

MARKING MILESTONES WITH EYES AHEAD | Executive Director's Letter

2021 and 2022 are banner years for anniversaries in the upper Roaring Fork Valley. The oldest operating business in town, *The Aspen Times*, marked 145 years in 2021, and Aspen Snowmass kicked off a commemorative 75th season of lift-served skiing on Aspen Mountain. This year, Aspen Gay Ski Week—the oldest annual, week-long gay ski event in the nation—celebrated its 45th anniversary in January, and Aspen Valley Ski & Snowboard Club has been teaching snowsports to local kids for 85 years. This town's history is growing old! As the years pass, the community continues to adapt to new realities and Aspen Historical Society is hard at work preserving and sharing the stories that define our collective roots, for the future.

Over the last year, AHS undertook extensive projects to enhance interpretation, improve public access, and increase engagement with area history for years to come. These included a renovation to install Victorian-era wallpaper in the first-floor rooms at the Wheeler/Stallard Museum, an overhaul to AHS's online public archives and online video library, and new partnerships to expand public history programming in the community. These and other efforts improve visitor experience both at our sites and online, and we are thrilled to share the results with the community.

Though the last few years have been difficult, the anniversary celebrations offer nostalgic and fun peeks at the past. This is the ebb and flow of AHS's mission: to preserve and share all the area's stories, the highs and the lows, the banner moments and the day-to-day, whatever the future has in store. AHS stewards your stories to foster a sense of community and encourage a vested and informed interest in the future of this community. Thanks to your continued support and engagement, there is a bright future ahead for preserving the past.

Sincerely,



Kelly Murphy
President & CEO

75 SEASONS

In December 1946, the world's longest chairlift opened at Aspen Mountain, delivering skiers up to 11,212 feet where the brand-new Sundeck welcomed them with a warm fireplace and views across Castle Creek Valley. That year, the newly formed Aspen Skiing Corporation embarked on a path that would lead to its modern reputation as one of the top resort operators in the world. What started as a dream among WWII veterans, sports enthusiasts, engineers, and entrepreneurs has grown to a 75-year-old family-owned company that hosts more than a million skier visits on its slopes each year.

This season's festivities not only mark the anniversary, but also celebrate the community's unique role in the origins of snowsports in the United States. In this valley, skiing was born among miners testing ways to maneuver in the snow, but it took hold in the early years after the war, when dreams for European-style ski resorts in the western United States became a reality. Skiing remains central to the identity of this community and, 75 years later, many would say Aspen Skiing Corporation's first annual report included a self-fulfilling prophecy: to make "Aspen the finest ski area in North America for all types of skiers."

In honor of this milestone anniversary, the historical images in this publication (with the exception of the staff selections and the supporters spotlight) were selected from the Aspen Skiing Company Collection, which includes images taken by several local photographers.

(in order of appearance):
Aspen and Aspen Mountain circa 1970 (Miggs Durrance); Top of Aspen Mountain circa 1970 (Miggs Durrance); Skiers on Snowmass circa 1965; a party at Gretl's on Aspen Mountain in 1968 (Bob Krueger); skier on Aspen Mountain in 1968; a couple on Ruthie's Run on Aspen Mountain circa 1965; Andre Roch on Aspen Mountain in 1949 (Fritz Kaeser); Tourtelotte Park on Aspen Mountain in 1967; ski-packing Aspen Mountain circa 1965; 1976 men's World Cup on Aspen Mountain; Sundeck on Aspen Mountain circa 1965 (Miggs Durrance)





LOCAL HISTORY

- PRE-1879** Ute people hunt in the upper Roaring Fork Valley and its tributaries
- 1879** Miners use “Norwegian skees” for transportation; ranchers test wooden skis for recreation
- 1936** Billy Fiske, Andre Roch, and Ted Ryan propose a ski area on Hayden Peak and build Highland Bavarian Lodge; plans are halted by WWII
- 1937** Roaring Fork Winter Sports Club organizes (now Aspen Valley Ski & Snowboard Club)
- 1941-45** 10th Mtn. Division soldiers train in the area; many return and help develop skiing in the U.S.
- 1945** Walter and Elizabeth Paepcke begin investing in Aspen, including plans for ski lifts with Friedl Pfeifer, who opens Aspen Ski School
- 1946** Aspen Ski Corporation forms
- 1948** Sardy Field officially opens for commercial air service
- 1951** Aspen hosts its first Wintersköl celebration
- 1978** Aspen Ski Corp. sells to 20th Century Fox, which sells to Marvin Davis and becomes a private company; the Crown family buys a 50% stake
- 1979** First Gay Ski Week
- 1981** Aspen Ski Corporation changes its name to Aspen Skiing Company
- 1993** Crown family acquires Aspen Skiing Company
- 2021** Aspen Skiing Company starts selling uphill passes

