



# News from the Red Caboose

SUMMER 2013



## The Knap-In: A Great Cultural Experience

By Karen Reinhart, Museum Registrar

Our Montana Spring Knap-In weekend event on May 18 and 19 was a great success. Locals and visitors from far-flung corners of the state as well as the region attended the event and enjoyed the diverse activities that the museum offered. We estimated that between 300 and 400 people attended the Knap-In. It felt like a step back in time—people working together to learn and practice skills that were once needed for survival. It was exciting and relaxing at the same time.



Ray Alt helping a young knapper

Adults and children tried their gloved hands at “breaking rock” and some even made projectile points under the tutelage of practiced flint knappers. Ray Alt and George Bryce, local knappers, invited their friends

and collectively they helped many individuals during the event’s day and a half. Tim Ryan, a member of the Salish-Kootenai Confederated Tribe, was brought to the museum with the help of Humanities



Tim Ryan showing young and old the art of making cordage

Montana and patiently guided many hands in the art of twisting super-strong cordage from pithy dogbane sticks. Chris Newhouse of Scoutcraft helped many students of fire coax flames from a variety of primitive fire-making methods including the bow drill. Don Stafford made throwing the atlatl

people had to practice several times to get the stance, throw, and follow-through motions correct.



Liz Jacobson preparing to throw the atlatl under Don Stafford’s expert eye

The demonstrators also had examples of their artistry—fancy projectile points and tools, woven willow fish baskets, atlatl darts, and more. One knapper had miniscule but very detailed sculptures made  
(continued on page 11)



Don Ellis, his daughter, Jody, and Mel Beatte admiring a sculpture

# Reflecting on Our Accomplishments & Future Needs

By Paul Shea

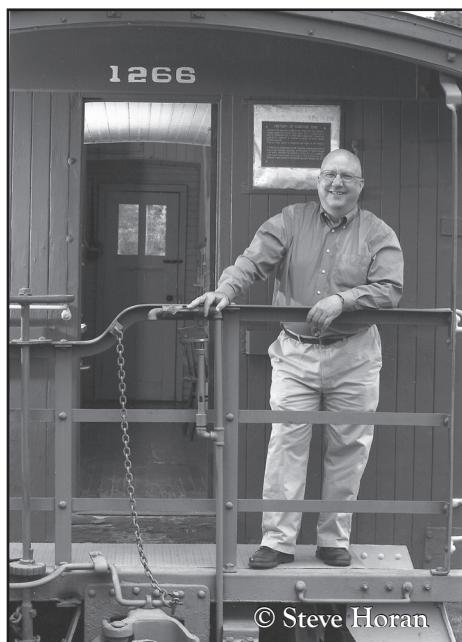
As I enter my fourth summer here at the museum I feel that we are achieving much in making the Yellowstone Gateway Museum an exciting educational, interpretive, and research resource not only for the residents of Park County, but for all our visitors. The museum has just completed its first year of being open year-round. The response has been positive and the number of visitors is growing.

With the completion of the first phase of infrastructure improvements we have refocused our energies on the collections and exhibits. Two new exhibits are up: Re-creating an Ancient Technology—Modern-Day Flint Knapping and Mattie Culver—A Life Sketch. In the next two months we will be opening two more exhibits. We plan to have one or two new exhibits each summer.

We have spent much of the last year inventorying our archival collections. As we inventory and place them in file cabinets they become available for research. A big part of this process has been to inventory and catalog all of the papers that Doris Whithorn stored here at the museum, as well as those that were donated by her family in 2006. Volunteer Ellen Zazzarino, retired Denver Public Library Archivist, has worked on this project for over a year. Ellen is getting close to completing this project, which will be a story in itself. With the inventory and information from Doris's papers we now have an incredible snapshot of her life of research and writing about the history of

Park County.

