



Aspen

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CELEBRATING

60
YEARS

ANNUAL UPDATE

WINTER 2023

970.925.3721 | aspenhistory.org
[@historyaspen](https://twitter.com/historyaspen)

CELEBRATING SIX DECADES | Executive Director's Letter

On January 4, 1963, Aspen Historical Society officially began work to preserve and share the community's stories. What started as a grassroots effort led by dedicated volunteers, visionaries, and community leaders has grown to include one of the largest public archives in the region, year-round history programming for all ages, four revered historical sites, and much more. History never stops, and neither do we! AHS is hard at work stewarding the stories that define our community, for the benefit of the public.

Over the last year, AHS embarked on many significant projects to help launch us into the coming decades. We enhanced interpretation at all four AHS sites, accessioned significant additions to the AHS Collection, provided support for regional history organizations, and developed new partnerships and programs to share the past with community members of all ages. These and other efforts expand our reach both in person and remotely.

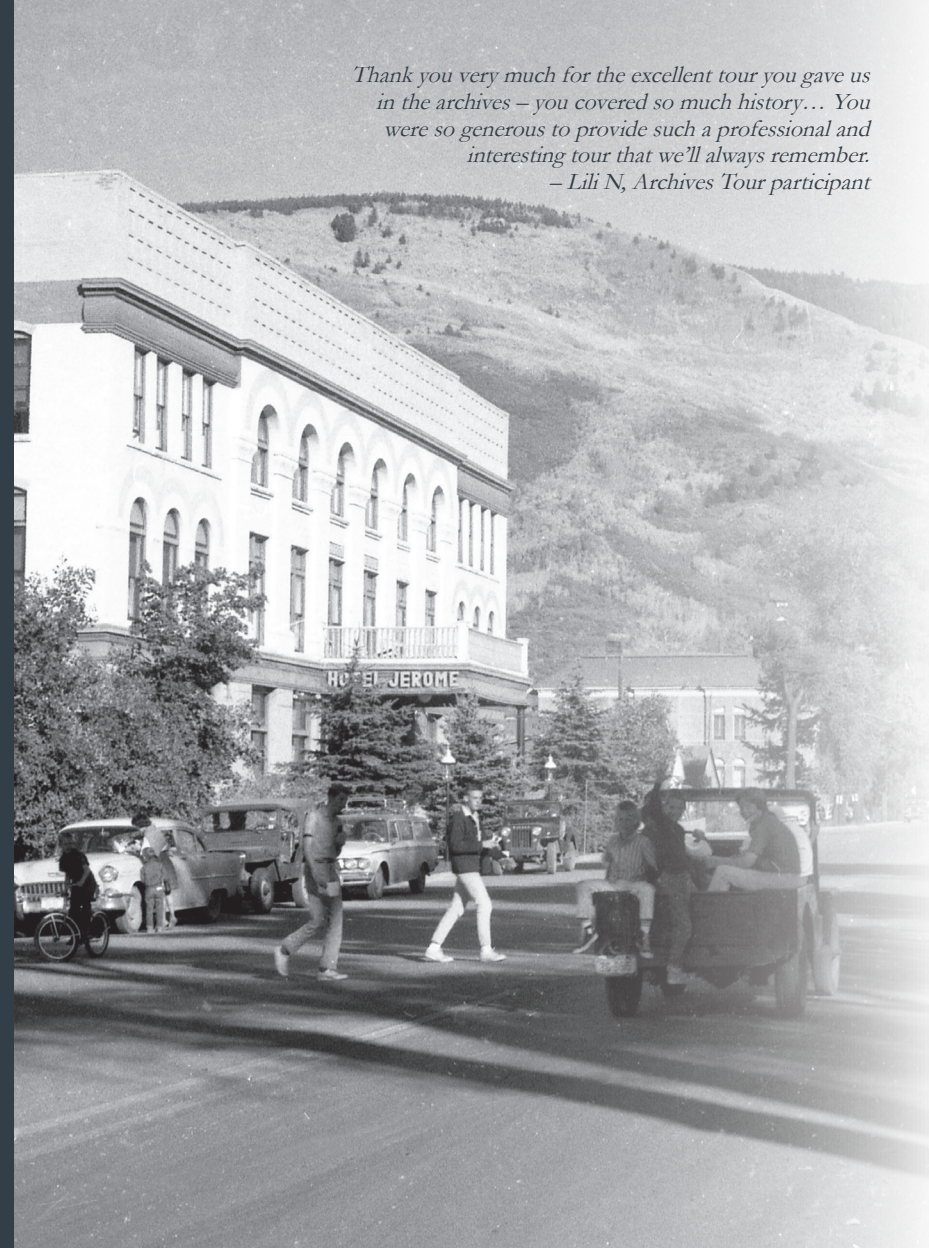
Anniversaries are a time for retrospection and celebrating the past, but at AHS we're also focused on the work ahead and are confident the best is yet to come! Thanks to your continued support and engagement, AHS will continue to serve the community for the next 60 years and beyond.

