



Winter 2011-12

Mining History News

Quarterly Newsletter of the Mining History Association

How It's Done

The MHA has, over its nearly-25-year history, helped establish what -- to most of us -- is a pretty comfortable template for how mining history is done. While there certainly is enough room for original and thought-provoking work within that model, it is safe to say that each year's conference proceedings and *Journal* bears more than a passing resemblance to its predecessors.

I didn't give this notion much thought until after a brief conversation some years ago with a young, first-time conference attendee from England. He commented that MHA members seemed a rather "bookish" lot and, at least as compared to his colleagues, weren't much interested "getting their hands dirty." His ultimate point was that there are many ways to "do" mining history, and the MHA didn't have a "lock" on the discipline. (In fact, he went on to suggest that the absence of a geographic qualifier in our name carried with it the implication that we rather presumptuously deem ourselves *the* mining history association.) Of course the roots of our organization have a great deal to do with how it looks and functions today. Certainly there is no need to second-guess or apologize for that.

But there are, indeed, many ways to "do" mining history other than those we emphasize. That became very clear to me when I accepted our critical guest's invitation to visit the website of the National Association of Mining History Organizations (NAMHO):

<http://www.vmine.net/namho-2010/>. NAMHO is an umbrella organization for many of the local mining history groups active throughout the British Isles. Its website provides both

information of general interest to the mining history community at large and links to its member organizations and their activities and publications. I was immediately drawn in. One evening -- then two -- quickly slipped by as I perused all the various links and sites. (One of those links led me to Roger Burt's "Mining History Network" site --

<http://projects.exeter.ac.uk/mhn/> -- which invites further exploration of yet more websites from the UK and around the world. Another evening gone!)

I have found nothing directly comparable to those groups or their websites on this side of the pond. That is undoubtedly due in large part to the relative scarcity here of active local mining history associations resembling those enjoyed by our English and European counterparts. Without a broad base of substantially similar local activity, it is perhaps not so surprising that we do things somewhat differently. (And, yes, comparatively speaking, we do not often get our hands quite as dirty.)

Still, this virtual "world tour" was sufficient to convince me that no one person or group has a "lock" on how mining history is to be done. And nothing I saw argued convincingly for changing MHA or how we go about things. But I did come away with an entirely new perspective on the extensive array of alternative approaches to the discipline; the sweep of ideas, research issues, projects, organized activities, publications and meetings was truly eye-opening. And, refreshing in itself, the underlying passion for

"How It's Done..." (continued from page 1)

mining history was truly vibrant everywhere I looked.

For these reasons, I can heartily commend the NAMHO and Mining History Network websites, and the immense variety of web resources available through them, to each of you. Spend an evening or two (even three) with them. At worst, you will be entertained. But, I sincerely hope many of you -- no matter what your views as to "how it's done" might be -- will also find more than a few good ideas for keeping your work -- and our association -- fresh, relevant, innovative and vital.

Mark Langenfeld
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MHA Beefs Up Website

The Mining History Association website is in the middle of a substantial renovation, thanks to the efforts of our Web Czar Mike Kaas and many members who have volunteered materials and photos. One goal is to post information and photos about all of the annual conferences of the MHA. Info about the Prescott, Dillon, Silver City, Creede, and Globe conferences is up, and the Scranton conference (including Franklin/Sterling Hill, NJ) is on its way. Mike is urgently looking for photos taken at the 2007 Leadville Meeting and field trips, as well as "people photos" from *any* of the past meetings, social functions, awards presentations, and trips, whether or not material is already on-line.