We have also completed a preliminary inventory of archival collections that have been in storage for years. This includes a large number of donated photographs, railroad records, and personal family records. We will continue to apply for grants to help process these collections and place them in storage files and boxes that meet museum standards. It is thought that this project will take from two to four years to complete. We have a lot of archival material!



In addition to these archival projects we have expanded our school outreach programs, and continue to explore new ways to engage county youth. Museums are seen as an extension of lifelong learning and what better way to build future audiences than to get them started now! We are continuing to develop teaching trunks that can be checked out by

teachers, have begun the addition of youth-oriented activities to our exhibit halls, and will continue to add youth and family programs.

While all of this is going on, we still have to maintain the buildings and grounds. This year we have to address the need for a new roof on the main museum building. It has been more than thirty years since the roof was replaced and it is showing its age. The northwest section gets the worst weather, and it is in great need of replacement. We hope to have this done by the end of summer. Another concern is the back lot location up against the ditch footing. This area is degrading and stabilization of the footing is needed to ensure that there is no failure.

Also looming on the horizon is the need to make our museum accessible to people with physical disabilities. As you know, the museum has many stairs and steps. If all goes well, we may be able to start with some work on the front entranceway later this summer. We also will have to address the difficulty of moving around inside the building itself. The stairs present a problem to disabled individuals and to some seniors. The solution is to install an elevator. We need to address this issue soon.

All in all I am extremely pleased with the progress we have made in updating exhibits and working with the collections, while staying focused on overall needs. I look forward to the future and the successes it will bring to the Yellowstone Gateway Museum.

# Volunteers and Staff

## We are Grateful to our Current Volunteers:

Ray Alt	Daniel Davidson	Alta LeDoux
Mary Jane Ammerman	June Doolittle	Jack Luther
Judy Bonnell	Nikki Fox	Pat Miller
Shannon Burke	Jessica Guldan	Harry Kolkmann
George Bryce	Georgia Hall	Carlene Newhall
Robin Brewer	Robert Hartsig	Donna Poeschl
Carol Carver	Bob Jovick	Sherry Hatfield
Cheryl Chmielewski	Betty Lahren	Ellen Zazzarino

...and our board members!



Norm Miller taking photographs of archived newspapers

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118 W. Chinook Street  
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[museum@parkcounty.org](mailto:museum@parkcounty.org)  
[yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org](http://yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org)



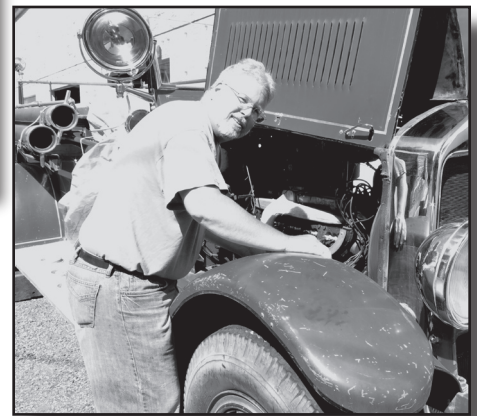
Cheryl Chmielewski working at the front desk

Are you looking for a rewarding experience?

We are seeking volunteers who enjoy computer, front-desk, education, and program assistance work. Please give us a call!



