

The Ouray County Historical Society (OCHS) thanks the Ouray County Plaindealer for their assistance in printing and distributing our newsletter.

MISSION STATEMENT: The Ouray County Historical Society (OCHS) is dedicated to preserve, protect, procure, exhibit, and interpret whatever relates to the natural, social, and cultural history of Ouray County and the adjacent San Juan Mountain Region of Colorado.

Summer 2015

Centennial Ranch Tour Showcases Colorado's Ranching Heritage

Centennial Ranch, a blend of historic preservation and rustic elegance, opens its entire spread to the public the weekend of June 27-28. A fundraiser for the Ouray County Historical Society, Open Ranch Days includes self-guided tours and a cowboy-style lunch.

Located in northern Ouray County just off Highway 550, the 400-acre, working cattle ranch dates back to 1879. The current owner has meticulously restored each ranch building on the property to reflect historic details and functions. The tour takes guests through those structures as well as the rancher's timber frame home, which has been featured in *Architectural Digest*.

In September of 2011, OCHS hosted a tour of the ranch that drew visitors from throughout the state and beyond. This year's event will feature summer blooms instead of fall foliage and will offer some new attractions.

The family-oriented event runs 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. both Saturday and Sunday. Admission is \$20 for adults and free for everyone 19 and under. The price includes an outdoor lunch of chili, biscuits and hot dogs. Transportation around the ranch will be provided for non-walkers. All proceeds benefit the OCHS.

Each guest will receive a detailed guide book, which describes the historic functions and construction of buildings along the tour route. Members of the Historical Society will be stationed throughout to answer questions.

Centennial Ranch meanders along a rugged half-mile stretch of the Uncompahgre River canyon. Visitors may catch a glimpse of two golden eagles that nest on the sandstone cliff above the river. The entire property is a donated conservation easement, which preserves the ranch land in perpetuity. Besides protecting wildlife habitats, the easement ensures that Centennial Ranch will never be developed and will always remain a working cattle ranch.

The tour begins at the rancher's residence, the Dashwood House, where guests can relax on benches near the riverbank or wander among early summer perennials. Most of the Dashwood's spacious rooms are included in the tour. Constructed of salvaged timbers and cedar board-and-batten siding, the house is

detailed with medieval-style, hand-forged iron work. Sturdy English and Welsh furnishings share the post-and-beam interior with western implements.

Guests will proceed to the line cabin, the traditional shelter for cowboys working fence lines along the far reaches of large ranches. Thick walls,

made from standing dead spruce, a stone fireplace and antique stove create a cozy, year-round refuge from the elements.

From there, it's a short walk to the calving shed, the original cabin that housed the first homesteaders and their nine children. An experienced rancher will be on site to describe the

calving process and the equipment used for complicated deliveries.

The tour ends at the massive barn, also a timber frame structure made from recycled wood and intricate yet functional iron work. Besides draft horse stalls, the barn features a tack room, grain room, and displays of ranching memorabilia. Just outside the wagon bay, the cook crew will prepare chili and biscuits in Dutch ovens and roast hot dogs over fire pits.

This scenic expanse of rocky bluffs, pastures and cottonwood trees may look vaguely familiar even to first-time visitors. The ranch has been the backdrop for many major companies' advertisements. Cabela's, Marlboro, Urban Outfitters and Abercrombie and Fitch are among the companies that have shot ads at Centennial.

The entrance to Centennial Ranch is on the east side of Highway 550, 14.5 miles south of Montrose and about 12 miles north of Ridgway. For more information, call the Ouray County Historical Society at (970) 325-4576.



Smith family ranch: a 100-year legacy

When James Nelson Smith and Charlotte Eldridge arrived in the Uncompahgre Valley in a covered wagon, the Utes still roamed the Western Slope, Montrose was not yet founded, and miners swarmed the San Juans around the new communities of Ouray and Silverton. The couple chose a site for their homestead about two miles south of the Los Pinos Agency (present day Colona). The Smiths built a tiny log cabin with a dirt roof on the fertile banks of the Uncompahgre River surrounded by sandstone and shale cliffs. Chief Shavano raised a small garden on the north part of the Smith's ranch.

After the Utes were removed to Eastern Utah, the Smiths purchased other homesteads adding fields to



The OCHS invites you to spend an evening with one of the legendary "Harvey Girls" and enjoy an authentic Harvey Girl dinner Sunday, September 20 at the Historic Western Hotel in Ouray.

