



Grand Valley Historical Society Newsletter
July 2011
Prepared by Jim Klink, Public Relations Chair

Dear Members,

I hope that the arrival of this newsletter finds you well and that the last year has been a good one for you. Like me, I'm sure you're glad to see the cold, wet spring behind us and are now basking in the warm, dry weather that has finally settled in. Now we just have to worry about keeping our heads above the waters of the swollen streams and rivers!

It has been another successful year for the Historical Society, highlighted by outstanding programs and some much needed improvements to the schoolhouse. Below I will elaborate on these and other important events and happenings that have occurred.

This newsletter also begins our annual membership drive and I hope you will take a minute to fill out the renewal form on the last page of this newsletter and return it to us sometime during July. I cannot overemphasize the importance your membership means to the success of the GVHS. Not only do we depend on your financial support to maintain the schoolhouse – including insurance and utility costs, building upkeep and improvement, the grounds and the Glover Cabin – but it also allows us to present quality programs at our quarterly meetings. Even though the Society also relies on renting the schoolhouse, and is receiving royalty revenues from nearby gas drilling, these sources of revenue would not be sufficient to cover the above mentioned costs. Your support also provides us with the most important resource of all – human support – without which, an organization cannot truly thrive. Your membership, therefore, is vital to us.

Royalties from Leasing Agreement

As was noted in last year's annual newsletter the GVHS has entered into a leasing pool agreement with Antero Resources Corp. for the mineral rights under the schoolhouse grounds. Drilling and the resulting gas production have taken place and the Historical Society is now receiving monthly royalty checks. These checks vary in value and are not guaranteed. Because of the uncertain nature of these royalties, the GVHS board of directors decided early on that we would take advantage of the funds for one time maintenance purchases and, more importantly, to set up an endowment fund that will assure the survival of the schoolhouse well into the future. As this endowment increases - through additional royalties, interest, and personal contributions - the Historical Society will be in a better position to maintain the schoolhouse, cabin and grounds into perpetuity, even should times "get tough". This endowment has been established with the Western Colorado Community Foundation in Grand Junction. The Society's Board

thought this decision was the most responsible action to take concerning the royalty money and we hope you agree.

If you are interested in contributing to this endowment or just wish more information, feel free to contact Judi Hayward at 285-9696.

Schoolhouse Maintenance and Improvements

Two years ago the Historical Society's maintenance efforts went almost entirely toward site preparations for the Glover Cabin. This past year, however, we were able to turn our attention back to the schoolhouse and surrounding grounds. With additional financial help from the gas leasing royalty money the Society was able to tackle two important projects that have been on our "wish list" for quite a while – storm windows and fencing.

The idea of storm windows first came up a few years ago but at the time the cost was prohibitive. However, after undergoing an energy audit earlier this year it was decided that it would be well to our advantage to put storm windows on the schoolhouse. With the funds finally available, these windows were installed this spring and now, along with the window shades installed last year, make the schoolhouse quite energy efficient.

We also contracted for removing the old fencing around the schoolhouse grounds and putting in its place a wooden pole fence. This project is still underway but already enhances the grounds surrounding the schoolhouse. We would like to thank Jeff Tonder for his fair bid and fine work on this project.

If you have recently had the opportunity to drive to the schoolhouse you may have noticed another improvement that has just been completed. A new layer of gravel has been added to the driveway and parking area. Our thanks go out to the Cook Trucking Company for doing this job for a very fair price.

Finally, the Historical Society recently purchased a set of dishes, glasses and flatware to have available at the schoolhouse for any events there. This purchase should make the schoolhouse more desirable as a rental facility for meetings or dinners.



Glover Cabin Update

The Glover Cabin has become a very popular site for visitors to the schoolhouse. Under the direction of Charlotte White and her Historical Committee members, the cabin has been fully decorated with furniture and implements circa 1900.



The cabin has been set up to resemble the living quarters of a schoolmarm from that period. Thanks to everyone who donated furniture, dishes, clothing, bedding, etc. and a special thank you to blacksmith Bill Smith who hand-forged the cooking implements. If you are interested in visiting the cabin, please contact Judi Hayward at 285-9696, Jim Klink at 285-2179 or Charlotte White at 285-9766.



