

Mining History News

Quarterly Newsletter of the Mining History Association

A Publication of the Mining History Association

Spring 2021

Presidential Pickings

I don't know about all of you, but I am starting to feel a bit more free this spring as compared to a year (or even a month!) ago. It's looking like we will be able to get out and travel more, in a careful fashion, which will be welcome. I love my house, yard, and city, but variety is the spice of life, and I need some spicing up. I'm sure you do, too

After twelve months of cancellations and postponements, events are starting to appear on the calendar, which is another welcome sign of approaching normalcy. Hopefully our annual conference is on your calendar! We will gather June 10-12 for a virtual conference hosted by the good folks in Elko, Nevada. We had been hoping that we would be able to gather in person, but it turned out not to be possible. There were just too many variables and unknowns, so rather than go another year without meeting, both the Executive and Conference Planning Committees decided to go the virtual route. We know that this is a disappointment for most of us. Getting together over presentations, tours of new places, and a few beverages is always something to look forward to.

While the delivery system will be different, many things will be the same. Program chair Eric Nystrom and his committee have put together a great program (twice!), and thanks to the hard work and creativity of Dick Reid and his committee, we will have the opportunity to "visit" some locations that it is not possible to visit with a large group. Look over the enclosed conference schedule and highlight the things you don't want to miss. I think we would all agree that very few things will go back to being "done the way it's always been done" in both our personal and societal contexts. We have all discovered alternate ways of being and doing, and many of them are going to remain even as the pandemic abates. We need to be willing to keep the good and the useful for future use. Because we are going virtual this year, we have the opportunity to use this conference as a recruiting tool for new members. With no travel required, and a modest registration fee, this is the time to encourage folks who are not familiar with MHA to check us out. Talk up the conference with your colleagues, share the conference info with those who might be interested, or host a watch party for all or part of the conference. (cont. p. 2)

Virtual Conference

This year's conference will be held virtually and broadcast via Zoom. The registration form for this year's conference is on page 9. Essentially, each household must register for the conference even though we realize that more than one member of a household may view certain or all sessions. You can pay the \$35.00 registration fee by PayPal but please also mail a paper copy as noted on the registration form so names of those registered can be tracked for admission to the sessions.

MHA is a group run by and for its members. As such, it is our responsibility to help keep the group functioning and moving in a positive direction. I would like to thank the officers and the current council for their willingness to serve and their flexibility in these different times. Another big thanks goes to the Elko Planning Committee: Dick Reid, Dean Heitt, Dana Bennett, Robert McQueen and Jennifer Hildebrand. They have stuck with us, and we look forward to sharing in the results of their hard work. As the result of the elections held earlier this year, some new people will be joining the ranks of the officers and the council. Thank you for being willing to serve. This is a great organization to be involved with, and we look forward to working together.

I will take one last opportunity to use my soapbox on behalf of our favorite non-profits. Many of us have received the economic stimulus checks, and for some they have been very welcome. Some of us, however, have not really been in need of the extra funds. I would encourage you to share your surplus with your local non-profits. They have had a challenging time and would welcome a gift of any size. We need our local social advocacy, arts, and history groups to remain vital forces in our communities. Thank you.

Membership Chair Needed - Help Grow the MHA

After several years of service to the MHA, current membership chair Rebecca Lange is stepping down. Thank you, Rebecca. We appreciate everything you have done for the association.

So, what does the Membership Chair do? They conduct the annual membership renewal campaign; keep the mailing list up to date; receive mail for the association, and direct it to the correct person; compile and send out the every-other-year membership directory; and assist the annual conference planning committee as needed.

What could the Membership Chair do? Someone with marketing experience or previous membership campaign experience could help the association grow its membership and conference attendance. Like many organizations, the MHA is aging as a group, and there is concern about our shrinking membership numbers.

Are we describing one person, or perhaps more? It is possible that the tasks outlined above could be done by one person, but they could also be divided between two or more people. If you have been thinking about how you can be a bigger part of the MHA, this might be the opportunity you have been looking for. If you and a companion or colleague would like to work as a team, we would welcome your participation.

