



News from the Red Caboose

WINTER 2016



The Many Functions of the Livingston Railroad Shops

By Bruce Graham

There is very little research about what type of work was performed in the Livingston shops—first, for the Northern Pacific Railway and then, for Burlington Northern—and when changes in the shops took place. This multi-part article covers the 1940s thru the closure of the shops in 1986.

The number of days and shifts that each shop was open varied according to need. The Diesel Maintenance Shop operated 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. At least one foreman worked during each shift. The Back Shop operated five days a week with two shifts; fewer people worked during the afternoon shift than the day shift. The Electric Shop was functional five days a week with two employee shifts. The Wheel Shop and the Road Way Shop operated five days a week and normally had only one shift. The Car Shop was a 24/7 operation.

Car Shop workers or carmen had to view every train that came into town for wheels in bad order and for cars whose loads had shifted. If they found a problem, the Train Crew set the cars aside for repair.



New Northern Pacific Railway Shop, Livingston, Sept. 28, 1945.

The carmen drove their own work truck and normally worked out of the yard office area west of Main Street on the north side of the tracks. There was also a group of carmen who repaired the cars that were set aside, and they normally only worked a five-day week. If there was a minor derailment in the yard, it was the carmen who put the cars or locomotives back

on the track.

When I started work in 1972, the Livingston Shop was the repair point for General Electric locomotives and parts. Most of the items on the locomotives were

rebuilt at either West Burlington, Iowa or here in Livingston. In the 1970s, vendors repaired very few of the parts, so when the Livingston Shop had EMD (Electro Motive Division of General Motors) locomotive parts to be repaired they were shipped to West Burlington.

Most of these parts were transported in box cars from one major point to another, so Material Department employees loaded box cars all week long to be shipped to different points on the railroad while box cars came in from various points with parts to be repaired at Livingston. There was a crew of three to four people working on (continued on page 10)

New Transportation & Yellowstone Exhibits

By Paul Shea, Director

After nearly two years of planning, design, and construction, we are ready to open our newly interpreted Transportation Room exhibit, “Wilsall to Wonderland: Trails, Roads, and Rails.”

This room held one of the last exhibits we put together in 2012 after the installation of the heating/cooling system. It was a last-minute job and I was never truly happy about the way it looked and the overall interpretation of this most important aspect of our county’s history. Lacking in depth and an overall story line, it didn’t include the personal stories that we like to use, and it lacked objects.

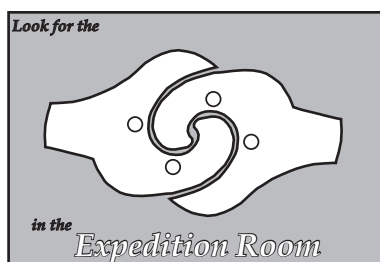
Our interpretation committee started planning in early 2014. We agreed to interpret the development of the trail and road systems in Park County from Native American trails through the building of Interstate 90. This would include travel by foot, horse and wagon, boats, the arrival of the railroad, as well as bicycles, cars, and airplanes.

An important aspect of this exhibit shows how geography has influenced the ways that people travel throughout this area.

Using maps designed by Jerry Brekke, longtime Park County historian, and Henry Hansen, Park County GIS technician, visitors discover the development of

movement in our area through the ages. Large, panoramic photos of the mountain ranges surrounding Park County: the Crazies to the north, the Absarokas to the east, Yankee Jim Canyon to the south, the Gallatins to the west, and the Bridgers to the northwest, highlight our area’s geography. These spectacular images, photographed and printed by Rob Park, range in size from 4’ x 12’ to 3’ x 20’.

With this exhibit we introduce of the use of “links” throughout



the museum. The links are colorful illustrations of a “slack knuckle”—a nod to our railroad history since this was the way that early train cars were connected. Stories and artifacts in each room link to stories and artifacts in other areas of the museum—their connections might be how objects are used or to give further information. Each link leads visitors to search for a related link. This will serve as a treasure hunt for kids of all ages.

We invite our friends to a special donor and members-only opening

on the evening of February 18, from 5-7 PM. The room will be open to the public the following day. So, this is a great time to join (or rejoin) the museum in order to help us celebrate; memberships will be available that night.

Work is also ongoing in the Expedition Room on the second floor. Planning is under way to put together a special exhibit to commemorate this year’s 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. Jessica Guldán, a college graduate and history major, is conducting research about what was happening in our area during 1916. We will focus on businesses that provided services to Yellowstone National Park, but also what was going on in the county that year. 1916 was during World War I, but we will also focus on people’s daily lives, including fashion.