ASPEN MOUNTAIN

- 1936-38** Volunteers cut Roch Run and build a “boat tow” that hauls skiers to Summer Road
- 1939** Area’s first ski race, hosted by Rocky Mountain Ski Association
- 1941** First of many U.S. National Championships
- 1946** Lift 1 and Lift 2 unofficially open in December (dedicated January 1947); the Sundeck is built
- 1950** First FIS World Championship alpine ski races held outside of Europe
- 1968** Hosts first World Cup ski races in the second year of the FIS circuit
- 1986** Silver Queen Gondola opens—the longest single-stage gondola in the world
- 2001** Last area mountain to allow snowboarding
- 2017** FIS Ski World Cup Finals mark 50 years of World Cup racing in Aspen
- 2019** City of Aspen voters approve new Lift One corridor project at the mountain’s historic western portal, including a history museum to be operated by AHS
- 2021** Aspen Skiing Company receives approval to expand into Pandora’s with additional terrain and new lift

ASPEN HIGHLANDS

- 1958** Whipple Van Ness Jones opens Aspen Highlands
- 1973** Ski Patrol begins Cloud Nine deck jump
- 1983** Snowboarding allowed
- 1993** Whip Jones donates resort to Harvard University, which sells to Gerald Hines, who partners with Aspen Skiing Company, which assumes operations
- 1998** Construction begins on new Highlands Village
- 2002** Highland Bowl terrain opens
- POWDER DAYS** Highlands Patrol raises the Epic flag

BUTTERMILK

- 1958** Friedl Pfeifer opens Buttermilk Mountain
- 1963** Aspen Ski Corporation buys Buttermilk
- 1964** Tiehack area opens, served by a T-Bar
- 1966** Expands to West Buttermilk
- 1977** First snowmaking installed on a local hill
- 1985** Snowboarding allowed
- 2002-22** Hosts X Games every January (longest X Games in one location)

SNOWMASS

- 1962** Snowcats run ski tours on the Big Burn
- 1964** U.S. Forest Service grants approvals for Snowmass-at-Aspen Ski Area
- 1967** Aspen Ski Corp. opens Snowmass-at-Aspen with five chairlifts and a restaurant at Sam’s Knob
- 1973** First National Brotherhood of Skiers summit
- 1988** Snowboarding allowed
- 1995** Two Creeks base area opens with access to Elk Camp
- 1997** Cirque lift opens (first lift powered solely by wind energy), completing the nation’s longest lift served vertical rise of 4,406 feet
- 2005** Snowmass Village Town Council approves Base Village development plan to include the Elk Camp gondola, Village Express high-speed chair, and the “Skittles” gondola
- 2010** Fossils of mammoths, mastodons, a giant sloth, and many other Ice Age animals and plants are discovered in the Ziegler Reservoir expansion

ADDING TO THE ARCHIVES

In 2021, AHS made important updates to expand access to archival materials and improve user experience with the online portion of the AHS Archives at archiveaspen.org.

A new film library allows the public to view and search AHS's ever-growing collection of 16mm, 8mm, VHS, Betacam, and ¾-inch Umatic formats. The extensive project included digitizing footage and updating records in the archival database to make the films keyword searchable. The video library features footage from the 1960s through the 2000s such as video histories, footage from events, sports broadcasts, and more. The project was made possible in part by funding from the Fred & Elli Iselin Foundation and the Colorado Historic Records Advisory Board (through funding from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and the National Archives Records Administration).

On a larger scale, AHS made improvements to the back end of the archival database that allow the public to search and view newly accessioned records instantly. This means the number of records, artifacts, and images available for the public to view online is increasing daily.

The AHS Collection is home to priceless artifacts from every era of area history; we invite you to explore the archives online or make a research appointment at archives@aspenhistory.org or 970.925.3721.



RETRO FILMS

Building on the success of the in-person Retro Film Series held at the Limelight Aspen for the past several years, AHS and Aspen Film joined forces in 2021 to offer a virtual program for the public to enjoy from the comfort of their homes. Close to 2,000 viewers

tuned in to watch the history of skiing – and the local resort community – unfold. Both the in-person and virtual series are back in 2022. Spanning several decades and showcasing beloved film favorites as well as newly digitized footage, the lineups include historical “feature” films, promotional videos, and documentary-style clips that explore skiing’s illustrious past in the Aspen/Snowmass area and beyond.

