

ASPEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Summer 2006

Journal

620 West Bleeker Street / Aspen, Colorado 81611 / 970-925-3721 / info@aspenhistory.org / www.aspenhistory.org

New Exhibits

Wheeler/Stallard Museum Two New Exhibits to Open

The Aspen Historical Society is very excited and extremely proud to announce the opening of two new exhibits: "Crystal Memories: Fifty Years of Palace Shenanigans" and "Aspen Under Glass: Photography from 1890-1920." The exhibits will open on June 16th with a Grand Celebration planned on Saturday, July 8th.

While it is impossible to duplicate the total experience at the Crystal Palace, the fun and nostalgia will be triggered by "Crystal Memories." Included in this exhibit are plenty of vintage photos which will instantly take many Palace patrons back in time. The exhibit includes selected historical notes as well as artifacts to take the visitor along a timeline of the past 50 years with a smile and a salute to the venerable dinner theatre.

No one is safe from being satirically memorialized in song at the Crystal Palace, and that irreverence is carried



1976 - Fairy In The Firehouse

over into the exhibit. There are a number of references to our past and current presidents

and social trends that look funny (and dated) in hindsight. There is a collection of some of the more *unique* costumes worn by the brave troopers that have performed for owner Mead Metcalf over the past 50 years.

The second new exhibit, "**Aspen Under Glass, Photography from 1890-1920**" is one that all lovers of Western history and early photography should not miss. This exhibit centers on our extensive and priceless collection of vintage glass negatives and early photographic equipment. If you've ever wondered how photographers of the late 1800's and early 1900's got their images of the West when they were miles from civilization, this exhibit is sure to shine some light on that question (no pun intended).

Here you can also get a feel for the amount of effort and expense it took to get every image, develop it before it was corrupted by too much excess light, and then to produce a sharp print for the customer. Actual glass negatives, box cameras, enlargers, darkroom setup, and original prints from the period make this an authentic look at the exciting early years of photography.

Neither of these exhibits would be possible without the interest and help of numerous people. Most notable would be owner Mead Metcalf of the Crystal

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IMPORTANT DATES

Opening Celebration

Crystal Memories

50 Years of Palace Shenanigans

Aspen Under Glass

Photography from 1890-1920

FRIDAY, July 7th. 4:00 to 6:00 P.M.
Private reception for AHS National Council featuring personal tours of new exhibits, a special performance by Palace pros, and other surprises planned for our special supporters.

SATURDAY, July 8th, Noon at the Wheeler/Stallard Museum. Piggy backing on the **Crystal Palace Reunion** held this weekend, AHS invites everyone to an **open house and tour** with - who knows? We're hoping for a day of spontaneous performances from many decades of songs! **FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.**

Ice Cream Social

SATURDAY, August 5th, 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Annual Ice Cream Social and 100th Anniversary Party celebrating the first car to arrive in Aspen. Wheeler/Stallard Museum. **FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Aspen Times Party

FRIDAY, August 25th, 4:00 to 7:00 P.M.- Aspen Times Birthday Party Bash in Ruth Whyte Park at the Wheeler/Stallard Museum. **\$1.25 donation. A COMMUNITY CELEBRATION - PLEASE COME.**

Old Timers Party!

LABOR DAY WEEKEND, September 2nd & 3rd. Old Timer Dinner and Brunch at Buttermilk. **MUST HAVE TICKET.** You qualify if you lived in Aspen 35 years ago and you were 21 at that time! Call 925 3721 for information or to be added to the invitation list.

Ride for the Cure

SATURDAY, September 9th, Ride for the Cure is a 100 mile benefit bike ride. Let AHS staff cheer you on at the Ashcroft Aid Station!

For information go to:
www.ridethecure100.com.

The Aspen Historical Society enriches the community
by preserving and communicating the remarkable history of our area.

www.aspenhistory.org

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Ruth Whyte Park - Honoring A True Philanthropist

In an act of benevolence and community spirit, Ruth Whyte has once again raised the bar of giving and caring. *The Society has recently received an unrestricted gift of \$900,000 from Ruth.* Her generosity ensures that the Historical Society will succeed on its drive to long-term financial sustainability. At the same time, Ruth continues to embody the true community character upon which the soul of Aspen has been built.

