

Silverton Country Historical Society

Museum and Office 428 South Water Street



This month's featured article is by Gus Frederick, long time Silverton resident and SHCS member, as well as historian, author, and well, you name it.....

The Red Kitty Affair

(By Gus Frederick with Thanks to Fred Parkinson for the photos)

It all began one autumn evening while scouting the back roads of the Silverton Hills for deer hunting venues. At the dead-end of one road, a shiny cylinder appeared on the headlights. Originally, it had served up any number of carbonated soft drinks. Now it's stainless steel shell sat in the middle of a dirt road.



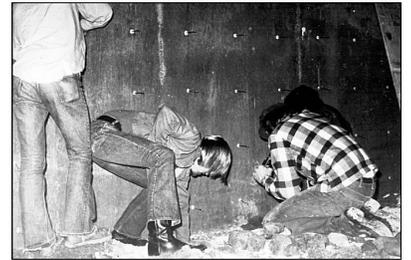
Quickly a scheme was hatched to use the empty container as a "Time Capsule." A sampling of contemporary examples from the here and now for the benefit of future folk. Various timely items were collected to be



added: Local newspapers, Oregon road maps, deluxe burger wrappers from various fast food chains, and a short 8mm movie featuring a time-lapse view driving through the streets of Silverton, ca. 1975. Once filled up, the capsule was welded shut at a local Hop Farm. Using the Silverton Police Department's engraving tool, we wrote on the side:

"TIME CAPSULE: IF FOUND, BURY DEEPER."

The original plan was to bury the capsule in the middle of Main Street, during the construction of the new bridge. A late night/early morning plan was devised the day before the concrete was to be poured. Unfortunately, the alarm failed to go off, the team was not alerted before the final patch of concrete was laid. Shortly after, it was announced that the old Birch house [*ed note: The Ames/Warnock House*] was to be moved to South Water Street, to serve as the new location of the Silverton Country Museum. The plot was modified to bury the time capsule in the basement of the new museum prior to the creation of a permanent floor.



A scout was placed at street level, with the code name of "**Red Kitty**." The capsule burying team, code named "**Cold Cold Basement**" kept in communication via walkie-talkie. Photos were taken of the event, and a media release prepared for when the basement floor was successfully covering

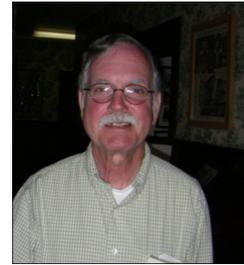


the capsule. Finally, in the summer of 1977 while home on leave from the USN, one of the conspirators read in the Appeal-Tribune that the Museum Basement floor was complete. However, when it was checked out, the capsule had been excavated, and was now sitting on top of the pile of excavated dirt behind the Museum. It had been un-earthed, and unceremoniously cast aside. At least the bomb squad wasn't called in to blow it up! It was grabbed, and returned for safe keeping in a local Mill Street basement, where it sits to this day.

Mark Bielemeier, Rick Ernst, Fred Parkinson, Lou Valknaar, Gus Frederick and Gordie Goschie. Not pictured is "Red Kitty" our scout, Ray Antico.

From the President...

This will be my first message to you in the newsletter since becoming president of SCHS in January. I want to thank all of you who take an active part in the activities at the museum. You know who you are, and let me state emphatically that the historical society would not function effectively without your help. I'm also thankful that I'm in a position to see much of what you do to make things operate on a day-to-day basis. We have a really wonderful group of volunteers!



Since many of you do not attend our monthly board meetings, I wanted to report to you on some of the activities that the historical society is currently involved with, so you are up-to-date with what is happening around the museum.

Wheelchair Lift in the Access Way

Since early March, we have been working on obtaining the necessary information to proceed with the required 'barrier removal' phase of our access way. When we obtained the permit to construct the access way in August, 2010, we were given a three year reprieve on adding a platform wheelchair lift to the structure, but we are now at the point in that process where we need to plan and proceed with that project. But we are still hopeful that we can somehow obtain a waiver so that we do not have to raise the necessary funds to obtain a lift at all. But, we will see how that all goes in the coming months. In the event that those waivers cannot be obtained, there are several grant programs that we can apply to in the hopes of raising the necessary funds to proceed.

Disaster Plan

We have recently been in contact with other museums in the area, in order to formulate a disaster plan for our museum. Some of those plans are really quite extensive, and we will be working on a plan that will incorporate those specific things we feel are important for our facility, so it will take quite a bit of work in the coming months to put this together, but the board is committed to doing it, and it is really important to have it in place, and the sooner the better. It's essential to have a plan of action in case of occurrences like fire, flooding, wind damage, or intruders, so that our extensive collection can be protected.

Ongoing Cosmetic Project

In addition to the above items, ongoing work on the cosmetic needs of the museum continues, in some cases, as weather permits. The painting of the porch and kick plates on the front stairs, plantings for the front gardens, repainting of the elevation sign on the front of the depot, continuing to work on the Porter School Bell Garden between the two structures, and repair of the drainage area at the basement door of the museum to help alleviate flooding problems that surfaced this past winter, are all projects that will be worked on this spring and summer. Also, the City of Silverton has promised to work the outside repainting of the facility into their maintenance schedule sometime this year, and then put us on a 7-year cycle for continued painting into the future. However, we will see how that all goes, since the financial woes of the city have been announced recently.

Your help would certainly be appreciated with any of the above projects. Contact me if you have any questions.

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Silverton Country Museum - History in the Making

SCHS Dime Toss Fundraiser Coming Up!