Please consider this opportunity. If you have questions, or need more information, please contact MHA president Stephanie Saager-Bourret (saagerbs@gmail.com).

Northern Nevada Gold and Mining History

Northern Nevada is our virtual destination for this year's MHA Conference. Significant large-scale mining for gold in the Carlin and Cortez areas is generally considered to have begun in 1962 with the discovery of the Carlin deposit just barely qualifying these areas for a "historic" designation. In reality, however, the mining history of this economically significant region began very early on in the late 1800's with the discovery of large and high-grade lead-zinc-silver-gold deposits in Eureka and Cortez, gold and silver deposits in Austin and other areas in Elko and neighboring counties, and important copper-silver deposits in the Battle Mountain region. Important mining areas came and went throughout the subsequent years at well-known camps like Midas, Tuscarora and Jarbidge as well as other smaller districts.

This year our conference will focus on the mining heritage of Carlin, Cortez and Eureka to share with the MHA membership the wealth of the rich history of these areas. We are very fortunate to have several local experts on these districts in Dean Heitt, author of *Before the Gold: Early History of the Carlin Trend 1874-1961* and Robert McQueen, co-author with Erich Obermayr, of *Historical Archaeology in the Cortez Mining District: Under the Nevada Giant*. We have also been fortunate to tap into some detailed historical information for Eureka courtesy of the Raines family and Market in Eureka.

Historically, founded in 1868, Elko was born on the tracks of the Transcontinental (Central Pacific) Railroad, but California's gold-seeking 49ers and other emigrant travelers had already been passing through here for decades. By 1868 dozens of mining camps had sprung up in Nevada, and Elko was ideally suited to become a major freighting and stage center in this far northeastern part of the state. By 1869 stage lines were running the toll roads to the camps of White Pine, Tuscarora, Bullion, and Mountain City, Nevada, and north to Silver City and Boise, Idaho. As more mines sprang up (especially Eureka and Mineral Hill), the importance of Elko and other railheads along the line grew. The Cortez and Eureka Mining Districts and the Carlin Trend will be the focal points of MHA activities.

Cortez (80 miles west of Elko) is one of the only mining districts in Nevada to remain continuously active or explored in its 150+ year history. Cortez was discovered in 1863 as a silver camp by prospectors from nearby Austin, Nevada. Simeon Wenban, after gaining control of the important mines in the district, revolutionized the ore processing system and also in an unprecedented step replaced the Cornish miners with Chinese labor. The discovery of rich silver-lead ore in the Eureka District (110 miles south of Elko) transformed central Nevada from a harsh and isolated outlier to a major mining center.

Eureka's boom starts in 1869 on a place called Ruby Hill. From 1869-1890 Eureka was Nevada leading silver-lead district. Eureka's rich history includes a fascinating story of the Charcoal Burner War of 1879 related to the Carbonari's business of providing coal to the town's smelters. Eureka's decline began in 1905 with a few sporadic fits and starts of new mining enterprises throughout the twentieth century including the interesting saga of the FAD shaft that will be featured on the field trip. Also highlighted will be Eureka's historic downtown.

The Carlin Trend remains extremely active today providing thousands of jobs for the region's miners and related businesses. The Carlin Trend is America's largest gold producer. Carlin is renowned for the occurrence of "No see'um" disseminated (microscopic) gold that could not be panned. This resulted in the relative lack of early development of the area until bulk mining techniques were introduced in the early 1960's and heralded continuous growth since. The early history of the men who did recognize the gold potential and attempted development is quite fascinating.

Elko MHA Conference Overview

The 2021 conference will be an online event, rather than the in-person gathering we have all experienced in the past, but the schedule will be substantially similar to previous conferences. Led by the intrepid Richard Reid and including Dean Heitt, Dana Bennett, Robert McQueen, and Jennifer Hildebrand, the Elko Planning Committee has worked diligently to craft an enjoyable online experience from Thursday morning, June 10, through Saturday midday, June 12, 2021.

The formal program begins on Thursday morning, June 10, with a welcome and overview of the logistics of an online gathering. We will convene at 8:30 am Nevada time (PST) as if we were all in Elko together. The first paper session will follow the welcome.

