramatic mining country. To my mind, having a beautiful environment and a great mining

history in your own backyard can inspire all kinds of projects.

But I don't have Colorado in my backyard; instead, I have the Black Hills. When I get home from our conferences I realize that the Black Hills may not be as grand and the mining ruins not as extensive, but I still have the opportunity to do some good mining history. Indeed my own, more humble, backyard can be inspirational, and I just need to keep that in mind before I become envious of others.

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

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

Let's look at some of the things that are in my backyard. As Rodman Paul wrote, the Black Hills gold rush represented the "culmination and a kind of summation of the successive mining frontiers."¹ Because of that, the Black Hills can be seen as a "microcosm." For instance, technologies that had been developed elsewhere found their way to the Black Hills, and new technologies emerged in the Hills that then spread elsewhere. My favorite examples involve ore processing. After studying Colorado smelting, a metallurgist named Franklin Carpenter believed he could take an assortment of local materials and run a successful smelter. He experimented with what he called pyritic smelting. While his original notion did not work, he ultimately succeeded and went on to build smelters in Colorado. One of the innovators of the chlorination process, John E. Rothwell, also honed his skills in the Black Hills before he too moved to Colorado. Then, noted metallurgists John Van Nostrand Dorr and Charlie W. Merrill spent a number of years in the Black Hills before they also moved on. In fact, the Black Hills became important enough to mining technology that the 1903 American Mining Congress was held in Deadwood.

Of course, the bad came with the good to the Black Hills, and every mining scheme tried elsewhere seemed to make an appearance. Mining fraud came in many forms, but the Harney Peak Tin Company stands out for its size and longevity. Over a period of ten years, a variety of investors, many from England, pumped in nearly \$3 million dollars to recover \$1,545 worth of tin.

Beyond the notion of a microcosm, the Black Hills is exciting because of Deadwood. Thanks to the deaths of Wild Bill and Calamity Jane, Deadwood has become famous in the lore of the West, but beneath the legend exists some exciting mining history. After its rich placer claims played out, Deadwood almost died a slow, ugly death, like many mining camps. But Deadwood always managed to reinvent itself, most often, based on new mining investors, new

mining processes, and new mining areas. Each, in turn, gave a new burst of life to the town. Today, only the 1906 Homestake slime plant, currently being turned into a casino, reminds us of that extensive mining history.

Obviously missing from my little commentary on Black Hills inspirations, is the Homestake gold mine in Lead. Unlike Deadwood, the Homestake's mining past is very evident with the open cut and the extensive mine plant, but I don't have a strong desire to research it. I suspect my interest wanes because others, such as Duane Smith and Steve Mitchell, have done such commendable jobs in exploring its history.² But the Homestake is a constant reminder of the great things that can come from my "little" Black Hills.

I am sure that each of you has a mining place that inspires you. If not, it should be evident that I believe there is such a thing as "power of place," and I am lucky to have a good place in my own backyard.

David A. Wolff
Spearfish, SD
David.Wolff@bhsu.edu

1. Rodman Wilson Paul, *Mining Frontiers of the Far West, 1848-1880* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974), 177.
2. Duane A. Smith, *Staking a Claim in History: The Evolution of Homestake Mining Company* (Walnut Creek, Calif.: Homestake Mining Company, 2001); Steven T. Mitchell, *Nuggets to Neutrinos: The Homestake Story* (Bloomington, Ind.: Xlibris, 2009).

Future MHA Meetings

Dillon, Montana: June 1-5, 2011

Prescott, Arizona: June 7-10, 2012

Galena, Illinois: June 2013

Exploring the Ancient Copper Mines of Spain

Phylis Cancilla Martinelli

In modern Spain a visit to the capacious Iberian Peninsula mining areas offers a step back into extractive history. Ancient traces of mining going back to the Carthaginian, Phoenician and Roman empires indicated that early cultures extracted the mineral wealth of this area. Romans invaded southern Spain around 200 B. C., establishing a base in the south. Despite resistance in northern areas Rome occupied Hispania for 700 years. A strong motivation for holding onto this area was the richness of natural resources. Roman engineers managed to find innovative ways to extract precious mineral wealth, which funded much of the empire's expansion throughout the Mediterranean world. Significant mining areas were Rio Tinto and Tharsis, in today's state of Huelva. Rio Tinto produced huge amounts of silver, which can be possessed today by collectors of Roman coins. Many profitable mines throughout the ages have been ruined by underground water tables that can make mining impossible. At Rio Tinto archaeologists found a Roman water-lifting wheel designed to keep lower levels of the mines dry. Despite engineering advances the main extractive work was done by slaves, however.