Jessica Guldan & BJ Earle assembling a collections box



Daniel Davidson working on the 1936 American LaFrance fire truck



The Tipi Set-Up Crew: Robert Hartsig, Jem Blueher, Bob Ebinger, & Andy Olds

# Fort Parker Day: A Rewarding Experience

By Merrilee Bryan, East Side School Librarian

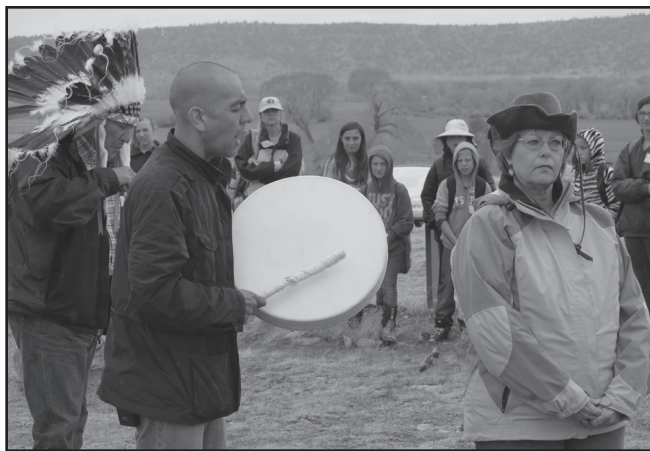
Fifth grade is a pivotal year for students in our school district. Among the many special courses of study offered, we must fold in the state-mandated curriculum of Indian Education for All. This year the culmination of these studies took place Friday, May 17 at Fort Parker, the first Crow Indian agency, situated ten miles east of Livingston.

Twelve local fifth grade ambassadors met twelve fifth and sixth grade students from the Pryor School, along with Burton Pretty On Top and his family, at the Yellowstone Gateway Museum on May 16 for ice-breaking activities. Museum staff members, Paul Shea and Karen Reinhart, were also on hand. As part of Fort Parker Day activities our students taught their Pryor pen-pals about some of the local plants, native and non-native, to be found at Fort Parker.

We adjourned to the East Side gym that was beautifully decorated by fifth grade teacher Chris Gillespie and friends of the museum board member, Suzanne Goodman. Earlier in the year our students hosted a dinner of locally based products to raise money to purchase Tanka Dogs (buffalo hot dogs) from Native American Natural Foods, a Pine Ridge Reservation company. We feasted on the Tanka Dogs, prepared by Quentin Schwarz. We also enjoyed pasta salad made by Gillespie and Wilcoxson's huckleberry ice cream.



Burton Pretty On Top with his ceremonial pipe at Fort Parker



Shane Doyle drumming and singing honor song for Merrilee Bryan

Paul Shea introduced Burton Pretty On Top, the evening's speaker, who participated in Fort Parker Day through the generosity of the museum.

Pretty On Top spoke about the traditional teachings that Crow elders give to their children and related his vision quest pursuit for

direction and clarity on top of the Crazy Mountains. He then spoke of his experiences in Assisi, Italy in 1986 where he joined dignitaries from the world's twelve main religious groups for the World Day of Prayer for Peace. Pretty On Top represented native people's beliefs. He reminded us we have only today to make a difference and to fill each day caring for each other.

The following rainy morning we gathered near Fort Parker where Pretty On Top donned his eagle headdress and lit his ceremonial pipe to bless every person present. He explained how the pipe could be used to alter the weather and uttered some quiet prayers. The rain stopped and the sun shone down, creating a perfect day for the rest of our activities. Pretty On Top performed a ceremony inviting Paul Shea to be his brother. Shane Doyle, from MSU-Bozeman, shared the pipe and then sang a poignant honor song to a retiring teacher.

Our 110 students were organized into six groups. At the nearby Mission Creek Ranch each group in turn learned about the Crow horse from Leslie Pierson, with Vicki Schwarz located the plants they had studied the day before at the museum, and made willow game pieces with Chris Gillespie. They used these pieces for games such as Run and Scream, Guessing Stick Game, and Double Ball at the game station taught by Marla Bray and Robin Lovec.

(continued on page 5)



(continued from page 4)



Students making willow game pieces

Archaeologist Jeannie Moe and her assistant, Courtney Agenten, from Project Archaeology, aided by fifth grade teacher Kathy Francisco, helped each group locate artifacts still visible on the remains of Fort Parker. Volunteer Brian Sparks and librarian Merrilee Bryan shared information about Fort Parker at the history station.