“Receiving this gift from Ruth is like icing on the cake,” said a bemused Georgia Hanson, Executive Director. “This past year has been quite a ride. We climbed up out of our bunker into the light and now another vote of confidence from our long time friend and supporter, Ruthie, is just so rewarding. Knowing that Ruth and her family trust us to be the custodians of Aspen’s extraordinary legacy is a tremendous responsibility. Our vision of a thriving, sustainable future is much closer to becoming reality thanks to Ruth.”

In recognition for all her contributions and many years of dedicated service to the Society, the Board of Directors has voted to honor Ruth by naming the grounds at our Wheeler/Stallard site as “Ruth Whyte Park.” Future generations will be able to enjoy the gardens and remember Ruthie’s fondness for the Historical Society’s home in perpetuity.

This is not the first time Ruth has shown her generosity to help preserve Aspen’s past. She spent countless hours over the years supporting the Aspen Historical Society as a long-time member of the Society’s Board of Directors as well as President of that Board. She was an untiring volunteer reaching back to the Society’s beginnings in the early 60’s. Many of us remember being awakened by one of her famed six a.m. calls as she started each day with gusto. In the early nineties Ruth donated a local property that provided \$1.7 million dollars that was used to restore the Wheeler/Stallard Museum and gardens. Her gift saved the old Victorian from certain collapse and gave the community a museum we can all brag about. In any discussion of Aspen’s history, Ruth Whyte’s dedication and influence show up early and often.

AHS Welcomes Barbara Bossart as Director of Operations

We are extremely pleased to announce Barbara Bossart as our new Director of Operations.

Barbara has been in the Roaring Fork Valley since 1999. Originally from Grayville, Illinois, Barbara attended college at Eastern Illinois University where she studied psychology and merchandising. That educational background prepared her perfectly for 30 years in the hospitality industry where she has extensive experience in property management, sales and marketing, food and beverage, and event planning. All that experience should come in handy as the Society’s Director of Operations.



Barbara wearing the winning smile that will win you over in an instant!

Barbara’s duties will include overseeing the volunteer program, responsibility for the Society’s sites as well as the staffing and training of docents and, in the end, making sure our visitors have a memorable and enjoyable experience.

As Barbara herself puts it, “Being Director of Operations at the Aspen Historical Society is much like running a hotel: you staff it, train the staff, maintain it, improve it. And all of that leads to the primary goal that we all share: to take care of our guests and visitors and bring our hospitality to them.” Our AHS future is looking brighter all the time.

Aspen Times Celebrates 125 Years

“125 Years in 125 Days”

Imagine the irony of being present when the largest silver nugget ever found was brought down from the Smuggler Mine in 1894 - the year after the silver market collapsed.

Be there when a new automobile, a Buick, pulled into Aspen for the first time ... to no traffic!

Follow the day-to-day excitement that was generated by the draining and reopening of the Smuggler Mine by deep-sea divers in 1910.

Imagine experiencing all these things first hand and from the comfort of your own home. That is the potential we all have with the ***“125 Years in 125 Days”*** fundraising project that is currently underway by The Aspen Times, Aspen Historical Society and Pitkin County Library.

Be part of the community team contributing to the rescue of an important part of our history. **In the 19th Century everyone in town donated a day’s pay to build Aspen’s first hospital. Today you can rescue our early boom and bust story on the Web.**

This fundraising enterprise will preserve every page of every newspaper published in Aspen from 1881 through 1925 - headlines, stories, ads, cartoons, editorials, everything - just as it all originally appeared - making them available to the public by January 1, 2007.

For 125 days, The Aspen Times is dedicating page 15 of each daily paper to highlight news reports from consecutive years, 125 of them to be exact.

This project is not as simple as you might think. First, each original page must be photographed individually and put onto microfilm. (There are years of originals in the AHS archives that have not been filmed.) These issues must first be unbound, a delicate process for century-old newsprint. Once on microfilm, each page is scanned to convert it into digital form and indexed for search engine interface. Both of these processes - the photographing and the digitizing - are done by outside companies and require months to accomplish.

\$125,000 is necessary to successfully complete the “125 Years in 125 Days” project. We are seeking donations to reach this goal. **A \$125 donation preserves one full week; \$450 will cover a month; and \$5000 will save an entire year of news.** Why not form teams and donate as a group? Encourage your employer to rescue a year? Perhaps suggest matching funds? **OR, help us get the word out. Advertise your business by sponsoring the Times’ page 15 tribute every day.** Check out the existing website-you will be hooked. www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.com.