Your feedback, critiques, and suggestions are very welcome! Email Mike at: minermike@att.net

Future MHA Meetings

Prescott, Arizona: June 7-10, 2012

Galena, Illinois: June 6-9, 2013

Trinidad, Colorado: June 5-8, 2014

Mining History Where You Least Expect It

A recent publication from the U.S. Geological Survey includes a wealth of information about the zinc smelting industry in the Northeast. Written by two minerals availability experts, Donald I. Bleiwas and Carl DiFrancesco, "Historical Zinc Smelting in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C., with Estimates of Atmospheric Zinc Emissions and Other Materials," Open File Report 2010-1131, can be downloaded for free in pdf format from:

<http://pubs.usgs.gov/of/2010/1131/pdf/OF10-1131.pdf>

The bulk of this report consists of profiles of 19 zinc smelters, most of which have vanished from the landscape. Each profile describes which mine(s) shipped ore concentrates to the smelter. Production statistics and good background information on the metallurgical processes are provided. It includes many useful maps and photographs.

Mike Kaas, Arlington, VA

2011 On Your Label?

If your mailing label says "Thru 2011" you have not yet paid for 2012. 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

Johnsson Shares Maryland Chrome Mining History with the Public

Mike Kaas

MHA member Johnny Johnsson shared his passion for mining history during a fall 2011 tour at the Soldiers' Delight Natural Environment Area located about 20 miles from downtown Baltimore. The would-be miners on the tour, kids and adults, got to see an outcrop of chrome-bearing serpentine, visit a chromite mine to learn about the process of mining, see some miners' tools, and pan for chromite in the decomposed serpentine.

Soldiers' Delight is a "serpentine barren," an area underlain by serpentine, with soil that is low in plant nutrients that supports a limited variety of vegetation. However, it provides a unique habitat for several threatened and endangered plant species, insects, and minerals. One of the hiking trails takes visitors to the Choate Mine which produced chromite from 1827 until the 1880s and briefly during World War I. The mine was one of several in Maryland and Pennsylvania owned by Baltimore mining magnate Isaac Tyson, Jr. (1792-1861). In 1845, Tyson opened the Baltimore Chrome Works which provided him with a monopoly in chromite mining and production of chromium chemicals and pigments until the late 1880s. Tyson was elected to the National Mining Hall of Fame in 1996.

For more information on Soldiers' Delight, see: <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/central/soldiersguide.html>



Left: Standing in front of the Choate Mine opening, Johnsson demonstrates three successive mine lighting technologies -- a candle, a teapot-style oil lamp, and a carbide cap lamp. Right: A group of chromite miners (of all ages) in training. (Photos by Mike Kaas)

Limbaugh's Tungsten Receives Nod

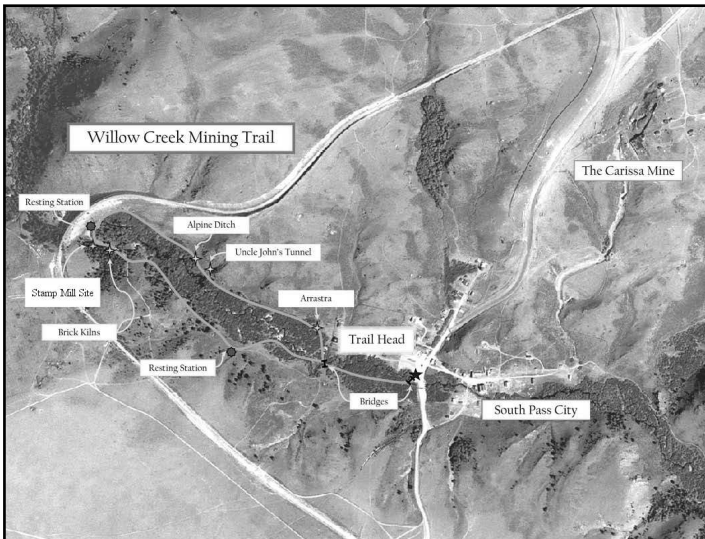
Longtime member Ronald Limbaugh's latest book, *Tungsten in Peace and War, 1918-1946* (University of Nevada Press, 2010), was co-awarded the MHA's prestigious Clark Spence Award for best mining history book published in 2009 or 2010. The excellence recognized by the Spence Award Committee has been recently affirmed, as Limbaugh's work was named an "Outstanding Academic Title" for 2011 by *Choice*, which reviews books for academic libraries.