Finally, our weary sojourners trooped back onto their busses, waved goodbye to their Pryor friends, and returned to school to reminisce about their experiences. As we returned to Livingston,



Students learning about native plants

the rain once again dotted our windshield. Later, I heard that the rain had never stopped in town. Hmm, I wonder if we can persuade Burton Pretty On Top to bring his pipe for next year's Fort Parker Day...

This remarkable museum and school partnership has changed the lives and education of hundreds of students, garnering both state and national notice. We

should all take pride in this community-wide project.



Student pointing out archaeological evidence at Fort Parker

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**Editor's Note:** Merrilee is the retiring teacher mentioned in the article. She told me that the Fort Parker and Indian Education for All project "has been the most joyful experience of my career." Merrilee has been involved in the project since its inception in 2007.

## Park County's First Military Presence

by Norm Miller

The first military presence in Park County happened long before the United States Cavalry and the Civil War and lasted only 2 days!

This July 15 and 16 marks the 107th anniversary of the passing of the Corps of Discovery, better known as the Lewis & Clark Expedition, through Livingston in 1806. William Clark, along with enlisted United States military men John Shields, George Gibson, William Bratton, Nathaniel Pryor, George Shannon, Richard Windsor, and Hugh Hall, as well as several non-military personnel, arrived at the Yellowstone River near today's intersection of Crawford and 7th Streets. There, Clark painted his name and the date in red paint on a cottonwood tree. After dining and resting their horses for several hours, the party proceeded along the river and camped near today's Sheep Mountain boat access on Convict Grade Road. The next morning they proceeded downstream for four more days until they found trees large enough to build canoes.

As we approach this historic anniversary remember the enlisted men who served under the Corps of Discovery. Come check out the museum's Lewis and Clark exhibit featuring two enlarged copies of William Clark's maps of the area.

# Roland Kaiser and *The Geyser*

By Bruce Graham, President of the Friends of the Yellowstone Gateway Museum

Roland Kaiser grew up on a ranch west of Wilsall, Montana near Meyersburg, where he attended grade school in a small, one-room schoolhouse. Rather than quitting school and staying home to work on the ranch, Roland elected to go to Park County High School in Livingston. He enrolled in the fall of 1913. During his sophomore year he was employed by the *Livingston Enterprise* as a cub reporter to cover hotel registers, court dockets, and society gossip.

A year later, *The Geyser*, the school's first paper, was founded. It was named after Old Faithful Geyser and, according to Kaiser, "it continues to erupt regularly, spouting forth a shower of wisdom and jokes, leaving behind a rich deposit of school fun and happy memories." He was the paper's first business manager and staff writer.

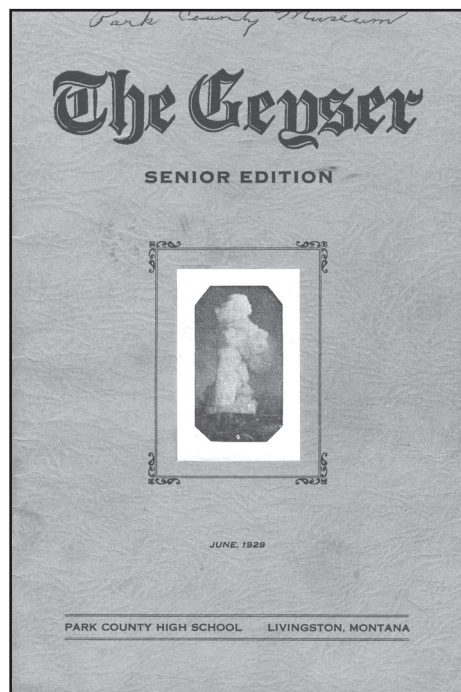
Kaiser graduated in May 1917. Because he had to leave six weeks before graduation to attend the Reserve Officers' Training Corps during World War I, an early commencement ceremony was held honoring him as the first Park County High School graduate to serve in the war.

At his San Francisco training camp, Kaiser was given a routine smallpox vaccination. An enemy agent had reportedly poisoned the vaccine, which resulted in the amputation of several soldiers' arms. Some young men died. Kaiser was sent home with his arm in a sling to convalesce for several weeks.

