

Mid Winter 2010

voices

From the

Summit Historical Society

The president's message

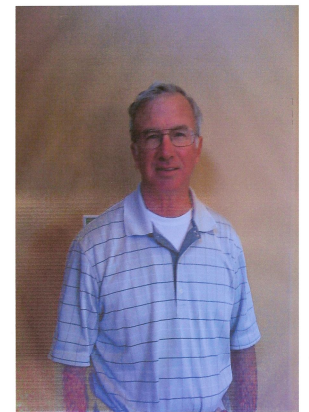
Looking ahead to the coming months of 2010, we are encouraged with all the activities of the Society.

First is the opening of the Summit County Ski Museum, which has been a joint effort of the SHS and the Breckenridge Historic Alliance. The museum had its grand opening on February 11. It is located at 308-B, South Main street in downtown Breckenridge. It covers the one hundred year period from 1860 through 1960, and features ski artifacts from this period. Among the many interesting items are copies of newspapers from the 1920s, which described the world ski jump competition in Dillon in 1921. The article also mentioned that the Breckenridge ski team would be taking the train to Dillon for the event. The museum is certainly a must-see attraction for both locals and visitors to Summit County.

Another important activity we have nearly completed during the winter season is the major effort, led by the Archive Committee, to organize and catalog our entire collection of photographs that are stored in the Dillon Schoolhouse Museum. Each negative and photo is being placed into an acid free envelope to protect the valuable collection and to make it available to the public. The catalog of photos may be accessed through the Marmot Network on our website.

We also began a major membership drive in January, looking to expand our membership significantly over the next three months. Terry Merrick is our membership chair and is planning a strategic mailing in the next few months, as well as membership-drive parties. Any help our membership can provide on this effort will be greatly appreciated.

John Ebright



John Ebright

Scroll or **CLICK ON NUMBERED BOXES**
BELOW TO TURN PAGES

SHS Book Club adventurers break trail to remote cabin

BY KAREN MUSOLF

The SHS Book and Adventure Club hosted its third consecutive winter snowshoe trek on Monday, February 15th. Led by scouts Maureen Nicholls, Barb Swider and Cheryl Tatro, a dozen hardy explorers detoured from the beaten path to find their way through deep snow up to an old mine site and cabin not too far from historic Dyersville.

They met at the Indiana Creek Trailhead in Spruce Valley Ranch, Breckenridge, to venture out on either snowshoes or cross-country skis. They followed a well-marked road to a trail that then led them along Indiana Creek into quiet forested paths and open glades. At many a turn, stunning views of 11,413 foot Mt. Argentine halted hikers in their steps. Arriving at some transmission lines, they then had to break new trail to reach the cabin nestled against the trees on a steep hillside. There they stepped down from nearly roof-level to enter the cabin door for lunch and a lesson in history.

Maureen Nicholls, who knew several who had associations with the mine behind the cabin, shared what she had learned. Curley Mackie, "a friendly old miner," told her that he and several other men had lived in the cabin, then one-story, and had worked the mine behind it in the 1930's to early 1950's. He didn't give any history of the mine, but it could be that early 1880's prospectors from nearby Dyersville had done some work there as well.....

Not finding the mining efforts worthwhile or wanting to move on, Mackie showed the property to Dave and Ethel Bruns, Breckenridge barber and his wife. In the early 1960's they then filed on the claim and did the \$200 assessment work each year to keep it. Maureen said that she helped Ethel fix up the cabin on summer trips. The Bruns called it Fucgowie Lodge.

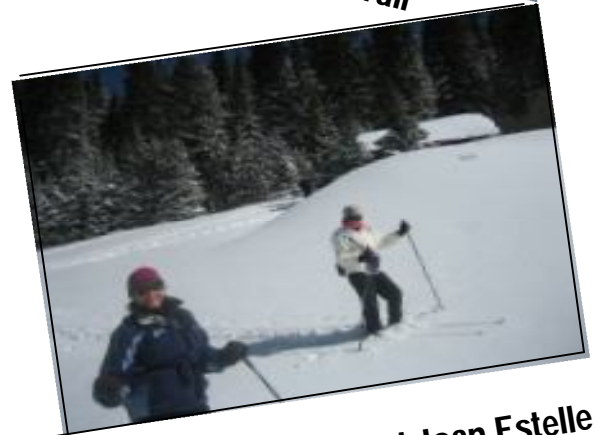
Dave Bruns died in 1969, and in the 1970's some squatters moved into the cabin and must have stayed there for some time as they raised the roof and added a loft with a ladder approach. When Ethel

discovered them living on her property, she called the sheriff and had them evicted. Not too much later, this private place received more public exposure when Colorado Public Service picked the area for running a transmission line from Breckenridge to Malta. Access was so difficult that the towers had to be set by helicopter.

