



Artifact at the Lomax Gulch Placer Mine

Inside this issue:

*Letter from the President*

*Calendar of Events*

*Blue Spruce Brunch*

*Thank You*

## ***Blue Spruce is coming...***

***Mark your calendar  
now!***

***This year's popular  
hike and brunch has  
been scheduled for Sun-  
day morning, August  
15th***

***Watch your mail in late  
July for more details  
and a reservation form***

## *From the SHS Archives...*

*Lomax Gulch becomes historic park  
by Barb Keller*

reprinted from *Summit Historical Society Voices, Fall/Winter, 1987*

**I**magine the days of water mining when sluice boxes rock-and-rolled and hydraulic jets washed away the hillsides.

Lomax Gulch, located at 301 Ski Hill Road in Breckenridge, is listed as one of the first placer workings in the state of Colorado and the site of early "booming" activities. Hydraulic mining was also used at this site.

Recently, thanks to developers of Christie Heights subdivision, Tim and Patti Casey, the Town of Breckenridge and a handful of volunteers, the Gulch has been acquired by the Summit Historical Society and has quickly become a showcase for these early mining methods.

On the 4.89 acre site now rest several structures moved from the backcountry near Breckenridge and the Breckenridge Historic District.

To date, the Christie Heights subdivision has put approximately \$35,000 into the site.

### **Those Behind the Scenes**

Christie Heights, led by Casey, has been the main force behind the development of this site as a historic park.

The developers donated the land plus a portion of open space behind the site, corrected the drainage, drilled a well, provided foundations for the buildings, moved the buildings, provided restroom facilities, purchased a sign, provided the gas, electric and telephone lines and will complete the landscaping, walking paths and parking lot in 1988.

The Breckenridge Sanitation District contributed enough money to pay for the sewer line and a year's worth of service to the site.

Restoration work on the Geiger barn was carried out by Tony Harris of Harris Construction, Gary Driscoll and Mark Westby. The

Town of Breckenridge donated \$2,000 to facilitate the restoration.

The Town of Breckenridge also made it worthwhile for Christie Heights to develop the site.

The acquisition of the site came about because the developers were looking for a community project to enhance their housing development.

On the 78 acres of the subdivision there was an area that was not usable for anything but maybe a tennis court. "We looked at the area and noticed there had been some disturbance there, and we thought that if there was some significance to this gulch that it would be a pity if it was just going to go for open space," Casey said.

Casey called the director of the Society and found out it did have an important past. Therefore, the developers decided to dedicate the land.

As negotiations continued, the developer, the Town of Breckenridge and the Historical Society struck further agreement to completely develop the site in exchange for an increase in density in the development. Christie Heights is a single family lot development project located on Ski Hill Road with 130 improved lots available.

"He struck an agreement, that if he was to dedicate to the Society the Lomax Gulch site and help move those buildings, we would allow him an additional 30 to 35 units of density throughout the project," said John Cole, Senior Breckenridge Planner.

Cole further explained that the town is willing to give away density for a good public project.

"So far, that's the best instance (of a

*Continued on page 6*



## *Letter from the President*

by Rick Hague, President

Greetings from Breckenridge, the Winter Wonderland. As I write this letter on Memorial Day weekend, we have just received four to five inches of fresh snow with more drifting out of the sky. Come on .... admit it. Don't those of you who are sweltering around your Memorial Day barbeque in Florida, Texas, Georgia, and elsewhere wish you could look out on your lawn and experience all this white stuff?

Your Society is coming off a very successful and encouraging "off season" and looking forward to an extremely busy and action-packed summer program. But, this is not to say that some storm clouds are not evident on the horizon – more on that later.

I mentioned in my first Letter from the President that one of my main goals this year was to expand our programs throughout Summit County. I'm happy to say that we are succeeding – big time.

In perhaps our most significant step in this direction, we have hired Liz Duxbury, on a part time basis, to be our Program Coordinator in the northern part of the county. She will be based in our Dillon office. Liz is a longtime resident of Silverthorne, is one of those people who seems to know everyone, and brings a lot of energy to the position. She will complement Karen Fischer, who has had considerable success in the southern areas of the county, and will have a role identical to Karen's, namely to be the sparkplug behind our day-to-day programs in the Dillon, Silverthorne, Keystone, Frisco, and Copper Mountain areas of the county. Welcome aboard, Liz!

We have just held our final monthly membership meeting before the summer break – a program that has been held in each of the county's main towns in their order of settlement. A group of about 55 members and guests heard Mary Ellen Gilliland speak about the history of Silverthorne and the Lower Blue. Groups of roughly comparable size had met earlier in the year at Keystone and Dillon. Once again – we're bringing our message throughout the county.