Sincerely,



Kelly Murphy
President & CEO

*Thank you very much for the excellent tour you gave us
in the archives – you covered so much history... You
were so generous to provide such a professional and
interesting tour that we'll always remember.*
– Lili N, Archives Tour participant



A PICTURE TELLS A THOUSAND WORDS

The AHS Archives includes a vast collection of historical photographs from every era, which helps paint a picture of the personal memories and community stories that make up our shared history. Over the last six decades, the AHS Collection has grown to include more than 60,000 images in varying photographic mediums, including glass plates, slides, negatives, prints, and digital files. The Collection is a treasure trove of primary resources, from family scrapbooks to journalistic photo catalogues, and everything in between. The Collection is also growing each year as more photographs are entrusted to AHS to be catalogued, preserved, and shared in perpetuity. It is AHS's honor to preserve these works according to archival best practices, and it is our mission to share them with the community.

In honor of the 60th anniversary, the images featured in this report (with the exception of the staff selections and the supporter spotlight) were all taken in the year AHS was founded, 1963/64, by various photographers. The images offer a snapshot of that inaugural year—a time when Aspen was rapidly changing—captured on film.

Additionally, as a 60th anniversary gift to you, we have inserted a poster print of a 1963 image from the AHS Collection in this report. We hope you enjoy the poster and encourage you to explore the Collection online at ArchiveAspen.org, where you can search by keyword and purchase prints.

Photos in order of appearance:
*Top of Aspen Mountain in 1964, Aspen Flyer Collection; Entrance to Aspen
in 1963, Durrance Collection; Youth ski jumping competition on Aspen
Mountain in 1963, Aspen Times Collection; Bell Mountain Chairlift in 1964,
Aspen Flyer Collection; Lift One base area in 1964, Aspen Flyer Collection;
Aspen from Lift One in 1964, Lavinia Meeks Collection*



- 1962** Community members begin discussing the need for a formal historical society.
- 1963** Aspen Historical Society (AHS) incorporates as a 501c3 nonprofit organization thanks to efforts by a group of citizens concerned about preserving local history as the town grew. Founding board members include Herbert Bayer, Fred Glidden, Julie James, Joan Lane, Ramona Markalunas, and Dorothy Koch Shaw.
- 1968** AHS leases the Wheeler/Stallard House from the Aspen Institute to house the growing Collection, exhibitions, and educational programming.
- 1969** The Wheeler/Stallard Museum opens with the first exhibit display; AHS purchases the Wheeler/Stallard house; walking tours begin.
- 1973** First intern establishes a cataloguing system for archival donations.
- 1974** The USFS grants AHS a permit to manage Ashcroft Ghost Town (the first historical society granted a management permit for a National Historic Property within a National Forest).
- 1976** AHS builds the Wheeler/Stallard Carriage House to provide storage, display, and archive space.
- 1982** The USFS grants AHS a permit for Independence Ghost Town.
- 1988** City voters grant AHS a 75-year lease on the Holden/Marolt property with a 76% approval vote.
- 1991** City voters grant AHS the right to operate a ski museum at the western base of Aspen Mountain with an 85% approval vote.
- 2001** Aspen Historical Society changes its name to Heritage Aspen.
- 2003** The restored sampling building at the Holden/Marolt property opens as a mining and ranching museum to share the area's industrial and agricultural history.
- 2004** HeritageAspen changes its name back to Aspen Historical Society.
- 2006** Voters approve a special district to partially fund AHS operations.
- 2010** Staff write and begin performing a unique museum theatre piece "A Briefly Complete History of Aspen."
- 2011** AHS co-founds and assumes a leadership role in the Four Rivers Historical Alliance, a regional association of organizations committed to preserving local history, supporting historic sites, and promoting heritage tourism on the Western Slope.
- 2012** AHS begins providing first-person character performances of historical figures in regional schools; AHS launches online archives, enabling the public to access and search a portion of the Collection online as a free resource.
- 2016** AHS purchases a storage facility to securely house the ever-growing collection of invaluable physical artifacts.
- 2016** The City of Aspen relocates the historic McMurchy/Zupancis buildings from Main St. to the Holden/Marolt property to be restored and interpreted in partnership with AHS.
- 2017** AHS reopens the state-of-the-art Archives Building after a long-anticipated renovation of the Wheeler/Stallard Carriage House to expand office and program space and Collections processing and storage.
- 2019** City voters approve the Lift One Corridor redevelopment, formalizing a path forward for AHS to create and operate a snow sports history museum in the relocated and restored Skiers Chalet Lodge.
- 2023** AHS launches exhibition conceptual design for Museum at Lift One.