Choice receives more than 25,000 books to consider each year, and reviews more than 7,000 of them. Only 600 of these books were selected as "Outstanding Academic Titles," placing Limbaugh's book in rare company. *Choice* selected titles for "their excellence in scholarship and presentation, the significance of their contribution to the field, and their value as important--often the first--treatments of their subject."

It is great to see high-quality mining history scholarship receive well-deserved public recognition!

New Mining History Trail in Wyoming

Jon Lane



The Willow Creek Mining Trail in central Wyoming will connect several historical sites in a one-mile loop. (Photo courtesy of Jon Lane, Wyoming State Government)

Construction of the Willow Creek Historic Mining Trail will begin in the summer of 2012. The mile-long trail will serve to provide for preservation, interpretation, and public access to a half dozen historic gold mining and milling sites. South Pass City State Historic Site recently acquired the property from the Federal government under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act of 1979. Funding for the trail project is provided by the State of Wyoming.

The purpose of the trail is to acquaint visitors with the small-scale, marginal gold mining and milling operations once common in the area, beginning in the 1868 gold rush. The primitive sites on the trail contrast with the mid-20th century era Carissa Mine and Mill, also a part of the historic site. Cultural features linked by the trail cover a full range of activities: small mine adits, shallow prospect pits, a diversion ditch to provide water power to an arrastra, brick kilns, and a former stamp mill site.

The arrastra was established during the 1868 gold rush and is the best preserved local example of the gold milling process. Large granite drags, complete with hand-forged iron hooks remain intact at the site. Plans call for archaeological examination of the site prior to reconstruction activities. Further upstream, at the stamp mill site, the area's last remaining 10 stamp mill will be preserved at the location where it was operated with steam power from the early 1890s through the late 1920s. All phases of construction, reconstruction, and signage will be completed during the summer of 2013.

Candidate Biographies for MHA Elections

Please cast your vote by mailing in an official ballot (page 6) by May 1, 2012

Roger Burt

Candidate: Vice President/President Elect

Born in London in 1942 (bad timing) and lived there until the early 1960s. Immigrated to the US in 1962 but returned home to complete college education. Graduated with a degree in Economic History and undertook a PhD at the London School of Economics on the development of the international lead industry from the early eighteenth century. Until that point, knew nothing of mining but soon became aware that industrialisation and economic growth are intimately dependent on the supply of fuel and raw materials. Taking a position as a professor of Economic History at the University of Exeter in southwest England in 1966, spent the next 40 years teaching and researching on the non-ferrous metal industry locally, nationally and internationally – covering the period from the medieval to the modern era, and every aspect from technology to finance. Detailed knowledge of archival sources created numerous opportunities for consultancy to the mining industry and the British Geological Survey. Employment during a golden age for British universities provided the time, opportunity and funds for extensive travel and research in all parts of the US which, together with regularly taught courses on American history, gave facility to indulge a passion for North America, which continues undiminished in retirement. For twenty years, attendance at the annual meetings of the MHA has provided a focal point for that indulgence and I shall forever remain grateful to the Association for that. Granted the Rodman Paul Award in 2002, the John Townley Award in 2008, and helped organize the International Mining History Congress, especially the Cornwall meeting of 2009.

Bill Culver

Candidate: Nominating Committee

Bill Culver retired from teaching in 2007 to concentrate on mining history. He taught courses in political science and Latin American studies at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh starting in 1971. His mining history research has concentrated on 19th century copper politics, mostly in Chile. His most recent work looks at James Douglas and the nature of Douglas' hydrometallurgical innovations -- Douglas went to Chile in 1871 to help install the Hunt & Douglas Process. Culver has one edited book, *Miners and Mining in the Americas* (1986), and many articles on the history of Chilean copper mining in both Spanish and English. His article "Capitalist Dreams: Chile's Response to Nineteenth Century Copper

"Biographies..." (continued on page 5)

Candidate Biographies for MHA Elections

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Competition," won the 1990 Conference Prize (American Historical Association, Conference on Latin American History, for the "Best Article on Latin American History"), and the article has subsequently appeared in several collections. In addition to the MHA, he is active in the International Mining History Congress, and the Historians of Latin American Mining. In other interests, Culver writes on the national legislatures in Chile, Argentina, Peru, and Bolivia. He lives in San José del Cabo, Baja California Sur, and Mooers Forks, New York.