The ancients however only scratched the surface of one of the planet's largest pyrite lodes in Huelva's mountainous region near the port of Cadiz, however. The Rio Tinto mining area and adjacent Tharsis mines put modern Spain on the map as a key global copper producer. It took investments by French and British companies to unlock the treasure chest with their new technologies. Spaniards believed the mines had been played out by the Romans so there was little interest in opening old sites. French experts, on the lookout for mineral wealth in southern Spain, saw signs in the earth of copper deposits. The mining began in Tharsis in 1855, with the French later selling out to British investors. It was the nearby Rio Tinto Company founded by British investors in 1873 that expanded mining by using



Museum statue depicting Roman-era enslaved miners in Spain. (Photo by Phylis Martinelli.)

both underground and open pit mining. The farms that supported generations of Spaniards were devastated as the English used open air smelting techniques, which were banned in England. The pollution, low wages, and other problems erupted in bloody confrontation between workers and the company in 1888. This day lived in infamy being remembered as "The Day of the Shots." The deaths of many unarmed Spaniards pressured the English company to institute a number of reforms in the company treatment of workers.

Huelva was a long way from Arizona, where my research took place, however links to Spain could be found to explain the small but influential cadre of Spanish miners in the U.S. In Tharsis workers learned of opportunities in the U.S. when in 1901 the Tharsis Company, considered acquiring the Ray, Arizona mines. However, another British company, the Ray Copper Mines Ltd beat them out. Furthermore, there was definite contact at Rio Tinto between the British management and U.S. copper mining interests. In 1900 the Rio Tinto Company hired William Carlyle who developed his tough

"Spain..." (continued on page 4)

"Spain..." (continued from page 3)

management skills while working in the U.S. Carlyle was replaced by Walter Browning who'd gained his copper mining experience in Mexico. These men forged links to the Americas, which led to skilled Spanish miners migrating to the new jobs overseas. The Rio Tinto company, owned by the British grew and merged with The Consolidated Zinc Corporation of Australia to form the global giant it is today; the Romans would be pleased to see another empire that developed from their efforts.

On a visit to Rio Tinto the visitor, if lucky, can see the river running red with minerals during a summer downpour. The museum, train ride, and overview of the fascinating landscape make for a worthwhile side trip from Seville or Cadiz.

Summer Workshop for K-12 Teachers To Focus on Mining History

Attention K-12 Educators! This summer the Montana Historical Society will host a National Endowment for the Humanities Landmarks of American History and Culture Workshop for Schoolteachers, titled "The Richest Hills: Mining in the Far West, 1865-1920."

Join us in the Treasure State for in-depth, intensive exploration and study. We will examine the mining history of the American West and its relevance to today's classroom. Two sessions will be offered--July 11-16 and July 18-23. Each week, 40 educators from across the country will join with university professors and public historians to investigate the cultural legacies and rich historical resources of Virginia/Nevada Cities, Butte, and Helena, Montana. Faculty members include Dr. Paula Petrik (George Mason University); Dr. Ellen Baumler (Montana Historical Society); Dr. Mary Murphy (Montana State University); and Dr. Robert Swartout (Carroll College).

Participants will receive a \$1,200 stipend from NEH, which they can use to help defray travel expenses.

For more information and application materials visit: <http://www.archiva.net/richesthills/index.html> or email krouns@mt.gov.

Last Call for 2009-2010 Spence Award Nominations

The Clark C. Spence Award Committee of the Mining History Association is accepting nominations for the best book published on Mining History during 2009-2010. The committee considers books that meet the documentation and narrative standards set by the works of Clark Christian Spence, professor emeritus, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

To be considered, the book must focus on the history of a specific mining region, or a mining-related theme or topic, especially within the American West, or an individual or individuals prominent in the history of American mining.

There are no temporal limits on subjects. The book must be published either in the year 2009 or 2010. A \$500 cash prize will be presented to the winning author or authors at the 2011 Mining History Association Annual Meeting.

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

David Wolff
Attn. MHA Spence Award
Black Hills State University
1200 University St, Unit 9059
Spearfish, SD 57799

2010 On Your Label?

If your mailing label says "Thru 2010" you have not yet paid for 2011. Your membership is important to keep the MHA viable and healthy! Please send payment for dues, payable to the Mining History Association, to Diane Dudley at the address below. General membership is \$25.00 annually, and International membership is \$35.00 Thank you!