Train Robbery Paintings

Several years ago former Battlement Mesa residents Jeanette and David Truog donated three oil paintings to the Historical Society. These paintings were done by noted western artist Jack Roberts and depicted the "Great Train Robbery" which took place outside Parachute in 1904. These valuable works of art have been kept in storage for the last seven years for lack of a proper place to display them. Displaying them at the schoolhouse was prohibitive because of the restrictions put upon us by the Colorado State Historical Society (in the original grant we obtained) concerning wall usage. Finally, this year, an agreement was reached with the Town of Parachute for a long term loan of these paintings to be hung in the town council room of the city building. The ceremonial unveiling of these art works took place on June 11. Garry Miller, the artist's son, was on hand for the ceremony and explained many little sidelights behind the creation of the paintings, as well as having a display of memorabilia from his father's life. (Thank you, Keith Lammey, for taking the pictures at the unveiling!)



Encana Recognized

Several years ago, when the schoolhouse was first being renovated, the Encana Company donated a substantial sum of money to the project for the purpose of installing a kitchen in the building. At the time Encana wished to remain anonymous with regard to the donation and we honored their request. Time and circumstances have changed and the GVHS would now like recognize them publically for their generous donation. In addition, a plaque to this effect will be placed at the kitchen entrance for all to see. Thank you, Encana.

Program Upgrades

When was the last time you attended one of the Historical Society's quarterly meetings? If the answer is "over a year", or even worse, "never", please take the time to attend at least one meeting this year. I think you will be impressed with the quality of the programs we have to offer. Because our financial situation has improved over past years (see Royalties) we have been able to afford some exceptional speakers. This past year these speakers included a notable local historian and three very well known portrayers of notable figures from Colorado's history.

Last July we had a very entertaining visit from Margaret "Molly" Brown portrayed by Mary Jane Bradbury. "Molly" (who actually never went by that name!) touched on her time on the Titanic but focused more on her life here in Colorado and her experiences as being a crusader for the rights of women, children, and mine workers in the early 20th century. "Molly" was a remarkable woman and her presentation was enjoyed by all in attendance.



At our fall meeting Kathy Jordan, a local historian from Grand Junction, did a presentation on the old settlement of Tunnel. The remains of part of this settlement can still be seen on the north side as you travel through DeBeque Canyon. What an interesting part of Western Colorado history!



In late January we were honored to have former President Theodore Roosevelt visit. He held the audience captive for an hour with his stories and recollections. After President Roosevelt left the room, Doug Mishler (who had been the portrayer) answered questions.

Everyone truly enjoyed Doug's animated and educational program.



Our next program, held on April 16th, featured Steve Lee portraying Otto Mears as an 80 year old looking back on his life. Mears is considered to be one of the most influential men in the pioneering era of Colorado. He was renowned as the builder of roads and railroads through the Rocky Mountains allowing the opening of Colorado's high country to exploration and development. Mears was also a major influence in state politics. Steve captured everyone's attention



with his recollections of life in Colorado during the late 1800's. After his presentation, he answered many questions.

While we have not yet set our next year's presentation schedule, our aim is to continue to offer high quality programs such as those just described. As always, you will be notified prior to each meeting as to what the program will be. I hope you will take advantage of these opportunities. They are not only educational, but very entertaining.

On a personal note, I would like to thank BJ Lindauer for scheduling this year's presenters and for taking care of all the little extras that assured that each program came off with such positive results.

Keeping Up Appearances

In past years, we have been fortunate to have the help of Garfield County's community release program, the Work Enders, to clear weeds and underbrush around the schoolhouse. We are thankful that this crew continues to do this work a few times a year. This year, we also have the help of Colorado Department of Corrections' work crews. Our thanks go out to the agencies that provide these two programs. Their help in keeping the grounds as weed-free as possible is greatly appreciated.

Quilt Show Is Back!

The Sew 'n Sews will be having their annual Quilt Show and Quilt Turning at the Schoolhouse on Saturday, September 24th from 10:00-4:00 and Sunday, September 25th from noon – 3:00. Be sure to mark your calendars!

Thank Yous

We would like to recognize the businesses and organizations that support us through their membership in the Grand Valley Historical Society. They are: Alpine Bank, Chamber of Commerce, Stanford Dere, Encana Gas & Oil, Kiwanis of Grand Valley, Rifle Insurance Agency, Shepherd of the Mesa Church, Town of Parachute, Wells Fargo Bank, Wildrose Enterprise and Williams Production. Please also thank them for their support.