Today, remnants of the mine, a dirt-buried mine car and perhaps a mine rail, can only be seen in summer. The cabin serves as a haven for summer hikers caught in the rain and winter explorers needing protection and rest. It has a wood-burning stove, several benches and a table. After their picnic and time-trip to the past, the SHS Book Club adventurers returned the way they came, arriving back at their cars by mid-afternoon.



Pat Larson on Forest Trail



Maureen Nichols and Joan Estelle
break trail to the cabin

Also, see article on page 7 of this newsletter

LONG-AWAITED SKI MUSEUM DEBUTS IN BRECKENRIDGE

By Jerry Dzedzic, Summit Historical Society Vice President

The Breckenridge Heritage Alliance has created a ski museum that celebrates the first ski town in Colorado, Breckenridge, and the first 100 years of skiing in Summit County. Exhibits explore the period from 1859 to 1960, including the earliest records of skiing (referred to as “snowshoeing” then) in Breckenridge, dating to 1859, the International Ski Jumping Championships held in Dillon in 1921, the celebrated 10th Mountain Division, and Summit’s first, post-war ski areas.

The idea for the museum formed late this past summer. Robin Theobold’s donation of the space in the building that houses the museum gave the effort a big boost. Alliance staff, especially Beth Johnson, have worked tirelessly locating exhibit materials and organizing activities. It’s remarkable that they accomplished so much so quickly, taking the project from conception to reality in barely four months.

Several Summit Historical Society members helped make this happen with their volunteering. John Ebright, Jim Cox, and Rick Hague helped move materials and assemble displays. Deanna Speer, David Spencer, and Karen Musolf produced materials from our archives, including photographs and newspaper stories. Maureen Nichols generously contributed much information she has collected in her research.

The museum opened in late December. A grand opening and official dedication was held on February 11.

The museum is looking for more photographs and other artifacts of Summit ski areas from the 1945-1960 period. If you have such material, or can provide a lead to someone who does, please e-mail Jerry Dzedzic at jerdz@earthlink.net. You can also phone Jerry at 970-453-3924.

Looking ahead, the organizers hope to expand the museum with exhibits depicting the Breckenridge Ski Resort years, 1961 to present, celebrating its 50th anniversary.

The museum is located at 304 So. Main Street, Breckenridge, opposite Bloom. Hours are 1-6PM, Wednesday through Sunday, closed Monday and Tuesday. Phone 970-453-9767 for more information.

SHS artifacts now on display at Summit high school

At the request of Summit High School librarian, Leah Schultz, SHS archivist Deanna Speer prepared and delivered an exhibit for the school library, which highlights some of the early history of Summit County.

Included are photos of the World Ski Jumping event on Dillon's Ski Hill in 1919. The winner of the event was Anders Haugen, with a jump of 214 feet!

There also is an autograph book from the 1800s, recently donated to the Society by George Robinson.

The exhibit also includes a photo of the county's first high school and its first graduating class, which included Mr. Robinson.

... and, **NOW AT THE COUNTY COMMONS**, there is a display featuring early railroading, created by Sue Paluska, assisted by Karen Musolf of the SHS Archive Committee.



Summit High School librarian, Leah Schultz , and the new exhibit

NOTES FROM THE ARCHIVES

Special credit must go to David (Spence) Spencer, Deanna Speer, Karen Musolf, Jim Cox and other SHS members and volunteers who devote so much of their time cataloging, organizing and updating the Society's archives. As a result of their efforts, the entire collection of artifacts, photos and historic records of Summit County is now better organized than ever before. Over the past year these individuals, along with their frequent helpers, have dedicated more than 800 hours to this important work. As a result of their continuing efforts, the photo files and information about the cataloged artifacts may now be accessed through the SHS website.