Last summer’s “Exploring Yellowstone Through Art” show was quite a success. Some 32 local artists exhibited their artwork inspired by the park. This summer, an exhibit of large oil paintings by Tom L. Roberts—historically accurate depictions of explorers and fur trappers in our area—will be displayed.

The 1916 and art exhibits will occupy two walls of the Expedition Room and are slated to be open by Memorial Day.

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Mariah Henry cleaning our model caboose, part of our new Transportation Room exhibit

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



Jessica Guldan peruses an old *Livingston Enterprise*

**Archived
newsletters
are now available
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Museum Hours:

Winter:
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10 AM - 5 PM,
7 days/week
~ ~ ~

Research Center
10 AM - 5 PM,
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Board members Andy Olds and Jem Blueher working on our stagecoach

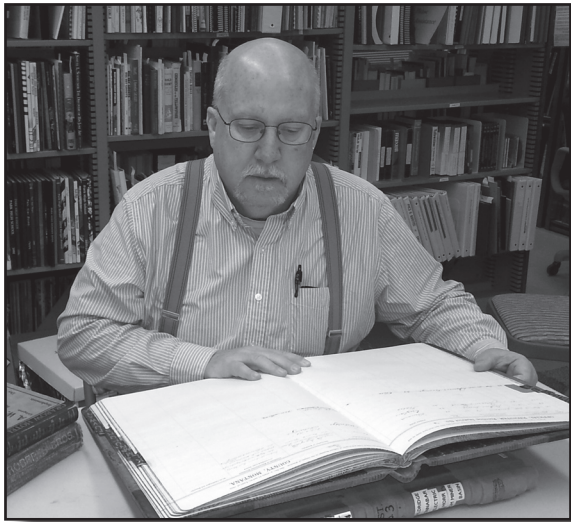


Dartha Meyers and Reeva Williams having fun while cataloging artifacts

Changing the Way We Do Research

By Paul Shea

We are conducting more and more research at the museum these days, using our Research Center's many resources. We are generally busier with this task in the summer, as people drop by when on vacation, but people also call monthly. Most folks are interested in genealogical research, looking for relatives who once lived in the county or asking questions about towns and businesses that are no longer here.



Conducting research is a fun aspect of my job. Helping people discover their family history is a rewarding experience, especially when you see their eyes light up with newly found information about their great-grandpa and grandma.

Research, like all aspects of our work here at the museum, takes time. When someone comes to the museum to do research, it is easy to provide him with resources to look through so that he can dig for answers himself. When a person calls and wants us to do their research, things change.

We must first set aside adequate time separate from our other tasks to conduct the research and then compile the information into a format that can be transmitted to the person. As the history world is becoming more familiar with the museum's resources, we are experiencing an increase in such requests.

Staff and volunteers are building an increasing number of finding aids for various collections, making them much more accessible to researchers. These inventories include a short description of what is contained in file folders or individual documents.

(See our web site, www.yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org, for online finding aids; more are added as they are available.) Using a finding aid, researchers can identify specific files or materials that are relevant to their search. These materials are easily retrievable.

Library publications, voter registration books, maps, and other resources are available in our Research Center. We are training volunteers in the art of conducting research so they can assist us with this task.

The museum needs to adopt a policy for dealing with extensive research requests. We are considering setting up a policy similar to one used by the Montana Historical Society. For example, if you are a member, we could help you with one or two free inquiries per year. After that you would have to pay a fee. If you are not a member, you would be directed first to our online research resources and published books. Then, if you require further assistance, you would pay a fee. This fee only applies to those who cannot or do not come to the museum; research conducted onsite by a researcher is free.

It is vital that the museum continues to improve our research offerings for the benefit of anyone who is curious to learn more; this outreach is an important way for the museum to preserve our history. But, we also need to help support the operating expenses of the museum. Most research centers have policies like those described above. This is just one more way that we are making strides toward becoming more professional at representing the history of our area.

In the meantime, if you have a question about Park County history, give us a call at 222-4184.

Online Finding Aids:

Thomas Ray Collection
Sax and Fryer Collection
The Geyser Collection, PHS newspapers
Park High School Annuals
Montana School Annuals
Bill & Doris Whithorn Online Database
Doris Whithorn Curator Collection
Subject Index of Vertical Files
Park County Voting Registers

Weaving New Artifacts into the Tapestry of Our History

By Karen Reinhart, Registrar



“Taking Care of Business”
Lyle E. Johnson

Park County residents and people living beyond our borders have given the museum a wide variety of wonderful artifacts, providing the foundation of our exhibits and important resources for researchers. Every donation that comes through our doors is a delightful surprise.