Diane Dudley, Membership Chair
Mining History Association
 P.O. Box 552
 Sedalia, CO 80135

May 1 Deadline for MHA Research Grants

The Research Grant Program is open to all who are currently engaged in or who plan to conduct mining history research. Eligible persons include graduate students, academic scholars, public sector professionals in history-related disciplines, independent scholars, writers, and educators. The MHA does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, age, national origin, sexual orientation or disability.

Funds are awarded on a competitive basis. The Grant Committee, at its discretion, may make up to two grants per year. Funding may vary, up to a maximum of \$750 per grant. The amount of each award will be determined by the Grant Committee on the basis of available funding, the grant criteria as indicated below, and on individual budget priorities. Announcement of the winner(s) will be made as quickly as possible, so that funds may be used in preparation for the 2012 Annual meeting.

To be eligible for funding, applicants must submit a complete letter of application and a relevant vita no later than May 1, 2011 to BrianLeech@augustana.edu. **Application information and criteria are outlined below.**

Thank you for applying and good luck with your research!

**The 2011 Mining History Association Grant Committee
Brian Leech (Chair), Eric Nystrom, David Wolff**

Application Information

Your *letter of application* should include the following:

1. **Contact information.** Please include name, postal address, email address, phone, and institutional affiliation (if any).
2. **Title** of the proposed project.
3. **Research Proposal.** (1,000 words maximum)
Describe the nature and purpose of the research, the relevance/importance to mining history, the purpose and necessity of the travel, the sources expected to be consulted, and plans to disseminate the research.
4. **Budget** (750 word limit) List the amount of funds requested (maximum \$750), itemize the amounts requested, indicate how the money will be used, and prioritize the amounts by order of importance to the project.

Send your *letter of application*, containing the information requested above, *plus a resumé or vita*, to BrianLeech@augustana.edu no later than May 1, 2011.

Criteria For Selection

Criteria for selection include the following:

1. Clarity of the stated objectives and procedures.
2. Quality of the work anticipated and the likelihood that the proposed project will be successfully completed within one year from the time the grant money becomes available.
3. Significance of the research topic to mining history.
4. How specific, realistic, and conservative the budget is.
5. Plans for disseminating the results of the research. Agree to prepare, within one year following a grant award, either a presentation for consideration by the program committee at the MHA Annual meeting, or an article to be reviewed in consideration for publication by the *Mining History Journal*. Some awardees may choose to do both.

2011 Mining History Association Ballot

Vice President/President Elect (one-year term beginning June 2011)

Vote for one:

Bob Spude

_____ (write in)

Council (three positions; two positions with three-year terms beginning June 2011; one to serve until June 2012)

Vote for three:

Bob Beers

Sheila Kelly

Rebecca Lange

Bob Weldin

_____ (write in)

Nominating Committee (one position, three-year term beginning June 2011)

Vote for one:

Peter Maciulaitis

_____ (write in)

Biographies are below and on the following page.

Mail ballot by March 30, 2011 to:

Mining History Association

P.O. Box 552

Sedalia, CO 80135

Candidate Biographies for MHA Elections

Bob Spude

Candidate: Vice President/President Elect

Bob Spude was one of the organizers of the MHA in 1989, was for ten years its first secretary and newsletter editor, and has helped coordinate and organize conferences, tours, and special events over the past two decades, most recently the 2010 conference at Silver City, New Mexico. He received the PhD in history at Illinois and has published on the mining West, primarily essays on the evolution of technology/metallurgy in the 19th century, on the Klondike gold rush and on the Southwest. He works for the National Park Service in Santa Fe, New Mexico as regional historian. Major recent projects include the identifying and

evaluating of historic mine sites within the parks prior to mine saving efforts. He began his career at Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in Skagway, Alaska, and worked in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, where he nominated Kennecott mill town as a National Historic Landmark. He is co-author of the National Register Bulletin on how to nominate mining sites to the National Register of Historic Places. His article on the cyanide process won the Hafen prize from the Colorado Historical Society. Among his present projects is a co-authored history of New Mexico, in press with the University of Oklahoma Press.

