



Fall 2006

# Mining History News

Quarterly Newsletter of the Mining History Association

## Mining History from the Miner's Perspective

I just attended a two-day conference on using oral history to prepare for Arizona's Centennial in 2012. The focus of the conference was how to use oral history to give communities, museums, historical societies, and individuals a sense of place and identity. Although the focus was on helping historical institutions create an awareness and understanding of the past, there was equal concern on how do we use that to create an awareness that we live in an evolving culture where the past, present, and future are a continuous line. Much of what was discussed during the conference helped me clarify my partially-formed ideas on using oral history to record the story of the working miner. Elsewhere in this newsletter I have a brief account of the attendance at the Globe conference. In collecting that data it struck me that we (The Mining History Association) have roots in most of the important mining areas, both active and

inactive. As I have previously stated, the main reason I agreed to be a candidate for this position was my concern and focus on the life of the working miner, and how best to bring attention to how they worked and lived. It seems to me that we should be able to use our presence in the mining areas to locate those accounts, both manuscript and oral, that already exist and make known their presence. I believe, based on my experiences of the past six months, that it is likely that most local museums and libraries already hold a great many manuscripts and oral histories. I thought I knew fairly well what existed in the significant depositories in Arizona. Yet I have recently become aware of three oral history projects, one newly-published book, and two important oral history collections, all on miners and mining camps in Arizona. As a natural corollary to locating existing

(Continues on page 2)

## Commodore Mine on Endangered List



Photo: Mark Vendl

*The Commodore mine.*

The structures in the Commodore Mine District, which lies one mile north of the mining town of Creede, are among five sites that the Colorado Preservation Inc. has added to its Most Endangered Places List this year. Activity in the area began with the early silver bonanzas of the 1890s and continued into base metal production during World War II, but the Commodore Mine finally closed in 1976. The district has stood as a regional icon and one of Colorado's most scenic and photographed mining sites. Last year's record snowpack and summer heat resulted in a spring thaw that propelled thousands of tons of waste rock downstream into the complex. The structures need stabilization. Ed Raines (MHA member) was instrumental in getting this site listed.

(Continued from page 1)

documents and records, we could (should) work to collect oral histories where such records do not exist, and add them to the collections of the local museums or historical societies.

While the process of collecting oral history is not the simplest task, it is well within the capability of many, if not all, of our members. Having ties and an identity in the community will make our effort a natural beginning. Who better to elicit, evaluate, and record the story of one's life than a friend or acquaintance, especially when that friend is already perceived as a knowledgeable individual with an interest in the subject. Finally, it seems to me that we could use our website as a clearinghouse or information point for collections and oral histories, much as the internet site H-Labor does for queries and information on Labor History information. Give this some thought and let me know what you think about it. I'll also put it on the agenda for our breakfast meeting at the WHA in St. Louis in October.

## GLOBE WRAP-UP

While the final figures are not in, it appears that the Globe Conference was, for the most part, a success. Attendance was good with 158 paid registrations. We had attendees from twenty-four states, and four countries. Colorado had the largest number with 38 with Arizona close behind with 33. Two states, California and Nevada, had 10 each and the rest were all single digits. Attendance at the meals was also good with 136 at each event.

The tours, with two exceptions, were also well attended with the Rod Plant having 38 of 40 slots filled and the Morenci Tour exceeding the original 40 slots by 11. The feedback from each tour was extremely favorable. I must admit I was surprised that the Pinal Creek Remediation Area Tour did not attract more interest, especially since it was scheduled right after a talk on the project. In setting it up I thought the current interest and concern on remediation would generate a great deal of interest. All of the comments I've received, except for one, have been favorable. The financial data is not in yet but I'm fairly sure that

will also be favorable.

All of this was possible only because a number of people put in a great deal of time and effort before and behind the scenes. Keith Long and Jim Sell and I met a number of times in setting up contacts and brainstorming on what to include. In fact, it was their idea (Keith and Jim Sell) to have the conference in Globe. Bob Trennert did an outstanding job in selecting and setting up the program. That was not the work of a committee, it was Bob's effort. Ed Hunter spent much of the conference helping out at the registration desk. His help was invaluable.