The OCHS fundraiser, a Vignettes of History event, features Susan Atwood's portrayal of a typical Harvey Girl. Her presentation is titled, "A Rail Pass to a Better Life." The Harvey Girls were gracious and well-trained waitresses hired by hospitality entrepreneur Fred Harvey to serve weary travelers at his establishments along the historic Santa Fe Railroad route.

The event begins with a cash bar at 4 p.m. followed by dinner, performance and dessert. The inspired, four-course Harvey Girl menu includes lamb chop with creamy shallot sauce, roasted beef with mushroom gravy and a lavish dessert buffet.

Guests will have an opportunity to bid on two auction items: a package that includes one night's stay and two meals at the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, New Mexico or a night's stay at La Posada Hotel in Winslow, Arizona. Both are original Harvey House hotels.

The OCHS thanks Terrance and Elizabeth Barry for their generous sponsorship of the event.

\$75.00 per person. Reservations required. Call OCHS at (970) 325-4576



OCHS Curator's Report



By Don Paulson
OCHS Curator

In 2013 OCHS moved the museum archives over to our new research center on Main Street. This opened up a number of rooms for exhibit areas. For example, we now have a small room dedicated to the life of Otto Mears, the "Pathfinder of the San Juans," and a new area for rotating exhibits which currently features Tom Hillhouse's "Ouray Postal History" exhibit. Through the generosity of Sandra Boles, owner of North Moon Gallery, we now have five additional large, lighted display cases in the museum. Two of these are now filled with new displays on topics including the old townsite of Dallas north of Ridgway and an expanded display on Ouray Bands. In addition to these new display areas we also now have an expanded storage area for textiles including Victorian clothes, our large collection of historic wedding dresses and linens.

Wonderful donations have continued to come into the museum during the past year. These include historic photos, Victorian clothing, books on southwestern Colorado, military items, crank phones used in Ouray, an industrial sewing machine used for over 40 years in Gus Mechler's shoe repair shop in Ouray, a steel

phone used in the Camp Bird mine, a collection of dozens of keys to areas in the Camp Bird Mill dating to the early 1900s, historic typewriters including one with two complete sets of keys, one upper case and one lower case, a large ventilated cigar case, high resolution scans of 19th century area mining maps published by Emil Fischer and samples of high-grade silver ore from the new Revenue Mine.

A particularly interesting donation was a cane that belonged to The Reverend J. J. Gibbons. Father Gibbons came to Ouray in 1888 and commented that the parish he ministered to was the size of Ireland. He wrote a book about his experiences traveling on horseback, and sometimes walking, between Silverton, Ouray, Telluride, Rico, etc. A reprint of that book, *In the San Juan - Sketches*, is for sale in the museum bookstore.

Barbara and Jack Rairden have donated a 37" x 42" x 6" three-dimensional relief map of Ouray County that is displayed in the Ranch. The Ouray Woman's Club provided OCHS with a grant to cover most of the cost of constructing a Plexiglas cover for the relief map.

A few years ago we built a small barn on the museum grounds to house the Marie Scott wagon and other ranching items. The two cabins outside the museum have been on the museum's security system for years but not the new barn. Last fall Steve and Marty Sears donated \$500 to add the barn to our security system.

In September 2013 John Fielder gave a two-day photo workshop. It was so successful that the sixteen participants agreed to have their best photos from the workshop displayed last year in one of our new exhibit rooms. These photos were for sale and enough were sold to more than pay for the cost of the exhibit.

Once again I invite our members to visit the museum. We are continually adding new exhibit items and descriptive signs giving the history of displayed items.



▲ Bertha Spears, a Harvey Girl.

MOUNTAIN TREASURES Fiber Art Auction

Whether you're looking for a holiday gift, a special remembrance of our beautiful Ouray County mountains, or just a great way to support our terrific historical society, you won't want to miss this year's "Mountain Treasures - Fiber Art Auction."

Since January, 21 fiber artists in Ouray and Montrose Counties have been creating small quilted and hand-woven pieces that will be auctioned for the benefit of OCHS this summer. The auction is a change from our traditional twelve years of making a "raffle quilt." Remember the beautiful Victorian Crazy Quilts in 2003, or the "Times and Seasons in Ouray County" quilt in 2006, or the intricate Cathedral Window quilt in 2013? These themes and methods have been repeated in various pieces available for sale and auction this summer. Items include wall hangings, table runners, place mats, pillows and even a picnic throw.