"Biographies..." (continued on page 7)

Candidate Biographies for MHA Elections

continued from page 6

Bob Beers

Candidate: MHA Council

My lifelong interest in the history and development of Nevada and the mines, coupled with my varied background can be advantageous for the MHA. Professionally, since 1989, I have been a Certified Public Accountant, and am currently serving as Managing Partner for a CPA firm in Las Vegas, Nevada. My public service includes serving ten years in the Nevada Assembly and Senate. My business experience includes marketing of computer software, business development and financial management of a chain of radio stations. I believe that this varied background in sales, government service and accounting would be of benefit to the Board and MHA and I would be pleased to serve.

Sheila Kelly

Candidate: MHA Council

Sheila Kelly, a Seattle-based author and environmental educator, began writing *Treadwell Gold, An Alaska Saga of Riches and Ruin* (University of Alaska Press, 2010) because her father was born and raised there in that hard-rock gold mining town. Years of research lured her from family memoir into the broader (and deeper!) story of the development of the mines, the technology, the company town, and the role they all played in the opening up of Alaska. Her continuing interest in mines has prompted her to plan vacations that include tours of the silver mines of Guanajuato, slate and copper mines of northern Wales, copper mines of Montana and the gold mines in California. A native of Washington state, Sheila received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Gonzaga University (Spokane) and a Masters of Public Administration from the University of Washington Evans School of Public Affairs. Sheila is a Board Member of the Charlotte Martin Foundation, funding youth and environmental programs in the Pacific Northwest. She serves on the program development committee for Leadership Tomorrow of Seattle. Married 40+ years, Sheila has 3 children and 3 grandchildren. She enjoys road trips, tent camping and hiking.

Rebecca Lange

Candidate: MHA Council

I have a degree in Geology from the University of Montana. The career path I chose was the administration of mining activity on public lands, working for the Bureau of Land Management or the Forest Service. This has given me exposure to a wide range of mining and mineral

commodities, including gemstones, industrial minerals, precious metals, and geothermal. My interest in the history of mining was piqued when I attended the 5th International Mining History Congress in Japan. If elected, I have enthusiasm and knowledge of minerals and mining to contribute to the Council.

Bob Weldin

Candidate: MHA Council

Bob Weldin is a long-time member of the MHA. He cosponsored the 2002 annual meeting in the Coeur d'Alene Mining District, and served an extended (18 month) term as President of MHA in 2005/06. He has been a chairman of the AIME (Society of Mining Engineers), a VP for the Washington Institute of Professional Geologists and is a certified professional geologist in Idaho. He graduated from the University of Idaho College of Mines, did post graduate work at Eastern Washington State University, and has studied at other universities in the US and Canada. He went to work for the U.S. Bureau of Mines in 1960 as a mining engineer, doing mineral deposit examinations and evaluations. In 1974 he became Chief, Branch of Engineering and Economic Analysis and retired in 1990 as Chief, Branch of Mineral Resource Evaluations (Western States). In retirement, he writes and speaks on mining, and is currently looking for a publisher for his first historical novel, *The Dry Diggins Club*.

Peter Maciulaitis

Candidate: Nominating Committee

Peter Maciulaitis, a professional geologist, earned a Professional degree in geological engineering at the Colorado School of Mines in 1967. In the past four decades he has worked in Mexico, Colombia, France, Scotland, Ireland, Canada and the USA. More than half of his career has been spent in gold exploration in the Great Basin, particularly in Nevada. He has served as a consultant for and employee of two junior companies (Franco-Nevada Mining Corporation and Euro-Nevada Mining Corporation) that went from start-up ventures to major gold-mining concerns. Before merging with Newmont, Franco-Nevada was the 5th largest gold mining company in the world as measured by market capitalization. Mining history has long been an interest. Peter is active in the Mining History Association, International Mining History Congress, and Australasian Mining History Association.

Mining History Association
P.O. Box 552
Sedalia, CO 80135

First Class Mail

Upcoming Events

22nd Mining History Association Conference

June 1-5, 2011

Dillon, MT

<http://www.mininghistoryassociation.org>

17th Australian Mining History Association Conference

Sept. 13-19, 2011

Hahndorf, South Australia

<http://www.mininghistory.asn.au>

Western History Association Conference

Oct. 13-16, 2011

Oakland, CA

<http://www.westernhistoryassociation.org>

23rd Mining History Association Conference

June 7-10, 2012

Prescott, AZ

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

Deadlines: Spring issue: February 15
 Summer issue: June 15
 Fall issue: August 15
 Winter issue: November 15

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

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Sedalia, CO 80135
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