Before Kaiser began his Navy career in 1918 he worked briefly

as a clerk with International Harvester in Helena, Montana—a career that eventually took him to Salt Lake City, Argentina, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Chicago. He retired in 1957.

How did I find this information about Kaiser? His story comes from his autobiography, *From the Soil of Two Continents* (1972), a book that is in the Yellowstone Gateway Museum's research library. Kaiser



The 1929 Senior Edition of *The Geyser*. Graham believes that this booklet may have also served as the Park High School annual

also told his story in issues of *The Geyser* that are at the museum. He subscribed to the paper from 1957-1959 and subsequently wrote a story for *The Geyser* about his years at Park County High School.

I am scanning the school papers so researchers can view them on

the museum's public computers. The research library is open from 10 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday.

Kaiser donated over 40 items to the Yellowstone Gateway Museum, including books, maps, postcards, and photographs. His gifts give us insight into the early history of his family and of Park County. Your donations can do the same for future generations.

Please contact Paul Shea, Museum Director, or Karen Reinhart, Museum Registrar, at 406-222-4184 if you would like more information about how to make a donation to your museum.

**Do you have any of these issues of *The Geyser*?**

**Pre-1921  
1925-1927  
1931-1937  
1946-1948  
1961  
1966  
1970  
1975-1977  
1985 to present**

If you have these or other years of the school paper that we could scan, please let us know. We are missing some issues for most years.

# An Index for the *History of Park County, Montana 1984*

By Dick Dysart

The Wan-I-Gan Press is publishing a complete *Index* of names found in the “big blue book,” the *History of Park County, Montana 1984*.

During the *History*’s preparation twenty-nine years ago, all residents of Park County were invited to submit their family stories. The resultant book was published by the local county museum and the historical society, and contained an amazingly thorough history of Park County.

The original 512-page volume is now nearly out of print; however, copies still may be consulted at the Livingston-Park County Public Library and at the Yellowstone Gateway Museum. As important, informative, and exciting as the *History* was and still is, it had a serious shortcoming: There was no index, no convenient way to check from a name to the page(s) where that name was referenced.

The new *Index*, compiled and edited by Richard Dysart,



Richard Dysart with the *Index* and the *History of Park County, Montana 1984*

contains about 30,000 line entries, including the names of many towns, schools, post offices, churches, residents, merchants, clubs and societies, doctors, lawyers, miners, and ranchers.

The *Index* also includes many special summaries such as Diseases & Mortality, Cemeteries, and Mining—a boon for any researcher.

The spiral-bound 8.5 by 11" *Index* is about 250 pages. It will sell for \$36 (plus \$5 standard shipping). A ten-percent discount is available to Friends of the Museum members. Find the *Index* and many other local history books at the museum, 118 West Chinook Street, Livingston. All proceeds from book sales benefit the museum.

Reserve your copy now by calling Richard Dysart at 406-222-6937, or the museum at 222-4184. You may also send a note to:

**Wan-I-Gan Press**  
**Friends of Yellowstone Gateway Museum**  
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**Editor’s Note:** See the back page for two stories gleaned from the “big blue book.”

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For: Placidia “Pete” Stoltz  
By Dick & Priscilla Dysart

# David R. Shorthill: Soldier & Homesteader

By Norm Miller

While doing research for our new military history display, I stumbled upon the Shorthill Cemetery. One of the least-known cemeteries in Park County, the Shorthill Cemetery is on a beautiful plot of land along McDonald Creek Road in Paradise Valley. It was named after David R. Shorthill, who dedicated this land as a final resting place for his relatives.

Shorthill was born in Pennsylvania in 1831. At age 13 he was employed in lumbering high in the Allegheny Mountains. Years later he ventured into mining.