On a related subject, Dave Spencer has determined that approximately 100 photos are now missing from the SHS collection. Any information or help in locating these SHS items will be greatly appreciated. He may be reached at 970-468-2207.

A bit of history with major relevance to locals and visitors

Where would the town of Frisco be today with out its busy lifeline ... U.S. Highway 9? Getting to, from or near the town could have been problematic today were it not for the luck of the draw in a historic poker game many years ago. Seems a little far-fetched? **Not at all.**

We can all thank an early Frisco resident... a distinguished New England transplant, subsequently devoted to her new Colorado home ... Ms. Susan Emery Badger.

As the story goes, "On the 14th of July 1939, Miss Badger, with friends Helen Rich and Belle Turnbull, along with Colorado Highway Department officials, W. Hancock and Mel Gardner, were in the midst of a poker game at her Frisco home on Galena Street. The highway officials and other participants agreed to accept an improbable bet on the "next hand." Specifically, it was to determine whether or not the route of the proposed Highway would pass through the small town of Frisco.

It is indeed accurate to say, in this case, "the rest is history: Miss Badger held the winning hand - a Royal Flush. It was Miss Badger's foresight (and luck) that actually gained the Route 9 right-of-way for the town of Frisco.

Appropriately, Ms Badger had that Royal Flush framed for posterity. It now is among the many artifacts displayed in the SHS museum located in the 126-year-old Dillon Schoolhouse.

"Ya gotta see it to believe it!"



Venerable 1883 Schoolhouse has served many purposes over he years

... and still does!

Built in 1883 to educate the sons and daughters of local pioneer residents, the Dillon Schoolhouse has survived a storied multipurpose existence. During its first 25 years, students in grades two through eight were aught in its single room by one teacher. Occasionally, the schoolhouse served as a venue for local and traveling entertainers.

Eventually, the growth of Dillon's population required the construction of a larger school, so the original facility became a church, which was lager transported "up the hill" to Dillon to make room for the large reservoir in the old town. Then, construction of a new church in 1872 resulted in the Summit Historical Society acquiring the original the original structure, which has been faithfully returned to its original 1882 appearance, but with he addition of an annex, which now houses fhe Society's administrative office, archives, a museum, as well as the historic classroom itself.

Narrated tours are regularly offered featuring the schoolroom, along with a slide presentation of the evacuation of "old Dillon", construction of Robert's Tunnel, the dam and the reservoir, followed by a visit to two historic log cabins just a few feet from the schoolhouse.

COME SEE IT ALL FOR YOURSELF!
OPEN WINTERS ON SATUDAYS 1:00 TO 4:00 PM

Archives Acquisitions

Irmal Miller has recently donated a wealth of goods and information to the Summit Historical Society. His grandmother, Emma Sperry, lived in the Lower Blue River Valley and opened her home to weary travelers making the stage-coach trip from Kremmling to Dillon around the turn of the century. The travelers were happy to have a home-cooked meal to break up the long journey.

Emma Sperry had a beautiful black seal-skin coat which kept her warm on many a cold evening. The fur coat was passed on to her daughter, Ada Sperry Miller, who was elected Superintendent of Schools for Summit County in 1936. She served in this office for eight years. Her niece, Audrey Berry, received the coat from Ada Sperry and enjoyed it for a number of ;years. The coat is now on display at the Dillon Schoolhouse Museum along with some beaded necklaces from the Sperry-Miller collection.

Included in this collection is a written history of Keystone and Summit County with early photos of the Sperry family in Keystone. There are also photos of the 1919 World Championship Ski jumping event at Ski Hill in Dillon. Norwegian Anders Hagen took home the first place prize for a jump of 213 feet. Ski Hill was built in the area of Dillon reservoir, which is now just off Dillon Dam Road.

There is a scrapbook in the collection that contains photos of places of note in Colorado as well as some postcards.

The Summit Historical society always appreciates having donations of historical artifacts. For more information or inquiries regarding specific items, please contact the archives office at 970 468 2207.

