WE’RE UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The Aspen Historical Society is literally moving along. That means we’ve removed tens of thousands of objects, images and documents from our archive building for a renovation project that started in October. The six-month remodel is set to finish this spring, and then we can move back in.

The Aspen Historical Society operates the largest archive of images, historical papers, maps and artifact collections in the region — 55,000 total. The facility houses priceless artifacts from every era of the Roaring Fork Valley’s history including the vast Mary Eshbaugh Hayes photography collection, maps of 1800s mining claims, Andy Mill’s Olympic uniform and Elizabeth Paepcke’s gardening hat.

To continue preserving these important pieces of Aspen history into the future, an upgrade was necessary. By May, we’ll welcome a 35 percent increase in our collection storage capacity; an upgraded climate control system and advanced hazard-protection system to safeguard our collection, plus additional space for offices, programming and exhibitions.

Forum Phi Architects designed the new facility’s interior, and G.F. Woods Construction is executing the project. Connect One is generously designing the new courtyard landscape.

This remodel is the first phase of a $3 million campaign. The Aspen Historical Society will continue its campaign to complete funding for the renovation and strengthen its endowment. A larger endowment will increase the size and availability of the society’s educational programming, support research positions, enhance exhibitions and develop and protect its vast archive collection.

Follow the construction progress on our website, and then mark your calendars for July 14, 2017, for a grand re-opening and community celebration.

ARCHIVE BUILDING: AT A GLANCE

Archival Vault: The archives are the largest repository for images, historical papers, maps, and artifact collections in the region. As the collection grows every year, the renovation will allow for artifact protection and storage for the next 20 years. Additional movable shelving will increase storage capacity by 35 percent.

Community Gallery: The community space can function as a gallery space to showcase the collection.
THE ASPEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY STAFF DISHES ON THEIR FAVORITE HISTORIC FIGURES AND LOCATIONS:

HISTORY HIGHLIGHTS

It’s hard to narrow it down to one. That being said, one of my favorite historical sites in the area is the Hunter Creek Valley. Not only is it beautiful, but there is so much history still visible – the countless remnants from the mining days and the Quiet Years – that it is easy to pretend you are in a different time.

— Megan Winn Cerise, Archive Technician

The first time I met DRC (Darcy) Brown, Jr., he walked into the archives and I felt like I was meeting a celebrity. The first thing out of my mouth was, “You look so much like your father!” – as if I had been great friends with Senior. I felt I had after conducting research, creating a family tree so I could figure out who was who, and looking at so many images of him from the late 1800s. It was a great experience to look at images and documents in our collection with Darcy, and to talk about both his and his father’s influence on the town. Talk about a legacy!

— Anna Scott, Archivist

Andre Roch was a Swiss mountaineer, avalanche researcher, resort developer, expert skier, engineer and author. Roch is best known as an expert in avalanche management whose expertise was sought throughout the world. He came to Aspen in 1936 to consult for the development of the Highland Bavarian Lodge. In just one winter, with infectious enthusiasm, he mobilized the entire community around the sport of skiing. He helped in forming what is now the Aspen Valley Ski and Snowboard Club, and also helped to cut the first run on Aspen Mountain, appropriately named “Roch Run.” Aspen’s legendary ski race, the Roch Cup, honors his contributions to ski racing and the town of Aspen.

— Lisa Hancock, Curator & VP of Collections

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— Nina Gabianelli, VP of Education and Programs

Right now, my favorite Aspen historical figure is Darcy Brown, son of an Aspen pioneer, Yale educated, WWII PT boat skipper, and original Aspen Skiing Corp. investor and board member. As president of the ASC, Darcy shepherded the development of skiing in the modern era in Aspen, helping the resort (and the town) moving forward towards the 21st century. Darcy himself spouted Robert Service poetry, skied and rode horseback into his 90s, and his descendants are still part of Aspen today, a legacy that goes back to 1880.

— Michael Monroney, History Coach

I love the three Aspen cemeteries: Aspen Grove, Ute and Red Butte. Each fall some friends and I do a Halloween run through all three. As children, we’re taught that cemeteries are spooky, but as adults we learn they’re not only places to be revered, but can also tell a lot about a community. The headstones in Aspen’s certainly do.

— Christine Benedetti, Marketing Director

The Gillespies built a ranch downriver from Aspen Junction in 1892, and called it the Ranch at El Jebel. They were in-laws with the Willits family, the Shehi family and more. There are street names and town names, all with historic relevance in our everyday life. For example, Robinson Street, in Willits, is Sarah Gillespie’s maiden name. Her parents had a ranch in Emma, and her sister married a Willits. That, to me, is cool!

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My favorite historic site in the valley is the Green Mountain ghost town. It was such a special treat having [fellow staffer] Nina take us on a History Hike to Green Mountain last summer. It is truly a hidden gem; something special that I would not have been able to find on my own! The rich history is fascinating and vistas of Independence Pass were incredible.