By 1861 Shorthill was commissioned as a recruiting officer for the Union Army and a year later he enlisted in the 125th Pennsylvania Infantry. Shorthill participated in the second battle of Bull Run and the engagement at South Mountain.

When I visited the cemetery, Shorthill's great grandson, Allen Nelson, happened to be there. According to Nelson, Shorthill was in the front line at Antietam with a young flag bearer who received

one of the first shots to the head. Antietam was one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War, with nearly 23,000 casualties. Shorthill received a wound thought to be fatal but was saved by his friends. After a lengthy confinement, he received an honorable discharge in March 1863.

Shorthill came to Montana in 1864 where he reportedly met Jim Bridger who informed him that there was gold to be found in Emigrant Gulch. Finding little gold at the mouth of the creek, Shorthill ventured six miles up the gulch where he found a considerable amount. This area became known as the Shorthill District. He eventually took up a homestead claim and began ranching along McDonald Creek. Shorthill and his wife, Margaret, had eight children. His original home can still be seen just below the cemetery that now bears his name. Shorthill's great-great grandson, Harold, and his wife, Micky, reside in Livingston.



Allen Nelson, descendant of David and Margaret Shorthill, in Shorthill Cemetery

## 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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*Membership Perks: Free Admission to the Museum, newsletter subscription, gift shop discount, insider updates and more!*



Several large rock walls built by David Shorthill can still be seen along the road leading to the cemetery and are reminiscent of the stone fences of his native Pennsylvania



Connect with your museum

## CALENDAR

July 12—Friday

### Mattie Culver's Autograph Book Program

6:30 PM

Livingston-Park County Public Library,  
228 W. Callender

Nan Weber, author of *Mattie: A Woman's Journey West*, reveals how Mattie Culver's autograph book uncovered the puzzle of her gravestone in Yellowstone Park. Refreshments. Free.



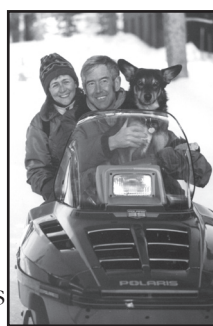
August 6—Tuesday

### Yellowstone Has Teeth! Program and Book Signing

6:30 PM

Livingston-Park County Public Library,  
228 W. Callender

Marjane Ambler, author of *Yellowstone Has Teeth!*, shares personal and neighbors' stories of living year-round in the interior of Yellowstone National Park. Refreshments. Free.



August 9—Friday

### A Military History of Park County Exhibit Opening and Reception

4:00-7:00 PM

Yellowstone Gateway Museum,  
118 W. Chinook

An opening reception for this new exhibit that chronicles the poignant stories of residents who served in the Armed Forces from the Civil War forward as well as those on the home front. Free admission.



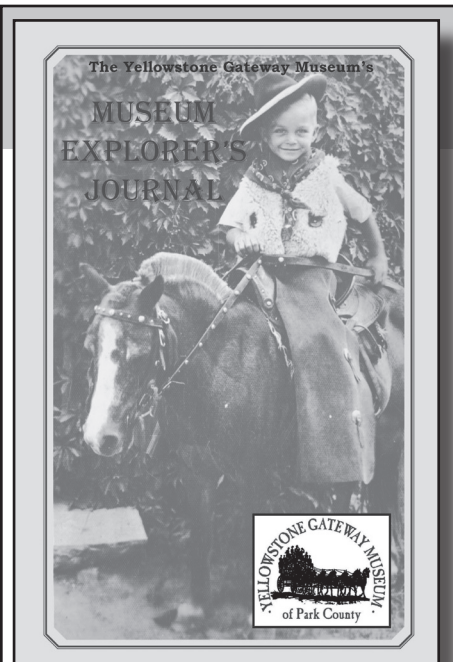
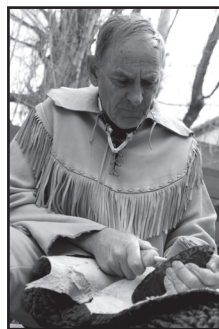
September 5—Thursday

### Modern-Day Flint Knapping A Conversation with Ray Alt

6:30 PM

Yellowstone Gateway Museum,  
118 W. Chinook

Local knapper Ray Alt talks about the process of flint knapping, his shaft wrench theory, the development of the exhibit, and more. The program is on the museum's upper floor next to the flint-knapping exhibit. Unfortunately it is not accessible to people who have trouble navigating stairs. Refreshments. Free.