Finally, and this was something most attendees would not notice, the Casino staff was a joy to work with. They went out of their way to both anticipate and respond to our needs and requests. If you have the opportunity in the future please tell them of our appreciation.

## HELP NEEDED !!!

One of the most important, yet least appreciated tasks in the successful operation of the Mining History Association is the quarterly newsletter. Over the years the Association has been extremely fortunate to have long-term editors. First Bob Spude and then, for the past five years, Mark and Karen Vendl. However, Mark and Karen now need to give up that position. They will be stepping down in June 2007. Fortunately they have given us ample notice to find a replacement. Whoever takes over will have plenty of time for a smooth transition and lots of help.

Although it is not an extremely demanding task, it does have certain specific requirements and needs. Following is a description from Mark and Karen based on their work over the past five years. "The newsletter is published four times a year. As Bob Spude told us when he gave up the job, each newsletter takes about a weekend's worth of work (that seems about right). Putting out the newsletter entails: obtaining submissions from various sources (including the President and other MHA officers); setting up the newsletter in an appropriate publishing program; taking it to a printer; placing mailing labels and post-

(Continues on page 5)



# Call For Presentations

## 18th Annual Mining History Association Conference June 7-10, 2007

### National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum Leadville, Colorado

The program committee (Duane Smith, Mark Vendl, Karen Vendl, Ron Brown) for the Leadville conference invites proposals for individual presentations or complete sessions (including chair) on any topic or aspect of mining history. Sessions normally include three papers of twenty minutes each. There are no temporal or geographic limits.

Proposals should include title of presentation, an abstract (not to exceed one page) for each presentation, plus biographical information about each presenter, including mailing/email address. Please note, speakers must register for the conference in order to give their presentations. Please send the written proposals to the program committee chair by **November 30, 2006.**

Duane Smith, Program Chair  
288 SW Center  
Fort Lewis College  
Durango, CO 81301  
smith\_d@fortlewis.edu



## Silver Spade Preservation Effort



photo: HCRHP

*The Silver Spade shovel, Cadiz, Ohio.*

The large stripping shovel called The Silver Spade began her working life in November 1965, near Cadiz, Ohio, and was named to commemorate Hanna Coal's 25th anniversary. It was manufactured by the Bucyrus-Erie Company, South Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and was erected on the job site. Its sole function is to remove the earth and rock overburden from the coal seam. Consol Energy has recently announced that the Silver Spade will be idled in early 2006.

The Harrison Coal & Reclamation Historical Park (HCRHP) was founded and established in 1992 for the purpose of forming an organization with the major goal of saving and acquiring the Silver Spade when its working days are over for good. Now that its retirement has been announced, it would seem that work is just beginning. There are many obstacles to be overcome, and it will take the help of a lot of people if this landmark is to be preserved. Contributions are being accepted, and at some point volunteers will be needed to help in the preservation. The HCRHP Park is located along Ohio 519, between US 22 & Rt. 9, about a mile west of the Village of New Athens. The park is currently under construction, and will hopefully be finished by the summer of 2006. For more information check out their website at: <http://www.hcrhp.org/index.htm> ☼

## Research Grant Program

Darby Moore-Doyle, a doctoral candidate in History and Public History at Arizona State University, was recently awarded the 2006 Mining History Research Grant. She has the honor of receiving the MHA's first research grant. Her dissertation topic focuses on historic preservation issues in the Utah ski industry, particularly as they pertain to the identification, preservation, and interpretation of American Indian sacred spaces and historic mining landscapes. An MHA member, Darby lives in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Research Grant Program is open to all who are currently engaged in or who plan to conduct mining history research, or who have completed a relevant project and need funding to attend a Mining History annual meeting in order to make a presentation on the subject of their research. Eligible persons include academic scholars, public sector professionals in history-related disciplines, independent scholars, graduate students, writers, and educators. MHA does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

Two awards per year will be available, with \$500 being the maximum amount of each Grant. Funds are awarded on a competitive basis. To be eligible for funding, written applications must be submitted to the Chair of the Mining History Association's Grant Committee by May 1, 2007. Announcement of the winners will be made as quickly as possible, so that funds may be used in preparation for the 2008 annual meeting. 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; 3. Relevance of the research topic to mining history; 4. Plans for disseminating the results of the research. More information and an application can be found on the MHA website: <[www.mininghistoryassociation.org](http://www.mininghistoryassociation.org)>.