Mark Vendl

Candidate: Nominating Committee

Mark Vendl is a retired geologist and has been a member of MHA since its beginning. He has held a number of positions within the Association, including Council member, newsletter editor, and Secretary and is currently on several MHA committees. He has co-authored several articles for the *MHA Journal* as well as articles for other publications. His most recent work, a book titled *Colorado Goes to the Fair*, was co-authored with his wife, Karen, and Duane Smith. He is currently working on another book with Duane and Karen about life in the mine boarding houses in the San Juan Mountains, Colorado. His interests include Colorado mining and California gold rush.

Dawn Bunyak

Candidate: Council

Dawn Bunyak is a long-time MHA member who served as Secretary from 2004 to 2010. She received the Rodman Paul Award from the MHA in 2011 to acknowledge, among other things, her extensive work documenting the evolution and adoption of flotation milling and the role of women in the development of mining technology. Dawn received her MA from the University of Colorado-Denver, and is a former employee of the National Park Service, where she was actively involved in historic preservation of mining properties. Today, she is sole proprietor of Bunyak Research Associates, a historic preservation and environmental documentation contracting and consulting firm. She and her husband John enjoy attending the annual conferences.

Ginny Kilander

Candidate: Council

I have been a Faculty Reference Archivist at the American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming since 1999 and served as the manager of the Anaconda Geological Documents Collection for more than a decade. Currently, I am serving as the head of Reference Services. In terms of

AHC Acquisitions, I remain the archivist responsible for developing our collecting in economic geology, and have served on our Majewski Fellowship (economic geology) review committee in the past. I have served in national elected positions for the Society of American Archivists (Reference, Access and Outreach Section and the Women Archivists Roundtable), and elected positions in the national/regional Guild of Bookworkers, among others. Some of my recent scholarship is based on the work of mining engineer David Brunton. It has been published and presented at a Colorado/regional western history conference, and will be presented at the MHA meeting in Prescott. I have been a member of MHA since 2007.

Noel Kirshenbaum

Candidate: Council

Noel W. Kirshenbaum's career in metallurgy has been both lengthy and broad. As a teenager, he had summer jobs at smelters and pyrometallurgical operations. He has conducted research, taught, and worked in industry; the latter has included work with non-ferrous and ferrous metals, refractory metals, by-product metals, precious metals, and non-metallic and fuel minerals. He has degrees in metallurgy and mineral economics from Stanford University. He is a past president of the Mining History Association and has attended every annual meeting of MHA since its formation in Reno. He has worked abroad and has presented many papers on technology and mining history, many of which were given to meetings of the MHA as well as to International Mining History Congresses.

Bill Wahl

Candidate: Council

Graduated as Mining Engineer from Colorado School of Mines, short terms as underground miner in Central City CO, San Manuel AZ and at Climax. Checkered career for City of Richmond CA, Spreckels Sugar and found way back to mining with Mountain States Engineers in Tucson. After four years gainful employment, opened consulting office with construction work in Arizona and engineering in Mexico. By late 1970's purchased a limestone quarry supplying the sugar factories. Converted plant to making feed for glass plants and animal feed. In 1997 bought IMV, a speciality clay producer from U.S. Borax. Past member of MHA Nominating Committee; gave a presentation at the Missouri meeting. Proudest accomplishments, besides four children, were co-Chair and Chairman of the two Nevada Boomtowns held in Amargosa NV in 2006 and 2007.