When choosing a few donations to highlight in this article, I discovered that, beyond their common thread of place, there were other relationships. The artifacts’ stories seemed to connect with each other, reinforcing the warp and weft of our history.

One gift was a bronze statue delivered by John Beaudry, public affairs manager for Stillwater Mines. The 16" tall statue, sculpted by Lyle E. Johnson and titled “Taking Care of Business,” depicts a coal miner holding a long crow bar, getting ready to engage in safe mining practices. Park County has a rich history of mining.

Another mining-related donation was recently given by Bob Ebinger.

He had purchased several Shorthill family photographs at a local antique store and decided that they belonged in our photo archives. David R. Shorthill was first lured to this area in 1864 when Jim Bridger told him that gold had been discovered in Emigrant Gulch. Shorthill did indeed find gold, a little further up the gulch than most miners had ventured, and the area became known



David R. and his wife, Margaret, are pictured in the top photo in this group of Shorthill family photos

as the Shorthill District. He couldn't homestead at that time because the area was still part of the Crow Reservation. Shorthill and his family returned in 1880, homesteading 160 acres on the Yellowstone River. The original cabinet-card photos were taken by several photographers who had studios in Livingston.

Local historian Jerry Brekke recently brought the late Bill Whithorn's darkroom equipment to the museum, an appropriate place to safeguard his enlarger, projector, light stand, and other

equipment that helped him document our early history by producing copies of residents' photographs beginning in the 1950s. More than 7,300 photos comprise the Whithorn Photo Collection, available online at www.yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org and in our Research Center.

Tools of a different sort found a new home when Dr. Yokichi Itoh's wife, Marion, as well as Livingston Health Care, gave surgical instruments and related items to the museum, helping to document our area's medical history. Dr. Itoh practiced medicine in Livingston for 30 years, retiring in 1986.

Dr. E.M. Robinson's Singer treadle sewing machine was donated by her granddaughter, Jean Powell. Dr. Robinson used the machine at the Robinson Hospital located at 215 South C Street in



Medicine kit and surgery drill,
Livingston Health Care

Livingston from 1929 to 1935.

During that time, in 1932, William Russell Grant purchased a saddle from A.W. Miles Hardware Co., located in Livingston. A packer, mule-shoer, and rancher, (continued on page 6)

(continued from page 5)

Grant was also a rodeo cowboy—it's possible that he could have participated in a Livingston Rodeo and even visited Dr. Robinson after taking a spill. (Of course, these stories are not substantiated but are fun to imagine.) Though most of his life he lived in Missoula and homesteaded in Swan Valley, Grant's saddle came back to Park County when his grandson, Tim Lien, recognized that the saddle was made in Livingston.

In 1944, Joe Garr sent a wooden trunk home to Livingston while he was serving overseas as a Draftsman for the 411th Engineer Battalion, Company C. I can easily visualize that many men handled and transferred the trunk from one conveyance to another before it arrived at his parents' home two years later. Built by carpenters in Northern Australia, 160 servicemen signed the trunk before Garr mailed it home free-of-charge as "Dead Man's Possessions," giving his parents quite a scare! Though other museums were interested in adding it to their collections, Garr felt that his World War II momentos (and other memorabilia) needed to go home to his local museum. The trunk is currently on exhibit and is a poignant reminder of sacrifices made during the war.

Research is a very rewarding activity, especially when I am able to locate and talk with family members. In October, I was conducting research for new stories to be included in our military exhibit. Volunteer Susan Kraft had discovered that National Park Service employee and truck driver Floyd Witthoeft had mailed photographs and letters back to Yellowstone during

his WWII service. After I spoke with one of his sons, Alan, he and his wife decided to travel from Minnesota to attend the exhibit opening that honored Floyd and other servicemen and women on Veterans Day last November. On that day, Alan donated a stack of black and white photographs that his father had taken in the 1940s



Collections Committee members, BJ Earle, Roddy Stanton, and Paul Shea inspect Paul Wright's milk cart.

but had never developed. Stored in tightly sealed canisters, the film was still good and Floyd's photographs of Yellowstone and war-ravaged Europe now reside at the museum.

