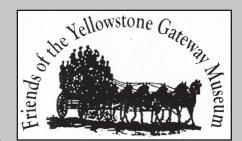


# News from the Red Caboose



WINTER 2014

## The 1918 Flood

**By Norm Miller** 

As spring arrives in Livingston, we can't help but wonder if the Yellowstone River is going to flood. One of our area's worst floods was in June 1918.

Carters Bridge down river

The downriver view of the flood from Carters Bridge south of Livingston on June 20, 1918

The flood was given little attention in the Livingston Enterprise. In May and June, stories of the flood were sandwiched between stories about World War I on the Western Front in Europe with headlines such as: "Italians Open Counter Attack—Throwing Foe Back with Loss," "Great Offensive of Austrians held, 4500 prisoners taken," and "Local W.C. Williamson-first Park Co. man killed on the front." Coverage of the flood was often found on the second and third pages, while war coverage dominated the front page. That spring high temperatures quickly melted snow, filling rivers to beyond capacity. The soaring temperatures also caused early forest fires. The fast-melting snows

> were shaded temporarily on June 8, 1918 when a total solar eclipse darkened the region, dropping temperatures a few degrees. E. M. Grigsby, the "shoe man" on Callender Street, had been recording daily temperatures in Livingston for several

years. On the day of the eclipse his thermometer read 80°F; on June 10 and 11, temperatures reached 94°F. (On the same dates of the previous year Grigsby recorded a high of only 36°F.) No wonder

the high mountain snows that year melted so fast! June 10 also marked fire outbreaks in School Gulch in the Bridger Mountains, Canyon Ferry Gulch near

Townsend, and in Lolo and other areas to the west, adding smoke to the area. There were limited crews available to fight the fires. When a small fire broke out at the base of Livingston Peak, ranchers organized a fire crew and extinguished it while town folks were busy securing bridges from washouts.

A message from an upstream Carbella resident alerted County Commissioner Frank Beley that the river was up six inches and the "new bridge being built was expected to go."

Melting snow continued to swell the creeks and rivers. Yellowstone National Park's Lamar Bridge and Pebble Creek Bridge washed out. The Park Branch of the Northern (continued on page 10)



Visitors at the washed-out Lamar River Bridge in northeastern Yellowstone National Park

# The Museum's Many Faces

By Paul Shea

What a winter it has been. We continue to receive donations of objects and archival materials. Twenty-two years ago when I got into the museum business I was told by a museum director not to worry about collections. Why not, I wondered, that is what museums are about—their collections. Instead, he advised me to spend my time accumulating storage space, noting that collections would come. Was he correct! We are constantly shuffling things around to make space for new collection items —and we are happy to do so.

Large objects, such as vehicles and farm equipment, take up a lot of room. Storage is one thing—you can set things side by side. But displaying them is another story altogether. One needs to be able to walk around a large item to see it properly and to gain perspective on its use. A case in point is the "new" roller feed mill that we received and restored this winter. (See more on page 8.)

This spring we are going to do a major clean-up and reorganize the back area bays and other onsite storage. The county has some short-term storage we can use this summer. We need to accumulate space, more space, and even more space. But don't get the wrong idea—we still want those large items for the museum.

Grants and exhibits are consuming our time right now. New exhibits for the summer include a makeover of the transportation room, an exhibit on fire, and a Yellowstone Fossil Forests traveling exhibit.



Paul Shea and Bob Ebinger at the 2011 Museum Grand Opening

One of the grants we are working on funds archival cataloging and storage. With the help of volunteers we know the approximate number of photos and archival materials that we need to process. We have had several small grants in the last couple of years that have helped Ellen Zazzarino organize the Doris Whithorn papers and a photo collection from John Fryer. We are applying for additional grants to help us catalog our archival collections, making them more available to researchers.

On the education side, we are seeking additional funding for the successful Indian Education for All program that we designed with the East Side Elementary School and Park High School. We are planning to make the program available to other schools in the county, starting with Gardiner.