### Ask about our new Museum Explorer's Journal!

Now available at the museum, it's free and packed with fun learning activities for the whole family!

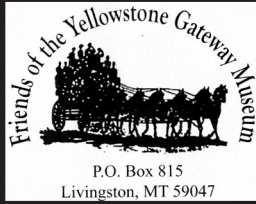
## Stay in touch with history!

—Like us on Facebook, another way to keep in touch with local history and the Yellowstone Gateway Museum.



—Visit our website:  
[yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org](http://yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org)

—Visit your museum and research center! Museum summer hours: 10-5, 7 days a week through September; Research Center hours: 8-5, Monday-Friday, year-round.



THANK YOU

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 Carol Woodley

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(continued from page 1)  
from dogwood, bark, and other natural materials.



Boys making a Scoutcraft version of fire

Breakfast of coffee and donuts, as well as a lunch of freshly grilled burgers, were offered Knap-In participants by the 4-H Shooting Sports Group on Saturday. Proceeds benefited the group and its travel to a national competition.

In the afternoon the knappers held a two-inch goat-game contest where participants had to give up \$5 to try to break a two-inch piece of obsidian from the parent chunk. The rock traveled around

the circle of knappers, and eventually George Bryce was left holding the last lump of lithic (stone) material and was declared the winner of half the pot.



George Bryce making a winning strike on obsidian in the two-inch goat game

After the goat game, Ray Alt auctioned off an array of beautiful and unique items made by the flint knappers or their wives to help cover the costs of the weekend, as well as to raise money for the Yellowstone Gateway Museum.

We received a lot of positive feedback about our new exhibit, Re-creating an Ancient Technology: Modern Day Flint Knapping. Thanks to Ray Alt and George Bryce's prolific and precise flint knapping, the three cases on the top floor landing of the museum are a rich and

interesting interpretation of flint knapping today. Visitors learn the origin of point and tool names, the process of flint knapping, and the identification of parent rocks, which are paired with projectile points made from the same material. A four by six foot map of Montana shows the approximate locations of the state's quarries and lists sources beyond Montana. The Yellowstone obsidian connection to Ohio's Hopewell Mounds is also explored, and includes ceremonial stone replicas made by Alt. After experiencing this exhibit, people will have a deeper understanding of how rocks have been used for thousands of years. If you haven't stopped by the museum this summer, this exhibit alone makes your visit worthwhile.

Admission to the museum was free during the weekend, giving people a break from the rainy, cool weather. It didn't seem to dampen any spirits!