Historical ski footage stands out as some of AHS’s most treasured artifacts. The archives has digitized many priceless and often delicate film reels that have been donated to the Collection and we’re excited to share this beloved part of local history with the public.

WINTER TOURS

(summer tours begin mid-June)
Hotel Jerome Tour
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:30 p.m.

Historical Downtown Walking Tour
Wednesdays & Fridays, 1:30 p.m.

Wheeler Opera House Tour
Wednesdays, 1:30 p.m.

AHS Archives Tour
Tuesday, March 15, 11 a.m.

Tours by appointment:
History Coach Electric Vehicle Tour
Victorian West End Walking Tour
bauhaus architectural walking tour

WHEELER/STALLARD MUSEUM

Tuesday - Saturday (through April 17; open for the summer May 31)
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

ARCHIVES & COMMUNITY GALLERY

By appointment, Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

SUMMER SEASON SITES (open mid-June, hours vary)

Holden/Marolt Mining & Ranching Museum
Ashcroft Ghost Town
Independence Ghost Town

REMAINING PROGRAMS

Virtual Retro Films Series
with Aspen Film
Final release March 8

Time Travel Tuesdays: *Aspen History 101 & Aspen Extreme*
March 8

History on Stage: Billy Fiske
March 13

Retro Films in Aspen & Snowmass
Aspen: March 15; April 12
Snowmass: March 18

History Lessons with Larry
March 17: *Mining and Its Impacts*



Kelly Murphy: Highlands ski patrol Cloud Nine deck jump circa 1975



Anna Scott: Grand Prix race trail at Highlands in 1966



Suzie Brady: Spring skiing on Aspen in March 1967



Laura Calk: Ski School Meeting Place in 1952



Megan Cerise: A racer on the Niagara downhill course during the 1950 FIS on Aspen Mountain

The AHS Archives includes more than 55,000 historical photographs from almost every era of local history. View photos and more online at archiveaspen.org, where you can order fine-art-quality prints. For research assistance contact archives@aspenhistory.org.



Travis Lane McDiffett: Wintersköl fireworks over Aspen Mountain in January 1983



Lisa Hancock: A skier on Highlands ridge looking at Mt. Hayden in 1941



Eliza Burlingame: Skiers below Peanut Butter Ridge on Aspen Mountain circa 1950



Nina Gabianelli: Lift 1 dedication in 1947



Jane Click: U.S. Women's ski team during the FIS World Championships in Aspen in 1950



Kelly May: A skier circa 1970

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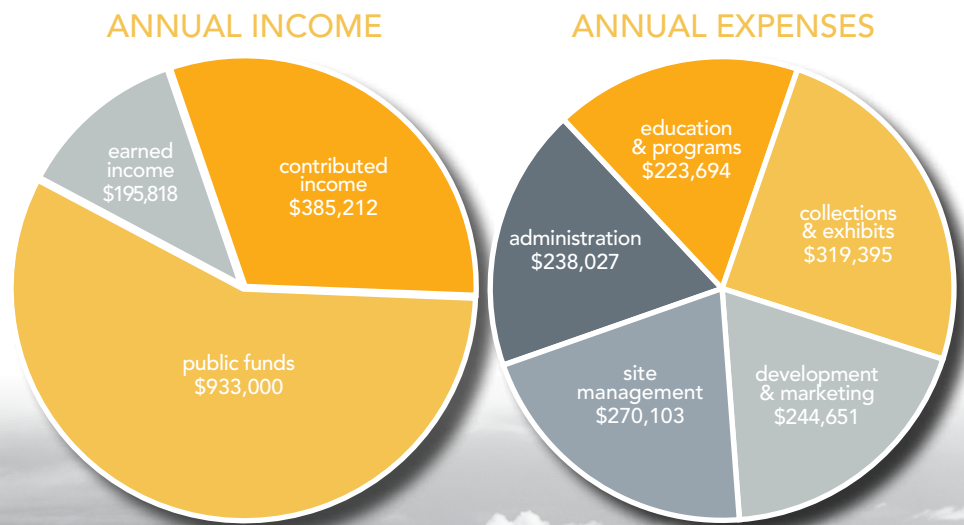
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THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS WHO HELP MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE

This list represents donations received in 2021

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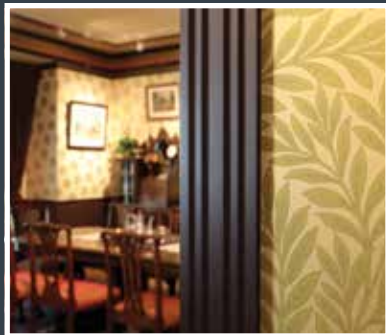
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THE HODGES FAMILY

In 2021, AHS completed a significant installation of Victorian-era wallpaper in the parlor and dining room at the Wheeler/Stallard Museum. The project was made possible by the generous and longtime support of the Hodges Family of Aspen, who have been part of the community since the mid-1930s when William Vanderveer Hodges, Jr. (front row, far left) and Joseph Gilluly Hodges (front row, middle) were guests at the opening of the Highland Bavarian Lodge. In 2001, their children established a fund to help AHS maintain the Wheeler/Stallard Museum parlor.