Beginning in 1928, Farmers Creamery, a Livingston business, delivered milk, cream, and ice cream to Yellowstone National Park establishments, including Yellowstone Park Co., Hamilton Stores, Pryor Stores, Haynes Photo Shops, and the National Park Service. Farmers Creamery workers picked up milk from individual farmers, operating into the 1990s. One of their suppliers was

Paul Wright who had owned and operated a small dairy in the 1920s through 1933. When the government required his dairy to have concrete surfaces and running water, he couldn't afford to make those changes, so he bought a separator and began selling cream to Farmers Creamery. Paul's daughter, Shirley Petersen, has given us the cart that her father used while he still delivered milk. Shirley remembered that her father delivered milk to households with children even when their parents couldn't afford to pay.

And finally, here's another Yellowstone connection. Our biggest surprise this year arrived when Richard Mills and Robyn Albright offered the museum a taxidermied adult male bison. Our Collections Committee voted to accept this donation and it now resides on the Upper Landing, carefully cordoned off so that visitors are not tempted to touch this fine artifact. The bison once roamed Yellowstone National Park.

This a small sample of items that people have donated over the past year. Each artifact is a thread in the tapestry of our collections, adding color and texture while strengthening our understanding of our history for this and future generations.



Karen Reinhart takes a safe selfie with our bison.

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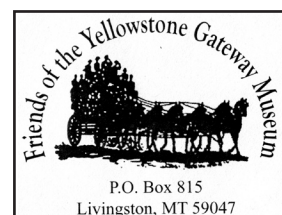
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CALENDAR

February 18—Thursday

“Wilsall to Wonderland: Trails, Roads, and Rails” Grand Opening

A Sneak Preview for Donors & Members

5-7PM

Yellowstone Gateway Museum, 118 W. Chinook



Memberships and renewals available at the door. The exhibit opens to the general public on Friday, February 19. Call 222-4184 for more information. Please see page 2 for more information about this interactive exhibit in the Transportation Room.

Spring Speaker Series

March 31—Thursday

Friends of YGM Annual Meeting & Program: “Montana 1864”

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

Livingston-Park County Public Library, 228 W. Callender

Following the meeting, author **Ken Egan** journeys back to the year of Montana’s founding in this lively presentation on various characters and events that shaped the state from its beginnings. He then leads a conversation about Montana’s past and present based on his book, *Montana 1864*, commemorating Montana Territory’s 150th anniversary. All welcome to attend this free *Speakers Bureau* program and book signing. Refreshments.



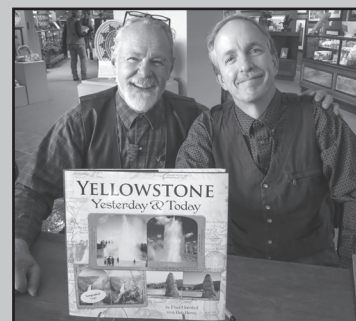
April 14 — Thursday

“Yellowstone: Yesterday and Today”

7:00 PM

Livingston-Park County Public Library, 228 W. Callender

“Re-photographer” Paul Harsted and photo collector and guide Bob Berry give a PowerPoint presentation about their book, showcasing historic and current images of Yellowstone National Park, photographed from the same spot and giving the audience a visual sense of history. All welcome to attend this free program and book signing. Refreshments.



May 12—Thursday

“Amazing American Indian Women throughout Montana’s History”

7:00 PM

Livingston-Park County Public Library, 228 W. Callender

Author and instructor **Laura Ferguson** shares the stories of about 20 native women during her PowerPoint presentation—they are also included in the Montana Historical Society’s new book, *Beyond Schoolmarms and Madams: Montana Women’s Lives*, a Montana Women’s History Matters project. All welcome to attend this free program and book signing. Refreshments.





NPRR Livingston Shops employees. YGM Whithorn Photo Collection

(continued from page 1)
the dock at all times, unloading and loading freight cars and freight trucks. Most of this work was done with fork-lift trucks; once freight was loaded onto cars, workers had to secure the load by filling in the gaps between freight and the car walls and doors, packing the load as tightly as possible to keep it from shifting while the train moved down the line. Workers spent a lot of time nailing blocking to the car's wooden floors to stop the load from shifting. Some of the loads that came in were humped so badly that there might be two-thousand-pound traction motors sitting on top of other motors, causing them to bounce 30" in the air during the switching process. "Humped" is a switching term that is used when a switch engine pushes a car over a small rise in the tracks and it is then released to roll into the end of the train that is being built in the yard; if it is moving too fast this causes a crash between the moving car and the stationary train that is being built, resulting in freight flying through the air inside the car.