2007 Grants Award Committee:  
Robert A. Trennert, Chair  
Dawn Bunyak  
Ronald Limbaugh ☼



## New Books

### Mines & Geology of the Randsburg Area: An Historical Gem of the Mojave Desert By Dee D. Trent

The western Mojave Desert region of Randsburg, Red Mountain, Johannesburg and Atolia takes its rightful place in the storied history of major Old West mining camps in this volume by geology professor Dee Trent. Unlike the single boom-and-bust cycle experienced by most mining areas in the West, Randsburg and environs experienced five booms from 1893 into the 21st century with riches from the earth that included gold, silver, and tungsten. Abundant historic maps and photos help readers and high desert adventurers understand the science and technology of a fascinating era in yet another contribution to the story of the land and its people.

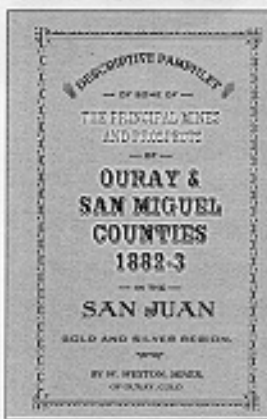
This 48-page, 5 1/2" x 8 1/2" book is can be purchased online from [www.sunbeltbooks.com](http://www.sunbeltbooks.com); it retails for \$12.95.

### Images of America: Connecticut Mining By John A. Pawloski

The search for mineral wealth in Connecticut has spanned more than 10,000 years of human history. It began with the migration of Native Americans into the Northeast soon after the last Ice Age glaciers melted away. The natives used materials for many of their tools, cooking vessels, and amulets. European colonists settled in what is now Connecticut in the early 1600s and immediately began searching for deposits of gold, silver, and precious gems. They soon learned that true wealth was not found in precious metals and stones but in the materials necessary to maintain life in their new world, such as iron, copper, and lead. The arrival of John Winthrop Jr. in the Connecticut colony in 1635 led to the discovery of many metal and stone deposits. This opened the door for the future United States to become an industrial giant.

This 128-page soft cover book is published by Arcadia Publishing at [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com) or 888-313-2665; suggested retail price is \$19.95.

### Ouray & San Miguel Counties, 1882-3 in the San Juan Gold & Silver Region By William Weston



In late 1882 and 1883, William Weston, a mining engineer and promoter, corresponded with Denver newspapers about the mines of Ouray County (now Ouray and San Miguel Counties). Eventually this rare pamphlet, which gives details about every active Colorado mine at the time, came about as a result of this correspondence. Editor P. David

Smith has inserted some introspective commentary and rare photographs to help bring Weston's report to life as an example of a time when mining was king in Ouray and San Miguel Counties. Also included are Weston's own detailed examinations of the towns and lifestyles of the era.

This 164-page, softbound book can be purchased from Western Reflections Publishing Co. at [www.westernreflections.pub](http://www.westernreflections.pub) or 1-800-993-4490; it retails for \$12.95.

(Continued from page 2)

age on each newsletter, and then taking them to the post office. Mailing labels are provided by Robert Sorgenfrei on request. The newsletter editor needs access to a computer with an appropriate desktop publishing or word processing program."

I can't over emphasize the importance of this need. Despite the straightforward, detailed description of the job by Mark and Karen, those of you who have been receiving the newsletter for any period of time know that it also requires imagination and dedication. They have done an excellent job. I would like someone to step forward and follow in the footsteps of Bob, Mark and Karen. Big shoes to be filled. **Who will volunteer?**

James McBride, MHA President ✶

## National Mining Hall of Fame to Induct Four

Leadville, Colorado - Ceremonies for the induction of four mining industry pioneers into the National Mining Hall of Fame will be held Saturday September 9, 2006 at the Museum Convention Center in Leadville.