Karen has met with the Gardiner Public Schools principal and teachers. They are excited about the Indian Education for All program. The museum

is expanding the program to include new field trips and speakers. We will be partnering with the Western Sustainability Exchange, the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, the Crow Tribe, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe, and the National Park Service. The program will not only address historic times but will also speak to today's challenges of land and

wildlife management.

We are excited about collaborating with the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe, giving them opportunities to share their story in Park County. The Shoshone Indians were here on the Big Bend of the Yellowstone for hundreds of years before the Crow. We also plan to help host a Shoshone speaker in Livingston for East Side School students. Karen made lasting contacts with the tribe while she was working in Jackson Hole.

As always, we thank all of our supporters who help make the Yellowstone Gateway Museum a great part of Park County. We've been going strong for 37 years now. Donations of historic artifacts that relate to Park County are always welcome, as are monetary donations for specific exhibits or projects. If you have any questions about donating to the museum please give me a call at 406-222-4184 or send me an email at pshea@parkcounty.org.

PAGE 2

## Volunteers and Staff

#### We are Grateful to our Current Volunteers:

Mary Jane Ammerman Nicholas Amsk Judy Bonnell Shannon Burke Carol Carver Camden Easterling Nikki Fox Bev George Gary George Betty Greathouse Georgia Hall Sherry Hatfield Betty Lahren Alta LeDoux

Carlene Newhall Dona Poeschl Ellen Zazzarino

and our board members!



BJ Earle putting up holiday cheer

## **Boards and Staff**

#### Friends

Bruce Graham - President Rick VanAken - Secretary Paul Shea - Treasurer Dick Dysart - Publishing Ruth K. Dargis - Member Suzanne Goodman - Member Robin Lovec - Member Rosamond Stanton - Member

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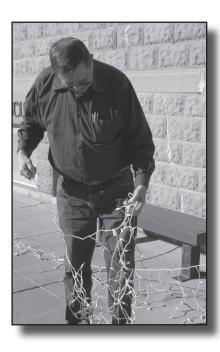
Paul Shea – Director Karen Reinhart – Registrar, Newsletter Editor Paul Deyerle – Experience Works

#### Museum

118 W. Chinook Street
Livingston, MT 59047
406-222-4184
museum@parkcounty.org
yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org



Bob Ebinger cleaning the roller feed mill



Rick VanAken untangling holiday lights during our decorating efforts



Dona Poeschl showing off an historic photograph that she has cataloged

# Volunteer for Your Museum

- Computers: inventorying and cataloging artifacts
- Front Desk: greeting visitors and other projects as time allows
- Historic Photographs: scanning and cataloging
- Web site: updating our site
- Videos: shoot short history clips
- Muscle: spring clean-up and help with outdoor exhibits

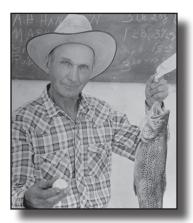
# National Trout Derby

By Bruce Graham

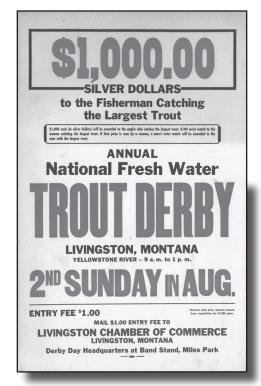
Livingston, Montana's National Fresh Water Trout Derby, a threeday event, was first held on August 2, 3, and 4, 1941. Participants paid a \$1 entry fee for a chance to win a hefty first prize, 1,000 silver dollars. (In today's dollars the prize is equivalent to \$15,847.41.) The winner of that first contest was Lonnie Bryan, a postal worker from Big Timber. Finus Lewis, owner of the State and Strand movie theaters, was the first chairman of the Derby. The Derby was planned as an annual event to be held every second Sunday in August.

No Derby was held during the war years of 1943, 1944, and 1945, nor was one held in 1950. Beginning in 1947 it became more simply the National Trout Derby.