Each one-hour paper session will consist of two presentations and be coordinated by a chair in the traditional format. The one-hour format leaves time for a Q&A at the end of <u>each</u> paper session along with a short break. The presenters and the titles of their presentations are listed in the 2021 MHA Conference Schedule later in this newsletter.

Meetings are also scheduled for MHA committees. The MHA Council will gather through the online platform on Wednesday evening before the formal program begins. The Editorial Board will meet during the lunch break on Thursday.

Tours are an important part of every MHA conference, and this year is no exception. On Thursday afternoon, we will all virtually visit Cortez with Robert McQueen who knows the area better than just about anyone. On Friday afternoon, we plan on virtually touring Eureka. Please visit the MHA website for updated information on virtual tours.

On Friday, June 11, we'll gather up our sack lunches or order in from our favorite local restaurants and enjoy the Presidential Lunch together. The pick will be passed from current MHA President Stephanie Saager-Bourret to incoming President Eric Nystrom who will provide the traditional Presidential Address.

Of course, it is impossible to provide food or beverages through an online conference, but you are encouraged to brew some coffee, whip up a tasty meal, or craft a favorite cocktail during the traditional food events – or really, at any time during the conference.

Two virtual receptions are on the agenda. The Zoom platform will allow for mingling and conversations, and intriguing presentations will be offered during these time slots. On Thursday evening, Garrett Barmore, Director of the W.M. Keck Earth Science and Mineral Engineering Museum, will introduce this marvelous facility on the campus of the University of Nevada, Reno. He plans to showcase items related to mining around the Elko area. The Friday evening reception will focus on John Livermore, the groundbreaking (pun intended) geologist whose work launched the Carlin Trend, history's most productive gold district. A viewing of the documentary "The Eye of the Prospector" will feature John and discuss the role of prospecting in modern mining in Nevada.

The 31st MHA conference will conclude with the MHA Business Luncheon on Saturday, June 12. The luncheon will include the annual membership meeting and feature the annual membership meeting and fea

2021 MHA CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

(All Times Pacific Time Zone)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9

4 pm – 6 pm MHA Council Meeting (MHA)

MHA officers and Council members only

THURSDAY, JUNE 10

8:30 am - 8:45 am Welcome to Elko

Richard Reid, Chair, Elko Planning Committee

8:45 am - 9:00 am How the Conference Will Work Virtually

Speaker to be determined

9:00 am - 10:00 am Session 1 Early Visions of Nevada

- Dean Heitt | Early Gold Discoveries in the Lynn Creek Area, Lynn District, Nevada
- Keith Russ | Some Nevada Mines, Maps, and Models
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10:00 am – 11:00 am Session 2 Traditions and Culture

- Brian James Leech | Mining, Music, and Misery: Examining the Popular Songs of Mining Labor
- Dan Plazak | Dreams, Crystal Balls, and Willow Wands
- Q&A

11:00 am – 12:00 pm Session 3 A Global Perspective

- Santharam Adibhatia | Foot Prints of Gold Mining Heritage in India
- Cory Fischer-Hoffman | From Company Town to Urban Proletariat: Labor Engineering in Bethlehem Steel's Mining Operations in Chile (1952-1971)
- Q&A

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm Lunch on your own

MHA Editorial Board meeting

THURSDAY continued

2:00 pm – 3 pm Session 4 Sunken Treasure and the California Gold Rush

- Erik Melchiorre, Bryan Seymour, Robert D. Evans, Katie VonSydow

 Gold Assayers' Ingots from the SS Central America Shipwreck: A Window into

 Mid-1800s California Assaying
- Katie VonSydow, Robert D. Evans, Erik Melchiorre

 Reconstructing 1856-7 California Mining Patterns from Placer Gold Recovered

 from the Wreck of the SS Central America
- Q&A

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm Virtual Tour of Cortez Mining District, Nevada Robert McQueen

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm 4:30 pm Virtual Social Gathering with Speaker 4:30 pm Garrett Barmore || Mining in Northeastern NV: 170 Years of Objects