EVER-GROWING COLLECTION

Where can you find a Roaring Fork Valley phone book from the 1920s, Aspen Mountain's "boat tow" ski lift, and perhaps a photo of yourself living it up in Aspen in the 1970s—all in one place? The AHS Collection, of course. The Collection contains more than 80,000 items, including images, documents, and three-dimensional artifacts, and is growing every day. The AHS collections team spends an average of thirty minutes accessioning each individual item, a process that involves describing the artifact, noting its provenance, photographing or scanning it, and identifying—if possible—all persons and elements in a photographic artifact.

In the past year, AHS finished accessioning several collections. The Spachner Collection (Beatrice Teller Spachner) includes photographs, programs, newspapers, souvenirs, and films documenting the music festival and 1949 Goethe Bicentennial. The Aspen Flyer Collection contains more than 900 negatives published in that paper in the 1960s. Photographs of local places, events, and people from the 1960s to the early 2000s comprise the David Hiser Collection. Thanks to enhanced access to the AHS online database, ArchiveAspen.org, the public can easily view these collections along with historical films and 42,000 keyword-searchable items in the AHS Collection.

Also new this year, additional issues of *The Aspen Times* (through the mid-1980s) and *Aspen Daily News* (1978-1995) are now searchable by keyword. These and many other newspapers are available at ArchiveAspen.org through a partnership with the Pitkin County Library and Colorado Historic Newspapers Collection. The AHS online archives is free for public use and is a fun and interesting way to spend an hour or three!



ARCHIVES HIGHLIGHTS more at archiveaspen.org

TOURS & PROGRAMS

Winter tours go through April 15; summer tours begin mid-June. Visit AspenHistory.org in early May for the summer calendar.

Seasonal tours include Historical Downtown Walking Tour, Victorian West End Walking Tour, bauhaus architectural walking tour, History Coach Electric Vehicle Tour, Red Butte Cemetery Tour, Independence Ghost Town Tour, Hotel Jerome Tour, Wheeler Opera House Tour, AHS Archives Tour, and more.

WHEELER/STALLARD MUSEUM

Tuesday - Saturday, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

ARCHIVES & COMMUNITY GALLERY

By appointment, Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
(closed April 17 - 28)

SUMMER SEASON SITES

(open mid-June, hours vary)

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

Thank you for telling us stories about the past. I like how the stories are funny and help us learn.
— Basalt Elementary School 3rd grader



GET EXCITED FOR SUMMER AT HOLDEN/MAROLT

Last summer, AHS debuted revamped exhibitions inside the Holden/Marolt Mining & Ranching Museum, a unique attraction on the former site of the Holden Lixivation Works. Featuring rearranged exhibition spaces and new interpretive signage, the site encourages visitors to step into stories about the area's early mining and railroad industries.

This summer, look for new outdoor exhibition signage as well as the completion of restoration work in the three domestic buildings, including period wallpaper and décor in the 1888 miner's-cabin-turned-Victorian-era home. Inside the cabin and accompanying barn, a new Immigration and Ranching exhibition will explore the stories of western European families who implemented high-elevation farming techniques from their homelands to ranch the Roaring Fork Valley's mountainous terrain.

Visit the Holden/Marolt museum this summer, Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free for car-free visitors thanks to generous supporters.

SITES, PROGRAMS, & EVENTS more at aspenhistory.org

MY FAVORITE ASPEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY MOMENT IS...