The Derby was held on various sections of the Yellowstone River in Park County; access to the river was provided by local landowners and through public access areas. The location was not announced



Rupert "Dooley" D'Ewart caught this 5-lb., 5-oz. Lock Leven trout that won him first prize in the 1966 Fish Derby. He used a bullhead for bait and caught his fish 25 minutes after the 9:00 AM opening near Point of Rocks.



until 8 AM on the morning of the Derby on KPRK, the local radio station. It lasted four hours, from 9 AM until 1 PM.

Participants could fish only in the area selected by the derby committee and the rules of the Montana Fish and Game Commission had to be followed. No fishing from boats was allowed. Anglers had to hand over their catch to a designated derby official on the river bank. After Rudolph Egeland won the derby two years in a row, 1947 and 1948, officials changed the rules so that a person could only win once in a lifetime.

By 1977 the entry fee had risen to \$2. The last Derby was held in 1979, and the winner of the 1,000 Eisenhower silver dollars was Charles Moore from Manhattan, Montana, who used a bullhead to catch a Loch Leven trout that weighed 3 pounds, 15 ounces.

PAGE 4

The original idea of a trout derby came from Jack Stevens, a jeweler with a business on south Main Street. The Derby was created by the Livingston Chamber of Commerce and was eventually managed by the National Trout Derby Association, a nonprofit organization run by members of the Chamber.



Jack Stevens

The demise of the Derby was probably due to several factors—lack of access to the riverbanks because of changes in land ownership was likely the main reason. Other factors included the catch and release fishing philosophy, the increased numbers of fly fishing anglers on the river, and the large number of guides floating the river.

The only public records known to exist of this event, other than in newspaper archives, are at the Yellowstone Gateway Museum Research Library in the form of six booklets, a poster, and one pamphlet.

#### Collections Corner



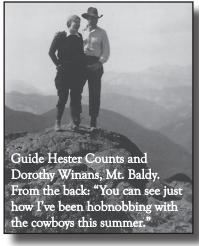
Part of the joy of managing collections for the Yellowstone Gateway Museum is spending time with photographs, objects, and archival documents.

Unexpected donations are another delightful aspect of my work—and they are almost always unexpected. We never know what will "walk" in the door next. Donors are not always local people; sometimes we receive things in the mail or from visitors who stop by the museum when they are in the area, looking for a suitable home for their piece of Park County, Montana history.

A donation came by mail from Michigan a couple of years ago. Adele Martinez, daughter of Dorothy Winans Waterman, gave the museum a collection of black and white photographic prints; some captured a 1918 trip that the Winans family made to the Crow

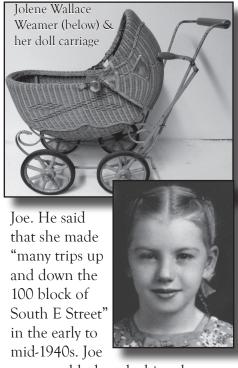






Reservation, some of the others a 1932 hike up Mount Baldy.

This doll carriage was recently delivered to the museum from Bozeman in memory of Jolene Wallace Weamer by her husband,



gave us a black and white photograph of Jolene as well. I can visualize this little girl proudly parading up and down on the early sidewalks of Livingston.

Occasionally, the museum is given artifacts that the Heritage Research Center in Gardiner received from donors across the country. Such items, like Yellowstone stickers and postcards shown above, are duplicates of what the Center already holds in its collection. We also received a bus fare box. Our receipt of these artifacts further enriches the museum's ability to interpret our connection to Yellowstone National Park.