Summer WILL be coming! And a sure sign is the Historical Society's Dime Toss booth at the community festivals. Weather permitting we will be at the Strawberry Festival held in Coolidge-McClaine Park on Father's Day, Sunday, June 17, 2012. We still need lots of containers and of course volunteers to make this a successful fundraiser. Please check your cupboards for containers someone will want to



win, and then bag them up and bring them to us. We can use vases, cups, flower pots, deep bowls, drinking glassesanything you can find. You can leave your donations at the museum on Tuesdays, between 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. or weekends when we're open from 1-4 p.m., or put them on Kathy Hunter's porch at 211 Welch Street in Silverton. It's helpful if you put your name on the bag so we can thank you. Dime Toss earnings go toward improvements to the museum's landscaping. Your help is greatly appreciated! And please let us know if you would be willing to help share the fun by helping at the booth during the Strawberry Festival

and later this summer at the Homer Davenport Community festival. Call 503-873-7070. Thank you!

Vesper Geer (1917-2010): A New Archival Documentary By Mike Turner

A community-wide premier of this film was held Saturday, April 28th at the Waldo Hills Community Club. The crowd had a great time, visiting, enjoying refreshments and most of all, re-living the life of Vesper Geer Rose, an amazing woman, committed to her family and the history of her home. In the 93 years that encompassed her life, the last century was laid before us through photographs and her own words. The film will be shown again in the area and the Museum will also try to arrange a showing. We will keep you filled in on how you might be able to purchase a copy of your own.



A New Look for Bobbie!

Earlier this spring, the statue of Bobbie the Wonder Dog got a face lift (muzzle lift?) and a thorough re-do. He's looking better than ever at his location in the parking lot of the Coffee Station on South Water Street, beside the replica of his dog house and just next to Lori Webb's amazing mural of his adventures. Do stop to visit him, but treat him gently. The Murals Society would like this new look to last a while!



Volunteers are needed to help with hosting at the Museum.
If you can share just **3 hours** a month with us, please call
Jan Long, 503-873-7070.

The Museum in the Community

MillTown Pub, located at Jefferson and Mill Streets here in Silverton, has several vintage logging photographs from the Museum on display. Thank you for sharing Silverton’s history!



Celebration of Cultures Friday, April 6, 2012

The Silverton Country Historical Society joined with several other organizations in participating in April’s First Friday Celebration of Cultures sponsored by Silverton Together. The goal of this event was to raise awareness of the diversity that has formed our community and the global community as well ...and to celebrate this diversity. The Historical Society had a display that showcased the history of Native Americans in the area. We encourage people who are interested in the native culture, to come see more displays at the museum.



Other Museum Happenings...



Left—Curator Jan Long with a recently donated Silverton penny parking meter—on display for now in the access way.

Right—Gary Ohren helping move boxes as we begin to index and organize the Museum’s extensive framed photograph collection. Items of apparel were moved to the upstairs closet so we could provide for centralized storage of these photos, making it easier for us to locate specific ones.



Marion County City Display Project

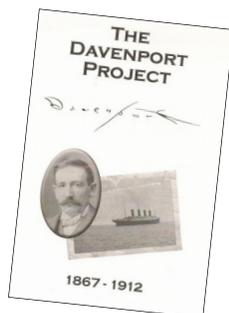
Earlier this year, Carolyn Hutton, former SCHS Curator, Gus Frederick, Creative Genius, and Fred Parkinson, Jack Hande and Chris Schwab, SCHS volunteers, met with Steve Kay, City of Silverton Development Planner, to tackle a challenge presented by Marion County Commissioner Sam Brentano. He asked all 20 towns that make up the county to prepare a display which would serve as a showcase for its essence and character. We had 3 or 4 brainstorming sessions, came up with an idea and Gus took our suggestions and created the poster seen here. Really amazing!

The Cities Display Project was unveiled at the Marion County Courthouse in Salem on April 11, 2012, with all 20 cities represented. Do try to visit the display which is located on the first floor just off the main entry hallway of the County Courthouse at 100 High Street NE, Salem.



Coming Soon!

The newly revised 2nd edition of
Cartoons by Davenport,
Compiled by
Gus Frederick



The Davenport Project

Homer Davenport Community Festival
2012

Over the course of the year, the Davenport Project will present a series of lectures, exhibits and general fun, leading up to Silverton's annual Homer Davenport Community Festival, starting the first Friday in August, 2012. The goals of the Project are straightforward: To honor the memory of this pioneering Oregonian cartoonist, lecturer and author, during the centennial of his passing, as the RMS Titanic's last victim, in 1912. Interested? Learn more about this at.....

www.Davenportport.LiberalUniversity.org



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The caption on the postcard reads:
“Repaired while you wait.”

Happy Mother’s Day!

Thank you to our new and
renewing members—

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Dorothy Price | Nancy Gilbert |
| Bo Larsen | Luanne Crail |
| Jane Bleakney | Marlene Hanson |
| Trish and Craig Jensen | |
| Virginia Tuggle McKim | |
| Ray and Kathy Hunter | |
| Gordon Munro and Melanie Rae | |
| Salon Blondies | |
| Larsen & Flynn Insurance | |
| Nicole Parkinson Winnen | |
| The Gordon House Conservancy | |
| Tom and Lynne Radcliffe | |
| Bob and Marilyn Dedrick | |

And Thank You —to Ken and Dolores Blust
for your generous donation—**and** for always
being there when we need you!

The value of the support of our members cannot
be adequately measured.

Your S.C.H.S. Board

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
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| Tracy Duerst | Treasurer |
| Jan Long | Curator |
| Kathy Hunter | Membership |
| Molly Murphy | |
| Marsha Worthen | |
| Kay LaLone | |
| Ruth Kaser | |

**If you received an overdue
notice with your newsletter,
we appreciate your prompt
response.**

Thank you!