October 1962, when Herbert Bayer wrote a letter to the editor proposing the formation of an Historical Society to preserve the “many relics of Aspen’s past.” (AHS was officially formed in January of 1963 with Bayer as a founding board member.)

– **Anna Scott, Archivist**



The 1991 Aspen election approving the City Council to grant AHS the right to operate a ski museum at the base of Lift One. I had just started working for AHS and it was exciting that the ballot measure passed with 85% of the vote because it showed how much the community supported the organization and local history.

– **Lisa Hancock, Vice President, Curator of Collections**



In 2008, when AHS acquired the first “History Coach” electric vehicle and began offering driving tours! I wasn’t working at AHS at the time, but I love taking alternative transportation history tours when I visit other places and this tour is one of my favorite things to do with visiting friends and family; everyone loves it!

– **Heather Macdonald, Development Director**

In 2012, when AHS curated and opened our first exhibit focusing on the Native Peoples of our Valley, Seasons of the Nuche: Transitions of the Ute People. The programs that were developed in conjunction are still the most enjoyable and fulfilling parts of my job. Another highlight was the summer of 2015 when we hosted a Ute Bear Dance, which was possibly the first time that members of all three current Ute tribes joined together in this Valley to celebrate the Bear Dance tradition.

– **Nina Gabianelli, Vice President, Education and Programming**



Every spring, when AHS upholds the annual tradition started by longtime board member Ramona Markalunas, who had partnered with *The Aspen Times* to give away sweet pea seeds. I spend many enjoyable hours working in the Wheeler/Stallard gardens and I love the annual seed giveaway tradition; carefully nurturing the seeds to plant on the Museum grounds; and caring for them as they grow up the trellis and finally burst into colorful fragrant blooms.

– **Travis Lane McDiffett, Facilities Manager**

The spring of 2017 when the Collections team moved into our new office after the Archives Building remodel was completed. It was amazing to move out of the basement and to transform that space into a dedicated state-of-the-art processing and storage facility for the Collection!

– **Megan Cerise, Archives Technician**

June 9th, 2020, my first morning as an AHS intern, when we woke up in our cabin at Ashcroft to at least a couple inches of snow!

– **Suzie Brady, Education and Program Assistant**



I have far too many “favorite” moments to choose just one, so a few highlights include the emotion on a guest’s face as he played Chopin in the Wheeler/Stallard Museum on the very same piano keys played by Albert Schweitzer.

The Cornell photography professor who eagerly explained how our Jackson panoramic image was processed with gold! And when the owner of the historic Bayer-designed home by Triangle Park invited my tour guests inside for the very best views of Hallam Lake from the living room.

– **Alexander Hunter, in memoriam (Docent & Tour Guide from 2011-2023)**

The future! I love too many AHS moments from the past, so I’m choosing something yet to happen and the anticipation of what’s to come. There is always something exciting ahead, known or unknown—the snowsports museum at Lift One coming to fruition; an unexpected donation of a fabulous artifact; a young student’s face lighting up when something from history really resonates with them...

– **Kelly Murphy, President & CEO**

In 2021, when I enjoyed my first view of the completed wallpapering of the Wheeler/Stallard parlor and dining room. The research that the Collections team did to achieve the gorgeous Victorian-era interpretation was remarkable and I love welcoming visitors into the space.

– **Jane Click, Docent**



The Twilight Cemetery Tour, every year! This and other unique programs like Aspen History 101 are eagerly anticipated and attended by locals and visitors alike and I’m constantly impressed by the original ideas that the Programming staff comes up with and how the Collections and Programming departments work together to re-create history.

– **Laura Calk, Collections Assistant**



The Ice Cream Social, every year! There isn’t much better than a summer afternoon enjoying ice cream and a performance of the fabulous *A Briefly Complete History of Aspen*, but I love seeing community members of all ages gather on the Wheeler/Stallard Museum grounds to celebrate local history with this longstanding summer tradition.