This German finger-button accordion was donated by Shirley Skillman, who got it through a



trade with Paul Fisher in about 1925. Fisher brought it from Germany when he came to live at the head of Mission Creek. In the early days, Shirley and others from the neighborhood played music for (continued on page 6)

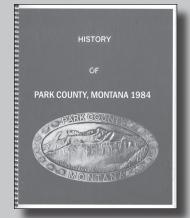
# Park County, Montana History

## The *History*

A spiral-bound soft-cover reprint of the History of Park County, Montana, 1984

- ♦ Includes all photos and text from the original book
- ♦ 512 pages
- ♦ ISBN 978-0-9823753-5-8

\$36





#### The *Index*

The new 274-page, 8.5" x 11", spiral-bound, softcover index includes:

- ♦ 33,000 line entries
- ♦ 1,200+ family names
- ♦ 550+ business names
- ♦ Special summaries
- ♦ ISBN 978-0-9823753-4-1

\$24

Both books are available at the Yellowstone Gateway Museum or if ordering, include \$5 shipping per book. Call 406-222-6937 for more information. Please submit payment to: Friends of YGM, P.O. Box 815, Livingston, MT 59047



(continued from page 5) dances at the Beaver Creek School and at McLeod. Bob Skillman, Shirley's son, told me his dad played fiddle and the accordion at those early-day dances.

One of the most intriguing donations we recently re-discovered isn't pretty enough to photograph. Amazingly, a ledger book was found under an old woodpile in Wilsall in 1983 by the Robert Cardona family. Though the leather cover is dilapidated, its interior pages are in good shape. This Justice Court's ledger entries begin in Gallatin County, Montana Territory, in 1883 and continue through 1887 when it becomes Park County, finally ceasing in 1918. (Montana earned statehood in 1889.) The ledger documents court cases in Nye, Wilsall, and Livingston. A sampling of judgments includes: 45 days in jail for uttering indecent language and cursing at a lady; \$25 or 30 days in jail for pointing a gun at and threatening Gardiner resident R.E. Cutler; \$250 in court fees paid over a hav dispute, after the hav was found and delivered to its rightful owner. (This artifact is currently in our freezer. which stops the growth of mold. We may

dismantle the book, preserving the pages in archival folders.)

We're grateful for these and future donations. Our Collections Committee meets monthly and determines if donations are within the museum's mission of preserving and interpreting the natural and cultural history of the Park County area.

# Join the Friends of the Yellowstone Gateway Museum TODAY!

The mission of the Friends of the Yellowstone Gateway Museum of Park County, Montana is to support the museum, its successors and affiliates by raising funds for the perpetual care, growth, improvement and expansion of the museum and by serving as a source of volunteers.

#### Annual Memberships:

\$25/Family; \$15/Individual; \$50/Business

Name
Address
Phone
Email
Please return to: PO Box 815, Livingston, MT 59047
Membership Perks: Free Admission to the Museum,

newsletter subscription, gift shop discount, insider updates and more!

#### Keeping History Alive

# Friends of the Yellowstone Gateway Museum

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As of 3/01/2014

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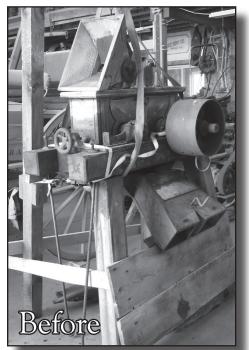




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# Roll Your Own...Oats

By Paul Shea, Museum Director



Roller feed mill cobbled together, restoration ready

Coral Holladay recently donated a roller feed mill to the museum, a fine example of early agricultural equipment used in Park County. It was found on her upper Shields River ranch.

What is a roller feed mill? It is an important piece of agricultural equipment that processes various grains for both human and animal consumption. More commonly known as an oat roller, it makes rolled oats that are used in baked goods and porridges. These machines come in a variety of sizes—from an industrial-sized mill that handles hundreds of tons of grain per day to bench-top mills that process up to two or three tons per day. Our machine is called a #1 High Table. This model came



Jem Blueher repairing the mill's rotted legs in his Anvil Wagon Works shop

in four sizes and we are not sure what the capacity of our roller is. We found it full of oats when we cleaned it.

At one time, farm workers used small roller mills that were powered by a steam engine via a rubber belt—a rather cumbersome arrangement. Once small single-piston engines became more

available and affordable, they became the standard in such mills. On this machine you can see the large drive wheel on the right-hand side. A belt would feed from here back to your tractor or small engine.

Table-top oat rollers or flakers and grain mills are readily available today; some stand alone, others attach to mixers or food processers. And there's even a Montana source for beautiful hand-made ones (www.grainmaker.com).