FRIDAY, JUNE 11

9:00 am – 10:00 am Session 5 Nevada Mining and the World

- Jenny Hildebrand | Burned Out in Elko and Eureka: Charcoal Production in North Central Nevada
- Frederic L. Quivik | Managing the Carlin Mine As Part of Newmont's Global Enterprise
- Q&A

10:00 am – 11:00 am Session 6 Mining Camps and Their People

- Barbara Clements | The Nevada Adventures of the Patrick Brothers
- Ronald H. Limbaugh | Testing Mining Camp Democracy
- Q&A

11:00 am – 1:00 pm Presidential Lunch and Passing of the Pick

Eric Nystrom, Incoming MHA President | **Big and Small, they Mined them All: Thinking about Scale in Mining History**

FRIDAY continued

1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Session 7 20th Century: New Processes and Minerals

- Jane Bardal | Boom and Bust at the Mt. Taylor Mine, Grants Uranium District, New Mexico
- Robert L. Spude | Patent Wars: Edward H. Nutter, <u>Minerals Separation, Ltd,</u> and the Introduction of Froth Flotation into the U.S., 1911-1922
- Q&A

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Session 8

Mining Corporations; Mining Society

- Alexandrea Penn | The Visiting Nurses of Cleveland-Cliffs: Medical Care in the Michigan Iron Mines
- William Culver | Megantic County's Early Copper Mining Companies and the 1850 Act to Provide for the Formation of Incorporated Joint Stock Companies, for Manufacturing, Mining, Mechanical or Chemical Purposes
- Q&A

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Virtual Tour of Eureka, Nevada

Richard Reid

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Virtual Social Gathering with Film

4:30 pm

The Eye of the Prospector introduced by Dana Bennett

SATURDAY, JUNE 12

9:00 am - 10:00 am Session 9 Nevada: First-Hand Sources

- Ginny Kilander | 1920s Views of Tonopah, Nevada: An Unusual Perspective
- Peter Maciulaitis | The Cloud 9 and Other Sagebrush Tales
- Q&A

10:00 am – 11:00 am Session 10 Mining as Social Foundation

- Fred Barnard | History of Kaiser Steel's Eagle Mountain Iron Mine, Riverside County, California
- Ed Raines | Elements of Civilization and Their Effect on Mining: Lessons from History
- Q&A

SATURDAY continued

11:00 am – 12:00 pm Session 11 Community Memories of Mining

- Jen Dunn | From Democrat to Republican to Superfund: Changing Political Ideologies in a Montana Mining Town
- James S. Day, On to Birmingham!
- Q&A

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm MHA Business Meeting and Awards Luncheon

MHA Nuggets

MHA members can virtually gather on the third Tuesday of the month from 7:00 - 7:20 pm Central, for a social time and then observe a 20-30 minute presentation that begins at roughly 7:20. There will be time for questions at the end. Videos are posted simultaneously on the MHA YouTube channel, Mining History Association, but YouTube participants cannot chat or ask questions of the presenters.

The topic for 20 May is "A Persistent Prospector, A Little Man in a Big Hurry, and the 'Big Z' by Mark Langenfeld.

Past presentations include "Leadville Members of the Denver Club, 1880-1890" // "Gold Mining Heritage in India: Kolar Gold Fields, Karnataka state, India" // Bingham Canyon Copper Mine — Evolution of the Open Pit. Past presentations can be viewed on the Mining History Association YouTube Channel.

MHA Nuggets will resume in August.

The Mining History Journal

As an organization dedicated to research on the history mining and metallurgy, the Minnesota History Association publishes *The Mining History Journal*. *The Mining History Journal*, the annual literary publication of the Mining History Association, seeks manuscripts on mining or its supporting industries of any subject, era or locale. The journal is particularly interested in publishing the personal first-person accounts of persons who have worked within the industry or to preserve mining's history. Manuscripts, which will be peer reviewed, should be sent to the editor, Eric L. Clements at eclements@semo.edu

Our thanks also go out to the Editorial Board of the *Journal* that includes Ronald Brown, James Fell, Ronald Limbaugh, Jeremy Mouat, Silvia Pettem, Duane Smith and Mark Vendl. Barbara A. Clements serves as the Compositor.