– **Eliza Burlingame, Marketing Director**

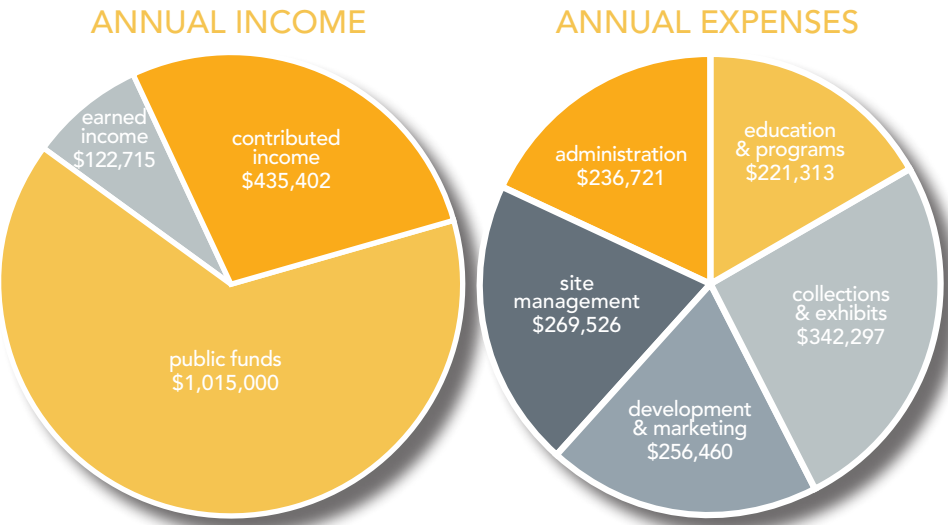
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ALLOCATION OF INCOME & EXPENSES
(Fiscal Year End December 31, 2022)
For complete financials, visit aspenhistory.org



INTRODUCING NEW MEMBERSHIP LEVELS!
Beginning this year, we have added more membership levels with exciting new benefits! Membership provides special opportunities to explore the area’s past while helping ensure a sound future for AHS. Let the discovery begin with benefits such as museum admission, invitations to events, and so much more. Join or upgrade today with the attached envelope or online at aspenhistory.org and view the full list of levels and associated benefits. Please contact development@aspenhistory.org or 970.925.3721 ext. 105 for additional questions.

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS WHO HELP MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE

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Nancy Thorpe
Viviane Thomas Trimble
Martha and Kirby Van Vleet
Ellie Vance
Robert Venverloh
Eugene R. Veto
Noelani M. Von Stocken
Lisa Waldman and Tom Stiles
Priscilla Walker
Nina Ware
Judith and Iain Waugh
Wendy Weaver
Randy Wedum
Megan Cerise Winn and Evan Winn
Ilse Woerndle
Deborah Worlman
ARCHIVAL DONATIONS
Cecily Anne
Aspen Thrift Shop
Bill Blanning
Stephen Bradley
Mery Claire Butler
Event Rents
Ross Dolan
Loyal Durand

Laurie Elder
Nancy Gensch
Fred Palmer
Matt Hanley
Jackie Kasabach
John Keleher
Terry Kirk
Lori Koski
Bill Lipsey
Amy Maniscalco
Charles Miel
Stephen Newmann
Fred Peirce
John Seelen
Michael Smith
Don Stapleton
Philip Sullivan
Nancy Thorpe
Mary Ann Tittle
Kathryn Vagneur
Robert Weaver
Jamie White
Dottie Wolcott
COMMUNITY PARTNERS
Ashcroft Ski Touring
Aspen Art Museum
Aspen Center for Environmental Studies
Aspen Chamber Resort Association
Aspen Community School
Aspen Country Day School
Aspen Film
Aspen Hall of Fame
Aspen Institute
Aspen Public Radio
Aspen Reprographics
Aspen School District
Aspen Sister Cities
Aspen Skiing Company
Aspen Sojourner
Aspen Valley Hospital
Basalt Regional Heritage Society
Basalt Regional Library
BERKO Photo
Blazing Adventures
Bob Beattie Ski Foundation
Judy Boyd
Buffalo Joe Bluegrass Band
Camp Aspen/Snowmass
Carbondale Historical Society
City of Aspen
Community Office For Resource Efficiency
Daniel J. Sullivan, Esq.
Eagle County Historical Society
Edible Aspen
Event Rents
Farm Collaborative
Natalie Feinberg Lopez