The 19th National Mining Museum and Induction Banquet will begin with an open house and reception at 5:30 p.m., followed by the dinner and program at 7 p.m.

The four inductees are Earl H. Beistline (1916 to present), R.A.F. Penrose (1863-1931), Robert M. Reininger (1912-2006), and John Stanton (1830-1906). The inductions will bring to 193 the number of mining "greats" whose engraved photographs and biographical sketches are installed in the National Mining Hall of Fame.

The keynote speaker will be Timothy R. Snider, President of Phelps Dodge Corporation, Phoenix, Arizona, who will discuss his company's reopening of the historic Climax Molybdenum mine north of Leadville.

Stanley Dempsey will serve as Master of Ceremonies. He is Chairman and CEO of Royal Gold, Inc., Denver, and his first job in the mining industry was at the Climax mine in 1960.

Sylece Andromeda of Cripple Creek, Colorado, the Miner's Poet Laureate for 2006, will recite her poem, "Run A' Muck," as judged the winner in the 18th Annual Miner's Poetry Jamboree poetry contest.

Leadville Municipal Judge Neil Reynolds will entertain at the grand piano during the evening. Guests are encouraged to dress in Victorian attire.

On Sunday, September 10, banquet attendees will enjoy a complimentary breakfast and then visit the famous Matchless mine, which the Mining Museum recently acquired through a donation. The Matchless, a rich silver mine promoted by mining legend Horace Tabor, will be the location for an informative and

entertaining program arranged by Judge Reynolds.

### **Earl Hoover Beistline (1916- )**

Earl Hoover Beistline is widely recognized for his long and distinguished career as a mining engineer at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. Always an outspoken advocate of mining industry interests, in 1986, he was the motivating force in the Alaska legislature's enactment of the Alaska Minerals Commission, whose 11 members have since made continuous, effective efforts to improve the business climate in Alaska.

### **R.A.F. Renrose (1863-1931)**

Richard Alexander Fullerton Penrose, Jr. was an eminent economic geologist, who wrote important studies for state and national geological surveys, including the first on the Cripple Creek Mining District. He was a director of several mining companies, a college professor, and a mine owner, manager, and consultant. He was a confidant of Mining Hall of Fame inductees Spencer Penrose, Charles Tutt, Herbert Hoover, and Daniel Jackling.

### **Robert M. Reininger (1912-2006)**

Robert M. Reininger took over leadership of the 75-year-old New York and Honduras Rosario Mining Company in 1954 and built it into a powerful and diversified mining and oil company, with interests stretching out to North America, South America, and the North Sea. After a takeover fight, he negotiated highly rewarding terms for the merger of the company into AMAX in April 1980.

### **John Stanton (1830-1906)**

John Stanton was co-founder of the long-lived Copper Range Company and in his time was recognized as one of the best authorities on mining in the United States. He participated in the founding of the New York Mining Stock Exchange and helped organize the Copper Producers Association. Throughout his career, he was respected as a man of great shrewdness, who held to a high regard for right in both method and detail of action. ✕