Mining History Association 2021 Conference Registration Form

Elko, Nevada is the virtual host for the Mining History Association's 31st Annual Conference, on June 10-12, 2021. The event will take place on a Zoom-based platform. At least one member of each household must register in order to attend. ALL conference presenters MUST REGISTER in order to participate.

If you have questions about **Registration**, please contact Richard Reid <u>richardreid.geo@gmail.com</u>
If you have questions about **Presenting**, please contact Eric Nystrom <u>eric.nystrom@asu.edu</u>

Your Name
Mailing Address
City/State/Zip/Country
Telephone
Email
A telephone number or email address is required to participate in the virtual conference.
REGISTRATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY MAY 15, 2021
Fee \$35.00 per household Number attending@\$35= Amount Due 0 \$0.00 To renew or become a MHA Member, go to: www.mininghistoryassociation.org/member.htm
By attending the event, you grant the Mining History Association (MHA) unrestricted, royalty-free license to your image, persona, and likeness, in any visual recordings taken or to be taken of you by or on behalf of the MHA during the event. This license includes the right to reproduce, store, modify, and otherwise use the content in whole or part, in any manner for marketing and promotional activities. Additionally, the MHA believes in a safe, open, and inviting platform to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability. By attending this conference I agree to conduct myself in a courteous and professional manner free of harassing or offensive behavior. I understand that harassing or offensive conduct can be cause for my removal from the conference at any time without refund. I agree to the Terms and Conditions above*: Yes No
NOTE: REGISTRATION FORM MUST BE MAILED EVEN IF USING PAYPAL.
Make checks payable to the Mining History Association or pay with PAYPAL-

Dean Heitt 3702 Valley Ridge Ave. Elko, NV 89801

Mail completed Registration Forms and/or payment to:

(A fillable form is available online and can be emailed to DGHeitt@frontiernet.net.)

Mining and Museum News

The Western Museum of Mining and Industry in Colorado Springs recently added two mining and mineral related exhibits. The first exhibit is a The Mining Heritage of Colorado Springs that features colorful storyboards that highlight the operations of the coal industry in and around the city, the gold ore processing mills that stood west of the city, and the railroads that serviced the coal and mining industries.

Two cases of artifacts—coal-related items and Cripple Creek gold ore—compliment the storyboards. That exhibit runs through August 2021.

The museum also added a display called the Fluorescent Minerals Room. The minerals are displayed in a dark room allowing the details of the minerals to stand out. Check out www.wmmi.org to plan your visit.

Re-evaluting the Old Copper Culture

David Pompeani and a team of researchers presented new evidence in the March issue of Radiocarbon indicating that the Old Copper Culture emerged roughly 9500 years ago. Pompeani's team used modern methods to reanalyze 45 radiocarbon dates and 8 additional dates associated with the Old Copper Culture and then compared those with six lake sediment-based chronologies. The findings by Pompeani's team suggest that North America's Old Copper Culture is at least as old if not older than the copper working cultures in the Middle East.

The *National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum* has opened "Miner Leaguers: Mining and the Great American Pastime," an exhibit that explore the unexpected relationship between mining and baseball. The exhibit features vintage equipment and uniforms, historic photos, and text in English and Spanish. It includes a video on West Virginia coal-town teams. "Miner Leaguers" will be on display through December 2021.

Baseball and mining expanded together across the country, with the game arriving in Colorado in the 1860s. Miners worked long difficult and dangerous under conditions and played baseball on weekends to let off steam during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The game provided recreation as well as helped build community. Mining companies supported teams by buying uniforms and equipment, providing easier jobs for good players, and hiring former pro and semi-pro players. Some miners were such good players that they moved on to minor league or major league teams, although they often found that they could earn more as miners than as ballplayers.

Access to "Miner Leaguers" is included in the price of admission to the museum. The National Mining Hall of Fame and Museum is currently open Tuesday-Saturday 9:00-4:45. See www.mininghalloffame.org for more information about the NMHFM.