Four Rivers Historic Alliance
Friends of the Flume
Frisco Historic Park and Museum
Glenwood Springs Historical Society
Gran Farnum Printing
Grand Valley Historical Society
Hickory House Restaurant
David Hiser
History Colorado
Hotel Jerome
Hunter Creek Historical Foundation
Independence Pass Foundation
Jazz Aspen Snowmass
Kidtoons Productions
Les Dames d'Aspen
Limelight Hotel Aspen
Skyler Lomahaftewah
Marble Charter School
Marble Historical Society
Michaele Dunsdon, ID Interiors
Mike Monroney
Northern Ute Tribe
Paper Bag Media
Pitkin County Library
Pitkin County Open Space & Trails
Pitkin County Senior Center
Red Butte Cemetery Association
Redstone Historical Society
Rifle Heritage Center
Roaring Fork Conservancy
Roaring Fork School District
Roaring Fork Valley Storytellers
Roaring Fork Veterans History Project
Skiing History Magazine
Smiling Goat Ranch
Smithsonian Magazine
Snowmass Sun
Snowmass Tourism
Southern Ute Tribe
St. Stephen Catholic School
Summit County Historical Society
The Aspen Times
The Dreamery Co
The Resnick Center for Bayer Studies
Chris Thompson
Top of the Rockies Byway
USFS White River National Forest
Waldorf on the Roaring Fork
DJ Watkins
Wheeler Opera House
Wooden Nickel
Woody Creek Distillers

**deceased*

ASPEN SKI PIONEERS’ LEGACIES LIVE ON

For more than two decades, the Fred & Elli Iselin Foundation has played a significant role in preserving AHS collections and making them available to the public. The Foundation was established in 1989. Since then, its grants have helped AHS digitize its collection of ski films, restore the unique snow screw to working order, digitize the AHS large map and poster collection, and fund conceptual design for a planned snow sports history museum at Lift One, among other projects.

Fred and Elli met in Sun Valley, Idaho and moved to Aspen in 1947, making their own indelible marks on skiing and the community. Elli, who grew up in Austria and competed on the Austrian Ski Team, was one of the first women to teach skiing at the Aspen Ski School. She then put Aspen on the fashion map when she opened Elli’s of Aspen in 1954 and introduced Colorado to European ski couture. Fred began skiing at age 4 in Switzerland, taught skiing there and in Austria, and competed across Europe and North America. After he and Elli married and moved to Aspen, he co-directed the Aspen and Buttermilk ski schools before opening his own ski school at Aspen Highlands. Fred died in 1971 and Elli in 1991, but their foundation continues to enrich the local community and memorialize their passion for skiing.



Fred & Elli Iselin in Sun Valley in 1942, AHS Collection



WHITE RIVER NATIONAL FOREST

AHS has operated the Ashcroft and Independence ghost towns under a Special Use Permit with the Aspen-Sopris District of the White River National Forest for many years. The permits, some of the first ever granted to an historical society to manage areas within a National Forest, include interpretive and docent activities as well as structural stabilization and restoration of the historical buildings.

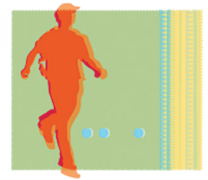
“Aspen Historical Society provides a tremendous service to WRNF visitors through its engaging interpretive offerings as well as the ongoing maintenance and preservation of remaining structures. With more than 17 million visitors annually, the WRNF relies on partnerships with organizations like AHS to help meet the needs of the public while protecting important areas such as Ashcroft and Independence. AHS’s knowledge and passion for the history of the Roaring Fork and Castle Creek valleys enriches the experience of area residents and visitors.”

– Kevin Warner, Aspen-Sopris District Ranger

THANK YOU TO OUR AMAZING AHS VOLUNTEERS

- | | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| Brian Berger | Graeme Means |
| Sheri Brinker | George Newman |
| Tim Cooney | Dan Reeves |
| Marc Demmons | Dan Sadowsky |
| Larry Fredrick | Bubba Scott |
| Pat Holloran | Dean Stapleton |
| Nyala Honey | Kian Sullivan |
| Mike Hundert | Tony Vagneur |
| Ally Kummell | David “Wabs” Walbert |
| Howie Mallory | Chris Wheatley |
| Laura Mathews | Tim Willoughby |
| Tim McFlynn | |





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 development@aspenhistory.org or 970.925.3721 ext. 105.

620 West Bleeker
Aspen, CO 81611

"...these people and the community and the events like this are exactly what make this place so special. Job well done on allowing us non-gangers to experience it."
— Sean B, Time Travel Tuesdays: Ski Gangs attendee