Now restored, it has a beautiful red patina. To properly display the feed mill, we will re-attach the grain hopper that sits on the top and side of the roller.

#### Watch for these soon-to-be published local history books:



Livingston Italians by Shirley Siriano DePuy

Stories about local families. About 165 pages and 140 photos. To order, call Shirley, 406-222-1365. Dreams of Cinnabar:

Montana's Raucous Gateway to Yellowstone by Lee H. Whittlesey

A story of the town (and its founders) that welcomed visitors to Yellowstone National Park from 1883 to 1903. Includes stories of Gardiner, Jardine, Livingston & more. Visit www.yellowstoneassociation.org to order.

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#### Connect with your museum

# **CALENDAR**

# Spring Speaker Series

March 27—Thursday

When Ike Came to Livingston

Friends of YGM Annual Meeting

6:30 PM (meeting); 7:00 PM (program)

Livingston-Park County Public Library,

228 W. Callender

Following the meeting, **Susan Kraft** gives PowerPoint program on Dwight Eisenhower's 1952 Whistle-Stop Tour of America on his presidential campaign. All welcome! Refreshments. Free.

April 17—Thursday (rescheduled)

Mysteries of Yellowstone Lake

**Prehistory** 

6:30 PM

Livingston-Park County Public Library, 228 W. Callender

Archaeologists Douglas MacDonald and Elaine Hale share discoveries about native peoples and Yellowstone Lake. Which tribes used the Lake? Did they fish? Use boats? What about bears? Refreshments. Free.

May 18—Sunday

Museum Fundraising Dinner

4:30 PM

Murray Hotel & 2nd Street Bistro, 123 N. 2nd Street

Support your museum while having a great time! Cocktails and dinner. Call the museum for reservations and more info, 222-4184. \$50/per person

April 2—Thursday

Story Matters: How to Catch and

Celebrate Life's Moments

6:30 PM

Livingston-Park County Public Library,

228 W. Callender

Katie Clemons, storycatcher, journal crafter, and TedX speaker seeks to revitalize the storytelling movement. She helps people celebrate their stories with writing-prompt journals. Refreshments. Free.

May 15—Thursday

Stories of the Medical Profession in

Park County

6:30 PM

Livingston-Park County Public Library,

228 W. Callender

**Dr. Lindsay Baskett** and Registered Nurse **Betty Lahren** share their colorful stories. Baskett had a 54-year career as a physician and Lahren began her career in 1949, retiring in 1984. Refreshments. Free.

June 7 & 8—Saturday & Sunday

Knap-In Weekend

Sat., 9 AM - 6 PM & Sun., 9 AM - 1 PM

Yellowstone Gateway Museum,

118 W. Chinook

Primitive craft demonstrations & workshops, including flintknapping. Free weekend at the museum. Call 222-4184 for more information.

# Keep in touch

- –Like us on Facebook
- -Follow us on Twitter
- —Visit our website: www. yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org
- -Visit your research center!

  8 AM 5 PM, Mon. Fri., year-round.

—Visit your museum!

Museum winter hours: 10 AM - 5 PM, Thurs. - Sat. thru May 24

Summer Hours Begin
Memorial Day, May 26:

10 AM - 5 PM, 7 days a week

Please call 406-222-4184 for more info.

# Memorials

For: Albert & Dorothy Blanc By Steve & Michele Libsack For: Carlo Cieri By Narissa Keough For: Eva & Harry Grabow By Patricia & Rob Grabow For: Frances Maxine Holmes By Pamela Tracy For: Darren Kipp By Sandra Christensen For: Cliff Miller By Glenn Woodson For: Alice Bigelow Murphy & Robert Murphy By Lorraine Wentz For: Doris Whithorn By Anonymous By Linda Holland By Caroline Klarr For: Past Members By Rick VanAken

# Other Donations

Margot Aserlind Sandra Christensen Fred Martin, Jr. Lorraine Wentz Park Photography

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(continued from page 1)
Pacific Railway was temporarily
closed due to the erosion of 40 feet
of track that was rendered unsafe.