The wallpaper enhances interpretation of the late 19th-century house museum, which features period furniture, décor, and layout typical of Aspen's finer Victorian homes. The wallpaper was carefully researched and selected to mimic sections of original wallpaper found in the house and uses historical hand-printed production techniques. The "American Aesthetic" style features ornate designs and rich color schemes. Thanks to this special support from the Hodges Family, visitors will enjoy a more authentic experience.

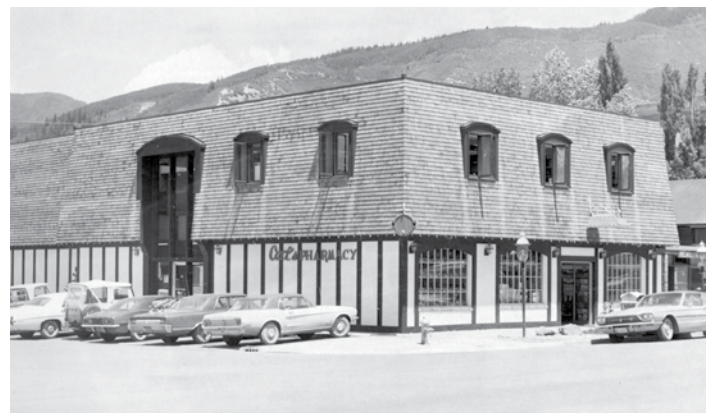


A group outside the Highland Bavarian Lodge in 1936. Aspen Historical Society, Grover Collection

Marilyn, Ann, & Bill Hodges at the Wheeler/Stallard Museum



"Aspen's history is unique and rich. There is much to learn about and appreciate in this beautiful Colorado valley of the American West. Four generations of our family still live in Aspen and enjoy what it has to offer, from winter sports to summer culture. One great grandson, Philip, even interned at AHS! Our family is grateful to AHS for preserving and sharing the history with our community and visitors alike."
- Marilyn, Bill & Ann Hodges, second generation cousins



CARL'S PHARMACY & MINERS' BUILDING HARDWARE

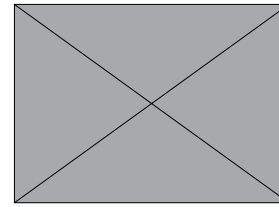
In 1989, AHS board member and longtime Aspenite Carl Bergman spearheaded a partnership with the City of Aspen that resulted in the creation of the Holden/Marolt Mining & Ranching Museum. For the next three decades, Carl spent much of his time volunteering there, and his family and their two local businesses have been generous supporters of AHS. After Carl passed away in 2018, his wife Katie and their children Linda Brining and Bob Bergman partnered with AHS to honor Carl's legacy by helping underwrite museum admission for car-free visitors. Thanks to their support, guests can walk, bike, bus, or ski to enjoy the museum for free. In 2008, Carl explained his passion for the museum: "I find the time and enjoy people, and feel that educating school children is rewarding beyond any comparison."



"Carl put his heart and soul into the Holden/Marolt Museum and was an ardent supporter of AHS. Our family is honored to continue his efforts through this special donation, so that visitors of all ages can enjoy the museum and its many stories in his memory." - Linda Brining



(Left) Carl's Pharmacy in 1968, Aspen Historical Society, MEH Collection; Carl starts the "Hit and Miss" engine at the museum in 2010; (Above) Carl and Katie Bergman in 1983, Aspen Historical Society Collection; Linda and Bob Brining in 1997, Aspen Historical Society, MEH Collection.



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MUSEUM AT LIFT ONE

Aspen Historical Society is honored to create a museum worthy of the area's rich snow-sports history as part of a reinvigorated base area on Aspen Mountain. At the site where local lift-served skiing began, the museum will honor the community's unique role in the origins of the sport. Thanks for bringing the boat tow home, Aspen!

Museum planning and a fundraising campaign are underway.
To support the project, contact AHS at 970.925.3721 or
development@aspenhistory.org.