The Livingston Shop received barrels of dirty rags that workers used for clean up on the rail line. They had to be wrestled by hand onto pallets to be hauled to the laundry to be washed. When I started work, the laundry was being

run by Leroy "King Kong" Clayton. He dumped the rags on the floor and sorted through them for items that he couldn't run through the



Above center photos: Dedication Day for the new Diesel Maintenance Shop, July 25, 1957.

large industrial-sized washers, then stuffed them into front-loading machines. After the laundry was washed, Clayton used a hook to pull the rags out onto a rolling table and then stuffed them into large, front-loading dryers. While the rags were washing and drying he cleaned the barrels, eventually filling them with the clean rags and shipping them back to their points of origin.

Workers pumped dirty oil from

the locomotives into a tank car outside the Refining Plant. When I started work this plant was run by Karl Karson. He used chemicals and acids to refine the used oil into clean oil so it could be used again in the locomotive engines. This process produced a black jelly-like sludge that was filled with toxic substances from the locomotives and the refining process; the sludge was hauled to the Mission Wye and dumped into a pit which Burlington Northern was required to clean up years later. Other locations that changed locomotive engine oil, such as Laurel and Missoula, sent their oil to Livingston for refining. The refining of used oil was begun after diesel engines became the main source of power on the Northern Pacific; it was a large, money-saving project.

Used oil and fuel filters were burned in an incinerator located inside the foundation of the razed, old round house building. It had a small smoke stack attached. Before this furnace was installed, dirty filters were dumped in an empty gondola car and hauled to another location to be burned, dripping used oil and fuel down the line as it moved.

The power plant was located next to the back shop and across a walkway from the old round house. You can still see the power plant's (continued on page 11)

(continued from page 10)
 large smoke stack in the shop complex. At one time, its source of fuel was coal that, when burned, produced steam heat and power for shop tools. Natural gas later powered the plant and was manned 24/7 by an operator. For a while, just before BN closed the shops, Park County's incinerator furnished some of the steam that the shops required through underground pipes. The shop whistle, located at the plant, blew at 7 AM, at noon, and at quitting time at 3:30 PM. (It is on display at the museum.) There was also a small shop in this area where Bridge and Building (B&B) workers Steve Bailey, and Frank and Charles Hardesty, worked when fixing the plumbing in the shops. They were part of the Track Department.

During the steam engine days there was a large coal dock located across the tracks near the present grain elevator and Town Pump. Employees loaded the coal cars here to power the steam engines. They winched up a carload of coal parked

at the east end of the coal dock to the top of the dock which was about three stories high. The coal was then released into a coal chute and held there until a locomotive was moved into position alongside the dock, ready for the release of coal into its tender.

When a steam engine rolled into the shops, workers had to clean

the cinders that remained after burning the coal out of the engine. Employees hauled these cinders east along the track and dumped them into a large pile on the north side of the tracks. After all these years, the pile is still there and is covered with dirt to keep them from blowing around. I remember coming to town as a kid and seeing coal dust from the dock and cinders from the piles blowing in the wind. I am sure that most people on the east and north sides of town hung their clothes outside to dry only when the wind wasn't blowing in their direction from the shop area.

To be continued...



Top: Stationary or Power Plant, June 21, 1946.
 Bottom: Locomotive in front of the coal dock, June 1955.

Consultants:
 Stan Adams
 Wesley Bull
 Frank Hardesty
 Howard Harper
 John Hochmuht
 Hardy Pugliano
 Tatsu Simao
 Earl Stermitz
 Rick VanAken

Photos: YGM Warren
 McGee Digital Collection

We Have a New Web Site!

www.yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org

We extend a *huge* thank you to board member Debi Nemetz for helping us create our new web site. New features include more photos, a museum store (coming soon), finding aids, submit-your-history forms, and board and staff info, making it more friendly and fun.

Gift Shop News

Now managed by the Friends, any gift shop profits can be used to purchase inventory or fund other projects. We are offering more exhibit-related items and are also developing branded items, like pub glasses imprinted with the Northern Pacific Railway logo (shown above), railroad posters, full-color maps, and Yellowstone Trail caps. Our new web site will soon feature many gift shop items.



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Our ADA Project:
Making Progress!

We have submitted a grant to the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Foundation and are writing other grant applications, including to the Livingston Community Trust. If successful, we will begin engineering and architectural planning next summer or fall.

The museum could really use your help to make our building accessible and will gladly accept any size donation. Please include a note with your check and we will earmark it for the ADA project. Please call Paul at 406-222-4184 for more information.

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