F. Holmes of the Yellowstone Park Transit Company had difficulty getting over the roads and was forced to go up Trail Creek and through the small community of Chestnut (across from today's Montana's Grizzly Encounter east of Bozeman) to reach Livingston because the first canvon of the Yellowstone River near Carters Bridge was completely under water. For several weeks Trail Creek was the only way to access the canyon. Residents of Pray said the approach to the Pine Creek Bridge had been washed out and driftwood had

piled high against the main section of the bridge, causing stress on the structure. As the waters rose higher, crews began to anchor large cables to the bridge as well as to two smaller bridges west of the Lamartine Bridge which once spanned the river at 9th Street.

Rick VanAken

Joe Weamer

Jerry Weimer

People died as a result of the flood. Former Chicago resident George Close was working in Livingston for a contracting firm. He was painting a picture of the railroad bridge just east of town when the ladder he was standing on pitched forward, throwing him into the swollen river. He drowned. Bridge workers downstream were notified to keep an eye out for his body. Nels Ebert, the nephew of PAGE 10

Can you help sponsor an upcoming exhibit?

On Fire: Structural and Wildland Firefighting

Transportation: From
Trails to Trains
and
Roads to Rivers

# A Children's Old-Time Kitchen and Mercantile\*

\*We need an icebox, a small woodburning cookstove, wooden table and two chairs, and an old-fashioned cash register for the exhibit.

Please call Paul for more info about sponsorships, 406-222-4184

longtime citizen Napoleon Ebert, drowned while freeing logs next to Harvats Bridge.

As the streets of Livingston began to fill with water, four families on P Street were driven from their homes. Hog rancher Grant Sailor was marooned on Krohne Island (on the east edge of town) for two days without a means to get to the mainland. Lamartine Island was severely flooded and families were forced to leave, including the Wells and the McGillans, who lost nearly everything. The McGillans had arranged for someone to gather their belongings but that person refused to cross the bridge once he saw how high (continued on page 11)



(continued from page 10) the water had risen. The family managed to bring one cow across the weakened bridge.

The large steel span of Carters Bridge finally gave way as crews were cabling it in an attempt to save it. The bridge floated downstream one quarter of a mile before coming to rest. Other bridges in Livingston were also being secured with cables, including the Main Street Bridge near the current Livingston Enterprise, the H Street Bridge, and Harvats Bridge, where Mayors Landing is today. One span

June 17, cutting off the Mission Creek area from Livingston. Farther downstream, bridges were washed out at Springdale (the water was six to eight feet deep on the road between Springdale and the bridge), Greycliff, and Billings. Bridges also washed out along the Boulder River.

Several miles of NPR's track east of town were washed out. Trains #1 and #4 stalled due to the washouts and many passengers were delayed, including Fred Dubois, former Idaho senator, who was on his way to Hunters Hot Springs. Dubois

Roosevelt's environmental conservation movement. (Dubois, Wyoming is named after him.) The railway arranged for the many stranded passengers to be taken by car, at no charge, further east where they boarded another train. Many trains were rerouted north on the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad (Milwaukee Road) until repair of the tracks and bridges was made.

During the flooding, swarms of mosquitoes invaded Livingston, and according to an article in the *Enterprise*, "transformed Sabbath day into a hideous nightmare. A spectacle of citizens walking around frantically waving handkerchiefs about their faces or slapping themselves cruelly created considerable amusement."

The river eventually dropped, as it always does. Jacob Sohl, a bridge engineer and county surveyor, investigated the damages, which he estimated at around \$75,000. This was the largest flood-caused devastation up to that time. Though the source of funding wasn't identified, the *Enterprise* stated that funds were immediately made available and workers were soon repairing Harvats, Lamartine, and Carters Bridges.





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**Left, top:** Harvats Bridge, summer, date unknown

**Left, bottom:** Site of Harvats Bridge, February 2014, today's Mayors Landing