2012 Mining History Association Ballot

Vice President/President Elect (one-year term beginning June 2012)

Vote for one:

Roger Burt

_____ (write in)

Nominating Committee (one position, three-year term beginning June 2012)

Vote for one:

Bill Culver

Mark Vendl

_____ (write in)

Council (three positions with three-year terms beginning June 2012)

Vote for three:

Dawn Bunyak

Ginny Kilander

Noel Kirshenbaum

Bill Wahl

_____ (write in)

Biographies are on pages 4 and 5.

Mail ballot by May 1, 2012 to:

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

2012 MHA Research Grants Due April 15

The Research Grant Program is open to all who are currently engaged in or who plan to conduct mining history research, including graduate students, academic scholars, public sector professionals in related disciplines, independent scholars, writers, and educators. Research may focus on technology, business, social and cultural life, the environment, or any other aspect of mining, its associated industries, and its communities. 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 Grant Committee will determine the amount of each award on the basis of available funding, individual budget priorities, and the criteria indicated on the grant form. The criteria for selection includes the project's scholarly significance, the project's budget, and the applicant's plans for disseminating research, which should include 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*. Announcement of the winner(s) will be made as quickly as possible, so that funds may be used in preparation for the 2013 Annual meeting.

To be eligible for funding, applicants must submit the following before midnight on April 15, 2012 to **BrianLeech@augustana.edu**:

1. One complete application form. For the form, see <http://www.mininghistoryassociation.org/researchgrant.htm>
2. A vita with professional information relevant to the proposal.

Thank you for applying and good luck with your research!

The 2012 Mining History Association Grant Committee
Brian Leech (Chair), Eric Nystrom, David Wolff

WVU Museum Exhibits Historic Mine Lighting

The latest exhibition at West Virginia University's Royce J. and Caroline B. Watts Museum focuses on the history of mine illumination and the struggle to develop and adopt safe, sufficient mining lights. "Defying the Darkness: The Struggle for Safe and Sufficient Mine Illumination" presents the complex and often contentious evolution of mine lighting technology.

A series of deadly mine explosions in the 19th and early 20th centuries, caused in part by open lights igniting flammable gases and dust, prompted a call for safety reform and a push to design safer lamps for use in gaseous mines. The exhibition showcases the perspectives of mining companies, miners, governments, and inventors who influenced the development and adoption of these new, safer lights.

Danielle Petrak, museum curator and coordinator, noted the role of social reformers during the Progressive Era of the late 1800s and early 1900s who drew attention to the need for improved underground lighting. "They encountered resistance from both miners and mining companies, who preferred their traditional lighting methods and viewed government interference as restricting their ability to perform their jobs and make a profit," said Petrak.

"Defying the Darkness" displays a wide variety of mine lighting implements, from early oil lamps and candles to enclosed-flame lamps, carbide lights and battery-powered cap lamps. The signature piece of the exhibition is the flame safety lamp, whose development and levels of success were a near-constant source of controversy within the 19th-century mining industry. Historical photographs and prints vividly capture the faces and activities of those who participated in the slow and uneven transition toward safer mine lighting. The exhibition will remain open through July 2012. The Watts Museum is located in Room 125 of the Mineral Resources Building on WVU's Evansdale Campus. The Museum is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1-4 p.m. Admission is free. For more information or to arrange a tour, please contact the museum at (304) 293-4609 or wattsmuseum@mail.wvu.edu.

Mining History Association
P.O. Box 552
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First Class Mail

Upcoming Events

9th International Mining History Congress

April 17-20, 2012

Johannesburg, South Africa

<http://imhc.co.za>

2012 Mining History Association Conference

June 7-10, 2012

Prescott, AZ

Western History Association Conference

Oct. 4-7, 2012

Denver, CO

<http://www.westernhistoryassociation.org>

2013 Mining History Association Conference

June 6-9, 2013

Galena, IL

2014 Mining History Association Conference

June 5-8, 2014

Trinidad, CO

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*. The 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 Newsletter Editor 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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