George Bornemann making dogbane cordage



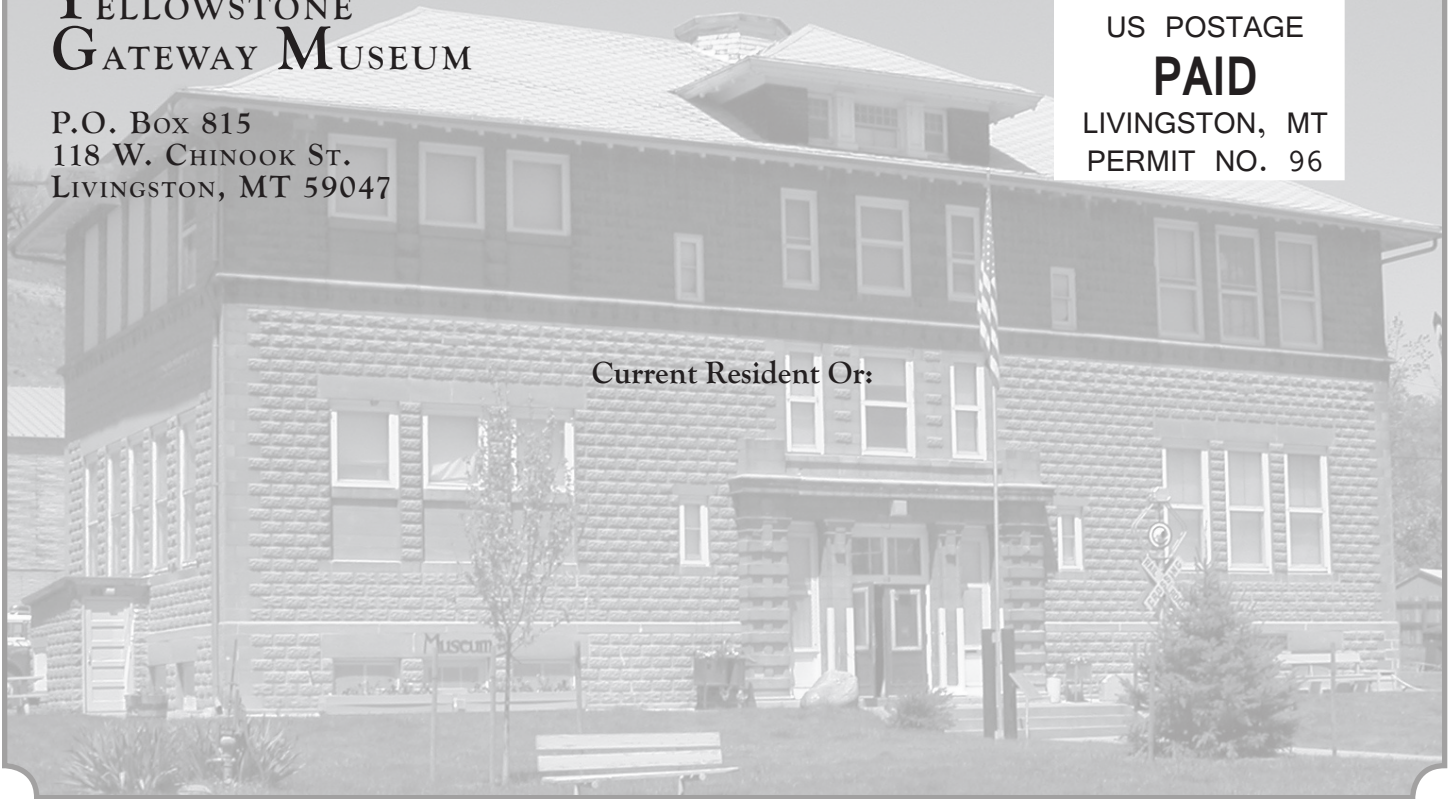
A dedicated young knapper showing his hard work

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**Fifty Cents and a Saddle Horse**

“Well, in 1931, it wasn’t all work on the ranch. If I could talk someone out of 50 cents and a saddle horse, I would ride to Bozeman Hot Springs for a dance. It cost 40 cents for the dance ticket and 10 cents for a glass of beer. No need to worry about taking a girl home; they were not interested in riding a horse at that time of morning after an all night struggle on a crowded dance floor.

Many a Sunday, I would ride over to my Aunt Lily, on Reese Creek. She had a gas washing machine and she would wash my clothes.”

–Sid McElwee

*History of Park County, Montana 1984, page 324*

**Hard Times and Rabbits**

“During the hard times in the 1920s, we ate so many jack rabbits, that every time the dog barked we had to drag the kids out from underneath the bed.”

–Jacobsen family

*History of Park County, Montana 1984, page 266*

~Compiled by Dick Dysart