Our Frisco Senior Center-based Chapter took off in January on the third Wednesday of each month and has been increasing in size each month. Twenty-one seniors turned up at the Washington Mine for the May meeting and tour. June will see a tour of the Dillon Schoolhouse complex, while July will involve our new Dillon, Denver, and the Dam tour. Come out and join us!

Our activities in the Breckenridge area have been robust as well, with Karen Fischer initiating a host of new tours, children's programs and efforts.

Come join us.  
Volunteer.  
Get Involved!

Contributors to this issue: Rick Hague, Patty Wahtera, Karen Fischer,.

*Summit Historical Society Voices* is published quarterly. Articles, Letters, Calendar information and other items may be e-mailed to the editor, at BarbaraJY@msn.com. The editor also receives U.S. mail addressed to Barbara J. Yost, 3531 Bryant Street, Denver, CO 80211 when she is not sailing on Lake Dillon, swing dancing at the amphitheater or at home in her little Dillon condo.

Deadlines:

Winter issue, December 1	Spring issue, March 1
Summer issue, June 1	Autumn issue, September 1

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## *Letter from the President Continued*

Our highly successful partnership with Colorado Mountain College in the summer History Lecture series will continue this summer at four separate venues throughout the county and will include such well known speakers as Beth and Bill Sagstetter, authors of *Mining Camps Speak*, and Denver's Beckwith Society presenting a program on Barney Ford, the escaped slave who played such an important part in the early civil rights effort in Colorado and was a very successful entrepreneur.

We have also formed a partnership with the Town of Breckenridge and the Saddle Rock Society to design and install the interior of the Barney Ford House Museum and to conduct tours there this summer. This work is a fee-paying consulting project and involves our managing the project to completion for its grand opening on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Even more significant than this effort is another newly formed partnership with the Town wherein the Town will look to the Society to perform most, if not all, historic tours conducted with Town facilities – all on a fee-paying basis. It is very gratifying to see that we have turned the corner in what, in the past, has been an uneasy relationship. Now all we have to do is perform!

Our museums continue to draw large groups of people. The Silverthorne Historical Museum drew over 10,500 visitors between mid-December and this weekend. The Breckenridge Main Street Museum continues its successful run in partnership with Grand Timber Lodge with its *It's a Child's World – Turn of the Century*. Both Karen and Liz are planning brand new summer tours in all areas of the county, from the Dillon Dam to the “new” old locomotive at the Rotary Snowplow in Breckenridge. We are about to complete a project

begun in 1999 by past-president Susan Donaldson – to erect a large informative sign facility on the Blue River to explain and depict Summit County's destructive dredging history, the endless quest for river gold that literally turned the county's major streams and rivers upside down.

Along with these successes, however, come challenges. Expanding programs requires expanding volunteer needs.

### **WE NEED VOLUNTEERS !!**

For all aspects of our programs – from gardeners to guides to maintenance people to archivists to office help. You name it, we need it. Come join us! Be a part of the action! Give back to your community! Call Karen at 970-453-9022 or Liz at 970-468-2207.

It goes without saying that we also need funding. We are trying to tap all of our traditional sources – expanding membership, the Summit Foundation, sponsorships from the county's towns, fundraising events, etc. We are also moving outside our normal funding sources in attempting to tap into other Colorado-based foundations and corporate sources. Our membership stands at what probably is an all-time high – about 500. But we need to do more! Help us – please! We've got a lot of momentum going – help us to continue!

We also have a challenge emerging with the Main Street Museum in Breckenridge. At some point in the next six to 12 months, we will have to find a new space for the museum. Our long run there will be coming to an end, as we all new it eventually would, and we will have to relocate sometime after October. Everyone is being very cooperative in assisting us in this quest, and we have a decent amount of time to plan the move.

So ..... that's where your Society stands today – on the crest of many successes but also facing future challenges. Come join us to meet these challenges! Get involved! The Past is a Blast – in Colorado's Playground.

**We are very happy to welcome two new board members, both longtime Summit County—Dana Smith of Frisco and Doug Pierce of Summit Cove.**

**Dana is an accounting manager with Vail Resorts and will take over as treasurer when Terry Merrick retires in August.**

**Doug is the owner of the historic Arapahoe Café in Dillon and is very active businessman in the community.**

**Welcome to both and thanks for helping us add value to the community.**

## Calendar of Events

### Exhibits

#### Main Street Museum

“A Child’s Life, Turn of the Century”  
10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. every day  
South Main Street, Breckenridge

Free Admission

#### Silverthorne Historical Museum

“Booze, Brothels and Baptism: Life and  
Leisure at 8,750 feet”

Green Village, Factory Outlet Stores,  
Silverthorne.