— Kelly May, Development Director

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WINTER 2017
Programming and Events Schedule

WINTERSKÖL ACTIVITIES:
Thursday, Jan. 12
Wheeler Opera House, 320 E. Hyman Ave.

Aspen History 101 (Free), 5:30 p.m.

“Aspen Extreme” (Free) 7:30 p.m.
The Aspen Historical Society kicks off the Wintersköl weekend with Aspen History 101 and a screening of “Aspen Extreme.” The no-credit, fun college of the Rockies, also known as the Aspen State Teachers College, hosts a crash course in local lore, featuring actors, actresses, song, dance and local celebrities. It will be followed by the iconic 1993 film that tells the story of two ski bums from Detroit who ditch everything to live the ski instructor dream in Aspen.

Presented by Aspen Historical Society, ACRA and Wheeler Opera House.

TIME TRAVEL TUESDAYS
Local Authors: Histories and Herstories of Aspen
5:30 p.m. / $10 or free to Lixiviator members and above
February 7 through March 14
Pitkin County Library Community Room

Feb 7    Bruce Ducker, author of “Dizzying Heights” and “Home Pool”
Feb 14   Andy Stone, author of “Aspen Drift”
Feb 21   Charlie Paterson, author of “Escape Home”
Feb 28   Paul Andersen, author of “Moonlight Over Pearl” and “High Road to Aspen”
Mar 7    Amy Hawes, author of “Aspen Haunt”
Mar 14   Tony Vagneur, author of “Then and Now”

*programs and times are subject to change.
For reservations and more information call (970)925-3721 or AspenHistory.org

ASPEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
WINTER 2017 (THROUGH APRIL 17)

MONDAYS
Aspen Highlands Ski History Tour
11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS
Hotel Jerome History Tour
1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAYS
Wheeler Opera House Tour
1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

THURSDAYS
Historic Pub Crawl 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.
Reservations required

FRIDAYS
Aspen Mountain Ski History Tour
11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

BY APPOINTMENT
History Coach (Electric Vehicle Tour)
Victorian West End Walking Tour

HARD HAT TOURS OF
AHS ARCHIVE BUILDING
Jan. 18, Feb. 22 and Mar. 15
at 4 p.m. or by appointment

For reservations or information: Call (970) 920-3271 ext. 104
www.aspenhistory.org
facebook.com/historyaspen
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WHOOSH! A QUICK HISTORY OF SKI RACING IN ASPEN

1936
Olympic gold medalist bobsledder Billy Fiske and ski resort developer Ted Ryan form Highland Bavarian Corporation and envision a ski resort to be developed in the Castle Creek Valley near Ashcroft.

1937
Aspen Ski Club holds its first ski races.

1939
World War II begins and Highland Bavarian Lodge is unable to procure steel for lift towers because of wartime shortage. The project loses momentum as a result of the war.

Swiss avalanche expert Andre Roch lays out first ski runs on Mt. Hayden and Aspen Mountain; Roch Run is visible from town.

1941
Aspen hosts the first of many National Championships.

10th Mountain Division soldiers train for World War II in the mountains around Aspen. Formed with ski racers, the Division specializes in mountain warfare – rock climbing, skiing, and mountaineering – and vow to return to Aspen after the war to bring skiing to the U.S. They follow through on their promise.

1945
Friedl Pfeifer starts the Aspen Ski School.

1946
Walter Paepcke and partners form the Aspen Skiing Corporation.

1947

1947: Lift One opens in January as the world's longest chairlift.

1941: National Championships on Aspen Mtn.

Combined = 1 Slalom Run + 1 Downhill Run
Super Combined = 1 Slalom Run + 1 Super G

1939: The Wheeler Opera House and Roch Run, which is visible from town.

1936: Highland Bavarian Lodge

TYPES OF SKI RACING

Slalom
Giant Slalom
Super G
Downhill

Combined = 1 Slalom Run + 1 Downhill Run
Super Combined = 1 Slalom Run + 1 Super G
1950: Aspen hosts the first FIS World Championships outside of Europe. The event debuted giant slalom as a discipline and put Aspen on the map as a major international ski resort.

1981: Giant Slalom first place Phil Mahre, and Steve Mahre, third place.

1981: Winternational begins, marking a week-long celebration of skiing and racing that continues almost annually for the next 35 years.

2002: The Women’s World Cup began its annual trek to Aspen, except 2003 and 2013, when the races were given to other resorts in order for them to run test races for the World Championships.

2000: Women’s World Cup racing returns to Aspen with Austrian Michaela Dorfmeister winning the Super G and Croatian Janica Kostelic taking home the top spot in the Slalom.

2015: Mikaela Shiffrin becomes first American female to win gold on Aspen snow since 1981.