Anyone interested in industrial baseball teams should also plan on visiting the **Negro Southern League Museum** in Birmingham when visiting the area during our 2022 Conference. The NSLM includes information and exhibits from the Birmingham Industrial League. Admission to the NSLM is currently free with a donation encouraged.

One Shot for Gold

Developing a Modern Mine in Northern California

Eleanor Herz Swent

"In one of the first mining histories set almost entirely after 1980, Eleanor Herz Swent's One Shot for Gold covers the development, operation, and afterlife of the McLaughlin Mine, the last major gold mine operated by the famous Homestake Mining Company."

—Brian Leech, associate professor of history, Augustana College, and author of The City That Ate Itself: Butte, Montana and Its Expanding Berkeley Pit

"The Homestake Mining Company had many successes during its nearly 125-year history, and the McLaughlin Mine was one of its more noteworthy. With a strong commitment to environmental stewardship, community engagement, and technological advancement, the company set a high standard for modern gold mining. By relying on oral histories she gathered as part of Berkeley's Western Mining series, Eleanor Herz Swent gives a fascinating account of the inception, development, and closing of California's most productive twentieth-century gold mine."

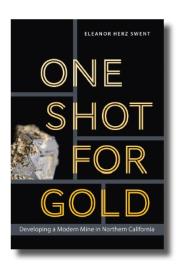
-David A. Wolff, professor emeritus, Black Hills State University

. . .

In 1978, a geologist working for the Homestake Mining Company discovered gold in a remote corner of California's Napa County, leading to the establishment of California's most productive gold mine of the twentieth century. Named the McLaughlin Mine, it produced about 3.4 million ounces of gold between 1985 and 2002. The mine was also one of the first attempts to create a new full-scale mine in California after the advent of environmental regulations and the first to use autoclaves to extract gold from ore.

One Shot for Gold traces the history of the McLaughlin Mine and how it transformed a community and an industry. This lively and detailed account is based largely on oral history interviews with a wide range of people associated with the mine, including Homestake executives, geologists, and engineers as well as local neighbors of the mine, officials from county governments, townspeople, and environmental activists. Their narratives—supported by thorough research into mining company documents, public records, newspaper accounts, and other materials—chronicle the mine from its very beginning to its eventual end and transformation into a designated nature reserve as part of the University of California Natural Reserve System.

A mine created at the end of the twentieth century was vastly different from the mines of the Gold Rush. New regulations and concerns about the environmental, economic, and social impacts of a large mine in this remote and largely rural region of the state required decisions at many levels. *One Shot for Gold* offers an engaging and accessible chronicle of a modern gold mine and how it managed to exist in balance with the environment and the human community around it.



Publication Date: May 4, 2021

cloth 978-1-64779-006-6 ebook 978-1-64779-007-3 278 pages \$45.00

For more information, please contact: Sara Hendricksen Sales and Marketing Manager shendricksen@unpress.nevada.edu T: 775.682.7395 F: 775.784.6200

Eleanor Herz Swent is a past president of the Mining History Association and winner of the Rodman Paul Award for contributions to mining history. She was born and raised in Lead, South Dakota, home of the Homestake Mine, and lived for many years in mining communities. As a senior research interviewer/editor at the University of California-Berkeley Oral History Center, she directed the oral history series on Western Mining and was the sole interviewer for this book. She currently lives in Palo Alto, California.





Mining History Association P.O. Box 6536 Boise, Idaho 83707

Upcoming Events

Mining History Association Conference Virtual – Elko Themed June 2021

Australasian Mining History Conference Burra, South Australia September 27 – October 1, 2021

Western History Association Conference Portland, Oregon October 27-30, 2021

St. Barbara's Day December 4, 2021

International Mining History Conference TBA

The *Mining History News* is published quarterly by and for the members of the **Mining History Association**. Submissions for the newsletter are encouraged.

Deadlines: Summer issue: June 15th

Fall issue: September 15th Winter issue: December 1st Spring issue: February 15th

Submissions for the newsletter should be sent to Paul R. Spyhalski at *prspyhal@yahoo.com* with MHA at the start of the subject line.

Change of address: Please send all address changes to Rebecca Lange, Membership Chair, at the following address:

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