Free Admission

### July

#### Mon 12 Speaker Series

*Mary Jane Duran as Martha Maxwell*

7:00 p.m. Park Lane Pavilion, River Run,  
Keystone.

Presented in cooperation with Colorado  
Mountain College Free

#### Sat 17 Cemetery Walk

10:30 a.m. Valley Brook Cemetery,  
Breckenridge. Call for fee information.  
(720) 453-9022

#### Mon 26 Speaker Series

*The Mining Camps Speak* with Bill and Beth  
Sagsetter

7:00 p.m. Silverthorne Pavilion

Presented in cooperation with Colorado  
Mountain College Free

### August

#### Mon 2 Speaker Series

*Barney and Julia Ford* with the Beckworth  
Society Players

7:00 p.m. Speakeasy Theatre, Breckenridge.

Presented in cooperation with Colorado  
Mountain College Free

#### Wed 4 *Thomas the Train*

**Family Story Night** 5:45 p.m. at the  
Rotary Snowplow Park, Breckenridge.  
Light dinner and refreshments. Free

#### Sun 15 Fundraiser

*Annual Blue Spruce Brunch and  
Hike*. This is so fun it always sells  
out!

#### Mon 16 Speaker Series

*Lost Flumes of the Swan* with Bill Foun-  
tain. 7:00 p.m. Frisco Senior Center.

Presented in cooperation with Colo-  
rado Mountain College  
Free

#### Fri 27– Sun 29

*Summit Historics* in Breckenridge

Antique Car Show. Rally.

### September

#### Wed 1 Poetry Reading

*Selected Poems of Belle Turnbull, Brecken-  
ridge’s Pioneer Poet Laureate.*

Noon. Bring a Brown Bag Lunch

Carter Museum

111 North Ridge Street, Breckenridge  
Free.

#### Wed 8 *Winnie the Pooh*

**Family Story Night** 5:45 p.m. at the Carter  
Museum. Light dinner and refreshments. Free

Details were not finalized in time for publication, but another great summer of book and travel club adventures is being planned. Don’t miss out! Call Karen Musolf 453-8874 for a schedule.

## Summer Tours

### Explore Historic Breckenridge

Summit Historical Society provides guided and self-guided tours of Historic Breckenridge. Listed below are some not-to-be missed heritage adventures. Call the Historical Society (970) 453-9022 to ask for a summer tour brochure with all the details!

- **Alice G. Milne Historic Park** 102 North Harris Street
- **Barney Ford House Museum** 111 E. Washington Avenue
- **Briggle House** 104 North Harris Street
- **Country Boy Mine** French Gulch Road
- **Edwin Carter 1875 Museum** 111 North Ridge Street
- **Iowa Hill Hydraulic Mine** Airport Road
- **Lomax Placer Gulch** 301 Ski Hill Road
- **Main Street Museum** 111 South Main Street
- **Rotary Snowplow Park** French Street and Boreas Pass Road
- **Valley Brook Cemetery** Airport Road at Valley Brook
- **Washington Mine** Illinois Gulch Road



### Historic Dillon, Silverthorne and more...

Pick up a walking tour map at Dillon Town Hall any time of the year to see buildings that were moved from old Dillon as well as those that were moved to new-new-new Dillon from sites elsewhere in the county. Ask just how many sites have called the town of Dillon home! In summer the hills are alive with tours. Call the Historical Society (970) 468-2077 for complete summer tour information.

- **Dillon Schoolhouse Museum** 403 LaBonte Street, Dillon. Also on the site is the "Honeymoon cabin" and Lula Myers' 1885 Ranch House
- **Montequma Schoolhouse** (by appointment only) Hillside south of Main Street in Montezuma
- **Dillon, Denver and the Dam** tours with Sandra Mather, author of the book by the same name
- **Dillon Cemetery** approximately 1/2 mile south of Dillon off highway 6.
- **Silverthorne Historical Museum**, Silverthorne Factory Outlet Stores, Green Village (just north of Dillon on the east side of highway 9).



The Lomax Placer Gulch site is open for 90 minute guided tours Tuesday - Saturday through August 31 3:00 p.m. Admission is \$8 adults \$6 children 3-12 Free for children under 3 years \$20 for families

*From the Archives*

*Lomax Gulch (first published 1987)... from page 1*

Public project) where we got something tangible for it (density trade),” said Cole.