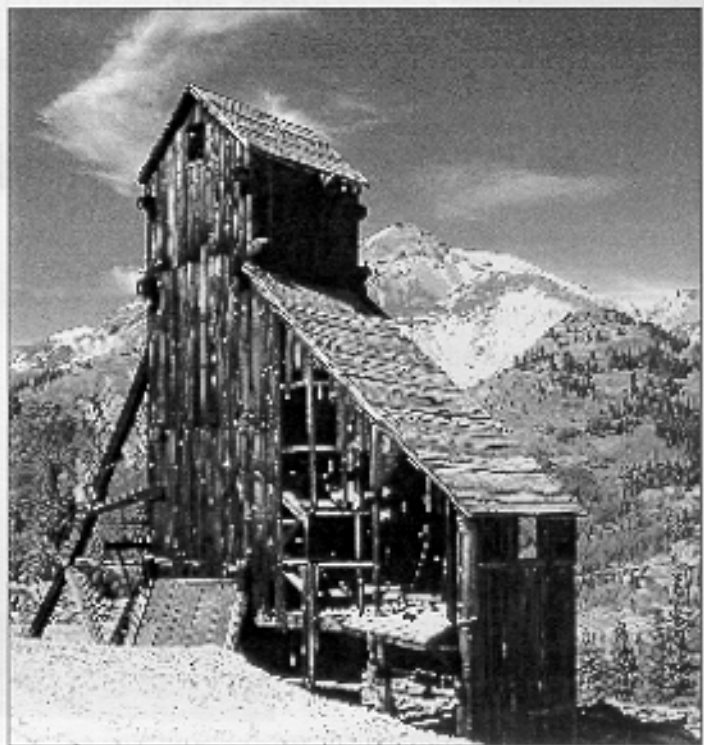
## Yankee Girl Head Frame Saved

The Yankee Girl head frame, recently at risk of destruction by a real estate developer, is now safe. One of the richest lodes in the United States for several years in the late 1880s, the Yankee Girl was sold to Montrose County Coroner Mark Young and his wife Mary, who plan to put the property into a conservation easement.

Young said the couple paid \$245,000 for the Yankee Girl and gave \$15,000 more for the adjoining Wilde and Orphan Boy mining claims. The three properties total 23 acres.

Very visible from U.S. Highway 550, the head frame has become the icon of the Red Mountain Project, a project which put 3000 acres of private property into public ownership. Its former owner threatened to bulldoze the head frame. He later tore down and burned the historic Kohler boardinghouse, near the Yankee Girl.

The Yankee Girl head frame is on the verge of collapse so the Red Mountain Task Force will do some emergency stabilization work this summer using funds from the Gates Foundation and the Colorado Division of Minerals and Geology. ✂



*Yankee Girl mine head frame.*

Photo: Mark Vencil

## Stan Dempsey Awarded Honorary Degree

Stanley Dempsey, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Royal Gold, has been awarded an honorary Doctor of Engineering degree from the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colorado. Stan has spent his entire career in the mining industry since his initial position at the Climax Molybdenum mine in Climax, Colorado in 1960. Stan received degrees in geology and law from the University of Colorado and completed the Program for Management Development at the Harvard Business School.

He is past chairman of the board for Mountain States Employers Council, former chairman of the

Colorado Mining Association, past president of the Rocky Mountain Mineral Foundation, and chairman of the Lands Committee of the National Mining Association. Stan has served as chairman of the Colorado Historical Society and president of the Mining History Association.

He is coauthor with Jay Fell of the book *Mining the Summit, Colorado's Ten Mile District, 1860-1960*. Stan will be the banquet speaker at next year's conference in Leadville. Our congratulations to Stan. ✂

## Upcoming Meetings

### 46th Annual Western History Association Conference

October 11-14, 2006

St. Louis Hyatt Regency at Union Station

St. Louis, Missouri

<http://www.unm.edu/~wha/>

Mining History Association Breakfast

Thursday, October 12, 7:00-8:00 am

Jeffersonian/Kinckerbocker Room

### 18th Annual Mining History Association Conference

June 7-10, 2007

Leadville, Colorado

[www.mininghistoryassociation.org](http://www.mininghistoryassociation.org)

### 7th International Mining History Congress, India

December 13-16, 2007

Contact: Mel Davies, Secretary IMHC

[Mel.Davies@UWA.EDU.AU](mailto:Mel.Davies@UWA.EDU.AU)

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 Mark and Karen Vendl at MHA address or by email: [mkvendl@earthlink.net](mailto:mkvendl@earthlink.net).

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

Change of address: Please send changes to your address to Robert Sorgenfrei, membership chairman at:

#### Mining History Association

Colorado School of Mines Library

1400 Illinois St.

Golden, CO 80401

[www.mininghistoryassociation.org](http://www.mininghistoryassociation.org)