2017: The FIS World Cup Finals come to Aspen. The world’s fastest men and women on skis will race in all four disciplines, as well as the new Team Event, March 15-19, on Aspen Mountain.
NEW (OLD) HOMES

The property at Holden/Marolt got some new residents which all happen to be very old. In December, three historic structures were moved from downtown Aspen to the open space at the entrance to town, where they’ll be refurbished and used as educational buildings for the mining and ranching museum that already sits on the property.

Three structures – a home, shed and barn – date back to 1885. William McMurchy, a prospector, built the home. The original was just 200 square feet; by 1890 he expanded it to 700 square feet, which is how big it is today.

Two other owners occupied the buildings before the Zupancis family purchased it in 1930. In 2002, the city of Aspen purchased the buildings from the Zupancis family. Now that the city is using the land, which sits next to the Pitkin County Jail, for the police department’s new headquarters, the buildings had to be moved, and the Aspen Historical Society welcomed their addition to the Holden/Marolt Mining & Ranching Museum.

The buildings will undergo considerable renovation before they become permanent additions to the Holden/Marolt property. By summer, guests should be able to see the mining and ranching museum with the new structures as part of the tour.

NEW (OLD) HOMES

If the Wheeler Opera House brick walls could talk, they’d have a lot to say. They can’t, but Travis McDiffett, an Aspen Historical Society guide and professional actor who’s performed many times in the storied building, can help tell the iconic structure’s tale. Debuting this winter is the Wheeler Opera House History Tour, offered for free on Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m.

Since the opera house was built in 1889, it’s been a source of pride, and contention, for the town. From suspicious fires and near-bankruptcies to an elephant on stage and a stomping ground for John Denver, it’s been a site for legendary performances. In recent years, the 128-year-old building has been completely renovated, featuring a new balcony, upgraded lobby and more spacious bar area.

Learn more about the Wheeler’s colorful past and please join for The Aspen Historical Society’s Aspen History 101 followed by a free screening of “Aspen Extreme” on Jan. 12 to kick off Winterskol.
PARTNER PROJECTS

The Aspen Historical Society is the community’s resource and repository for the town’s treasured objects and images. In 2016, we proudly partnered with a diverse set of organizations to ensure that history is tracked. Here are some of the projects we accomplished and relationships we continued:

Aztech Mountain
Heifara Rutgers was born and raised in Aspen, and his Aztech Mountain menswear reflects that. Take, for example, the Italian-made down-fill jacket, which has a Herbert Bayer print on its lining. Each year, he partners with the Aspen Historical Society to find a singular, striking image to be included in his high-performance outerwear line.

Aspen Times
More than 130 years of Aspen Times newspapers are stored with the Aspen Historical Society, and digitized copies of these newspapers through 1963 can be viewed online. But that doesn’t mean our job is done; in 2016 AHS processed another 595 images to add to the Aspen Times Collection and we made another 2,100 accessible online. Search archiveaspen.org for your favorites. One of ours is pictured here.

Ski Catalog
Our collection is full of skis – 193 to be accurate. Of those, two-thirds were made after 1960. Last summer, ski technology expert Evan Winn curated our collection, and analyzed just what the collection means to the ski industry. He created a timeline tracing the evolution of ski technology, along with the various innovations that happened. This information is now available from our collections team. One thing is certain: Skiing now is a lot easier than it used to be.

Aspen High School Yearbooks
Go back in time to figure out who was Aspen’s biggest flirt in 1998 or what graduating seniors had to say about each other in 1910, all from the comfort of your computer. We recently digitized Aspen High School yearbooks from 1909 to 2010 (some years are missing; if you have yearbooks prior to 1982 please let us know), and anyone can now browse them at archiveaspen.org. That means decades of real local history — stories and images about the kids who grew up here — is available at your fingertips. Look for embarrassing photographs of mom and dad, or even yourself. It should be great fodder for many Throwback Thursdays to come.
ASPIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY:
Allocation of Income and Expenses
For Year End October 31, 2016

For full financials and current balance sheet please visit www.AspenHistory.org

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Lois & Harold Price Foundation, Inc.

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Alpine Party Rentals
Aspen Art Museum
Aspen Brewing Company
Aspen Center for Environmental Studies
Aspen Chamber Resort Association
Aspen Daily News
Aspen Elks
Aspen Fire Department
Aspen Institute
Aspen Music Festival and School
Aspen Public Radio
Aspen Rentals
Aspen Reprographics
Aspen School District
Aspen Skiing Club
Aspen Sojourner
Aspen Square Condominium Hotel
Aspen Thrift Shop
Aspen Times
Aspen Tree

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Margaret Wilson Reckling
Mary and Hugh Wise
Rosalie and David Wood
Tamara and Frank Woods
Barbara and John Zrno

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*Deceased
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