**Lomax Gulch Historical Buildings**

The Tiger Assay Office came from the old town of Tiger above Breckenridge Golf Course on Tiger Road and was moved to leased Town of Breckenridge property.

It was one of the last buildings left from Tiger, surviving an organized clearing burn of the town. It is a real assay office and provides a perfect location for the Society’s extensive collection.

Assaying is the chemical analysis of precious metals. Recently the building hosted over 75 guests for a mining lecture and demonstration.

The Bachelor Miner’s Cabin was donated by the Land and Cattle Company of Breckenridge and was originally moved from the backcountry to Wes and Edna Enyeart’s property on Ridge Street.

It is a typical miner’s cabin measuring 8 feet by 10 feet in dimension with only one small window (for warmth), and is definitely lacking a lady’s touch.

The carriage barn, also called the Geiger barn came from the Geigers’ French Street property. Architecturally it is

a classic example of a carriage barn, with its folding carriage doors on the right and a separate door on the left for the horse. It will house the Society’s collection of early transportation artifacts.

Also on the site is a “giant” or hydraulic gulch washing equipment in the area where it was originally used in the gulch.

**Mining Styles Used at the Gulch**

Both placer mining and types of this called “booming” and “hydraulicking” (hydraulic mining) were carried on in the Gulch beginning in the early 1870s.

Placer mining is the search for free gold. It is the extraction of gold from loose gravels by washing.

Booming, the method of mining poor placer ground, became very popular in Summit County, particularly in Lomax Gulch. Booming had a self-acting gate at the reservoir which held back collected waters which were then released to blast away the gravels deposited in an area. The use of booming cut down on manpower and required less water. This lowering of overhead and use of collected water permitted the working of ground that otherwise could not be made to pay.

Hydraulic mining used powerful water channeling to erode the gravels away in search of free gold. Huge nozzles were created to focus water on an area and clean away large amounts of gravel in a short period of time, such as an hour.



## *Volunteer Appreciation*

*By Rick Hague*

The lifeblood of our success has always been our volunteers. We could not function or contribute to our community without them. Each issue of *Voices* we attempt to single out volunteers who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in the past quarter to make your Society as success. This issue's thanks go out to .....

**Terry Merrick** has served on our Board of Directors faithfully for many years, currently is our Treasurer, and has also been our Secretary. Terry and husband **Jim** spend hours and hours toiling over the Society's books, paying our bills, keeping track of our finances, and generating financial reports for our Board. After all of that, Terry and Jim also attend and contribute to most of our functions and programs. Terry will retire from her position and the Board in August for a well-deserved rest. Our very sincere appreciation goes out to you both, Terry and Jim.

Most of us never see them but we are all touched by their work. They are the two ladies – **Darla Geyer and Jen Moroney** – who tend to our membership management system, entering in your new memberships and dues as they are received, generating and mailing the thank-you and renewal letters that are so important to our operation, and keeping it all together. Both have day jobs and

contribute to the Society on the weekends in our Dillon office. Many, many thanks to you both.

**Dr. Sandie Mather** lives near Philadelphia but manages to put in more work for the Society than most of us. Sandie, as many of you know, is a well-known author of seven books about Summit County and spends her summers in the county. She is writing the scripts for two of our new tours – *Dillon, Denver, and the Dam* and the *Rotary Snowplow* in Breckenridge. She will also be one of the regular guides for both tours and will give several talks and programs throughout the county this summer. We lift our miner's candle in salute and thanks, Sandie!

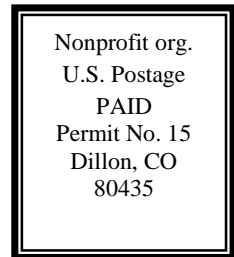
No vote of thanks can be complete without expressing our appreciation to those who continue to spend hours and hours on various efforts on the Society's behalf. Of course, **Barbara Yost, Louise and Jim Henderson, and Nancy Fulton** come to mind. **Karen Fischer and Liz Duxbury** are, and will this summer, put in far more hours than they are required to make our programs a success. Our collective hat is raised to you both as well.

**Thank you all for everything you do that**

*Congratulations to Historical Society member Claudia Carbone for her article in the Sunday, June 6th Denver Post about Barney Ford and the Barney Ford House which will open for tours July*

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We're on the 'Net!

<http://summithistorical.org>

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Dillon Museum & Research Annex

Phone: (970) 468-2207

Edwin Carter Museum & Tour Info:

Phone: (970) 453-7798

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