To find out more about the **“125 Years in 125 Days”** project or to donate call the Aspen Historical Society at 925-3721.

**WATCH FOR DETAILS ABOUT
THE
COLOSSAL STUPENDOUS
ASPEN TIMES BIRTHDAY
CELEBRATION
AUGUST 25, 2006
Ruth Whyte Park**



A Glass Negative Print from the exhibit.

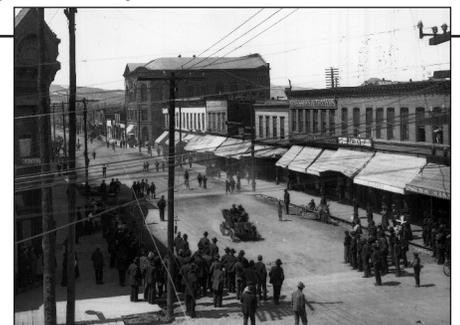
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Palace, who has loaned countless artifacts and has served as guest curator of the Palace exhibit. Nina Gabianelli, Diane Metcalf, and Michael McAssey have provided us with background and media. Immeasurable gratitude goes to the late Nick DeWolfe whose initial excitement over the glass negatives was the genesis for our idea to create an exhibit. Nothing would have happened without the vision and day to day energy of our dedicated staff, in particular Archivist Anna Lookabill Scott and Curator Sarah Oates. They have done an amazing job putting together the first new exhibits to open at the Museum in years. The Society would like to acknowledge everyone involved with the placement of the new exhibits especially Tom Ward and Liz Sharpiro for sharing their incredible exhibit design talent and Mirte Mallory for family artifacts.

Did you know?

The first automobile to arrive in Aspen came down Main Street on August 5, 1906?

One hundred years ago. It was owned by Ted Cooper of Cooper Book & Stationary Store.



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Tidbits



**INDEPENDENCE PASS FOUNDATION ANNUAL BIKE RACE
ADDED AN ELEMENT OF FRIVOLITY THIS YEAR WHEN
AHS 'RESIDENTS' FROM THE GHOST TOWN CHEERED
THE RIDERS ON TO VICTORY AT THE FINISH!**

Jane Battaglia, Anna Lookabill Scott, Barbara Bossart
at Independence Ghost Town, May 20, 2006



Truly, a most fond farewell (that we can only hope is temporary) to our Curator Sarah Oates. Sarah is leaving mid-August to go to Law School at the University of Wyoming. We have begged and tried to bribe her to stay - still we wish her all the best and are thrilled that she is following her dream.

Summer Hours - Begin June 16th

Tuesday thru Saturday
Tours Available - 1:00 to 5:00

Wheeler/Stallard & Holden/Marolt Museums

Ghost Towns open 7 days a week.

Call 925 3721



A Personal Fond Farewell to Our Buddy Nick! *by Georgia Hanson*

When Nick DeWolfe died he was smack dab in the middle of the kind of project that always got him jumping up and down with frenzied enthusiasm. He had "discovered" the AHS glass negative collection and determined to rescue it from the ravages of time. He researched the latest technology for preservation and then provided us with a new scanner. When he realized our staff and time limitations prevented a swift completion, he hired his own technicians to scan the negatives for us. When he left this world, pieces and parts of his anticipated grand production were scattered helter skelter in his workroom, I am told. His plan

included providing burros for our staff to ride about town (preferably in skimpy garb of course) to entice viewers to attend!

I wasted years as a kind of a voyeur, looking upon the DeWolfe clan shenanigans with envy from a distance. Nick and I were on opposite sides of several hard fought community issues in my early years here. I didn't find a way to break the ice, or more accurately, I didn't understand there wasn't any ice to be broken except in my mind.

We only recently got to know each other through a shared chemotherapy experience. Nick had been through it before; I had not. Nick made a quality of

life decision to abandon his treatment shortly after we became friends. (Not his zest for life, mind you, just the chemo impact.) While I totally understood and support the decision, still I wanted to yell, "NO, you CAN'T - we all need you!" Someone may come along to take his



place but no one will ever replace him! The tidal wave created by his enthusiasm provides renewable energy for us all.

If you want to get our newsletter electronically, please send a request to edna@aspenhistory.org