Another active and stimulating season for the SHS BOOK CLUB

Prior to the recent winter snowshoe trek, featured on Page 2, the Summit Historical Society Book Club produced an equally interesting indoor program on the subject of "Telegraphy and the Railroads." For this event the group met at the Fuqua Livery on January 19th.

The subject was inspired by a book by Thomas Jepson, titled: *Ma Killey, The Life of A Railroad Telegrapher.*

The author documents how telegraphy opened new doors for women. In fact, female telegraphy pioneers date back to a time before the Civil War. Many of the women became very skilled telegraphers, enjoying employment opportunity, mobility, independence and even romance.

Jepson considers this one of the "roots" of the women's liberation movement that took place 100 years later.

The completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 is generally regarded as the event that joined our nation. However, the Pacific Telegraph Company and the Overland Telegraphy Company joined their wires at Salt Lake City in 1861, fulfilling the aim of the Pacific Telegraph Act to link east and west.

Much railroad business was conducted by telegraph, especially the dispatching of trains, just as today's air traffic control systems do for the airlines..

Maureen reported some information she researched, indicating that Pacific Telegraph lines reached Breckenridge in 1880. Jim Merrick displayed a telegraph key and sounder, the instruments used to send and receive messages in Morse Code. And, it was interesting to learn that Mary Ellen Gilliland is actually related to Samuel Morse!



COMING SHS BOOK CLUB EVENTS

Tuesday, March 16

"Breckenridge Films and Filmmakers"

7:00 pm - place to be announced

Facilitator: Maureen Nicholls, Refreshments: Karen Musolf

Tuesday, April 20

The Western Stage (Theater, Music, Opera, Lectures)

7:00 pm- place to be announced

Facilitator: Karen Musolf, Refreshments: Volunteer needed

Tuesday, May 18

DVD: Rhodochrosite: Red Treasurer of the Rockies

The Story of the Sweet Home Mine

7:00 pm- Place to be announced

Facilitator: All, Refreshments: Volunteer needed

BITS And PIECES

Help wanted

Do your friends describe you as "patient and detail oriented?" Do you sometimes get side-tracked by a good story? Are you bit of a history buff? The SHS archives team is currently seeking one or two volunteers to assist inventorying the Society's collection of the Summit County Journal and placing it in acid-free archival boxes.

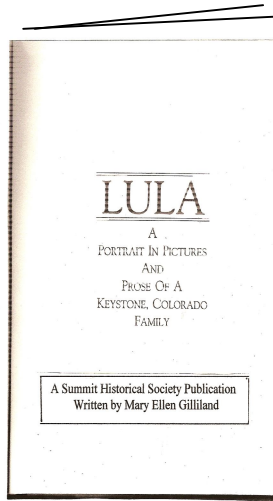
The project will take one or two days a week during the next two months at the beautiful offices attached to the Dillon Schoolhouse Museum. Times can be arranged with SHS archives co-chair, Karen Musolf. Reply to her at bdrmoose@msn.com, or by phone at 970-453-8874.

Visit us at the Farmers Market

The SHS will be well resented at the Farmers Market in Dillon this year, on consecutive Friday mornings, beginning July 16 through September 10th. As in past years, the stand will be diligently managed by SHS volunteer, Sandra Mather, who is scheduled to make the annual journey from her home in Pennsylvania for this and many other SHS summer activities..

Sandra always does extremely well in displaying and selling numerous books and other SHS items, along with acting as a very effective goodwill ambassador for the Society.

Stop by and say hello, maybe even spend some assisting her. She would appreciate that!



Reprise for Lula

If one person, and one family, personified the "good life" as well as the challenging times, in the early days of Summit County, it would be Lula and the Myers family. So, it is no surprise that the delightful book, simply titled Lulu, was a long-time favorite among the titles in the SHS inventory since the book's debut in 1996. Regrettably, it has been out of print for some time, but that's about to change.

A new edition of "Lulu" is right now being prepared for publication and will be available in a slightly revised format, but with the original content, very soon.

If any of our members would like to reserve a copy of the new edition, please email us at mail@summhistorical.org,

Or phone (970) 468-2207.

The membership price will be \$10.00 per copy.

Summit Historical Society

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