Beginning with the Vintage Quilt Show on August 18, the treasured pieces will be displayed at the museum and photos of the items posted online at the OCHS website. At that time, you have the opportunity to support the artists' efforts and OCHS with a "Buy it Now" bid. If you're willing to risk waiting, you can place your bid in a live auction at the Vignette of History Dinner, "Harvey Girls" on September 20 at the Western Hotel. Look for more publicity on these "Mountain Treasures" and plan to generously support our efforts and OCHS.



◀ Come see the tackroom located inside the barn as part of the tour of the historic Centennial Ranch during this year's fundraiser for the Ouray County Historical Society, June 27-28. Call the OCHS at 970-325-4576 for details.



President's Message
By Kevin Chismire

PRESIDENT'S LETTER, EARLY SUMMER 2015

Welcome OCHS members and friends of the Ouray Museum.

As we prepare to enter our summer season for 2015, I am excited to tell you about many of our sponsored events which, due to their ongoing popularity, will continue to grace the stage of our society. Moreover, we are bringing back exciting events of yesteryear for an encore performance.

Our early summer fundraising event will be a grand return to the Centennial Ranch owned and operated by Vince Kontny. This "Double Shoe Cattle Company" in Ouray County is a working ranch and we are proud to sponsor an open ranch event on June 27th and 28th in which patrons can spend a day along the gorgeous bottom lands alongside the meandering Uncompahgre River. Guests will experience all aspects of a living, working ranch. Come join in the fun. This part of our western her-

itage is something all us greenhorns should see...at least once in a lifetime.

The ever popular "Evenings of History" series under the directorship of Don Paulson, will kick off its inaugural performance on June 16th at the Ouray Community Center. Check your newspapers or visit our website for times and topics.

New exhibits and artifacts continue to find their way to our museum on nearly a daily basis. Come in and see all the new additions. Of course we still have our July 4th celebration at the museum after the parade in Ouray, guided tours ranging from the Corkscrew Railroad and Turntable to the museum itself, walking tours of Ouray, the Quilt Show and many others.

Kevin Chismire M.D.
President
OCHS



Dashwood House
Vince Kontny
35000 South Hwy. 550
Montrose, CO 81403
970-240-3822

▲ Map details location of Centennial Ranch, site of this year's Open Ranch Days, June 27-28, a fundraiser for the Ouray County Historical Society. See details and story on page one.



▲ Ralph Smith with his team of horses on the old Smith Ranch.

Please consider being a member of the OCHS! Help preserve the history of Ouray County

Your membership is vital so that the Society can maintain not only our historic Museum building but our new Research Center and Archive. All membership levels include Free admission to the Museum, a 10% discount on items for sale in the gift shop and Museum bookstore, free admission to the OCHS Evenings of History series, and receive newsletters and special announcements.

Please fill in below: (Please Print)

Name(s): _____	Membership Levels
Organization (If Business Member) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Silver King \$30 (Individual)
Mailing Address _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Guston \$40 (Family)
City, State, Zip Code _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Revenue \$50 - \$99
Phone Number _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Grizzly Bear \$100 - \$249
Email _____	<input type="checkbox"/> National Belle \$250 - \$499
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yankee Girl \$500 - \$999
	<input type="checkbox"/> Camp Bird \$1,000 - Up
	<input type="checkbox"/> Business Member \$50 - Up

Amount Paid _____ by (check one) Cash _____ Check _____ Credit Card _____

Date: _____

Please return to: OCHS, P.O. Box 151, Ouray, CO 81427
Or Phone with Credit Card info to: 970-325-4576

OURAY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kevin Chismire, President	Storme Zanett Lowery	Gail Saunders	Newsletter Committee
Tom Hillhouse, Vice-President	Don Paulson, Curator	Robert Stoufer	~ Maria Jones
Joey Huddleston, Secretary	Teri Blackford	Ted Zegers	~ Kate Kellogg
	Walt Rule		~ Gail Saunders

LEGACY Smith Ranch

From pg 1

their ranch. The couple raised nine children on their farm. They planted the fields with hay and raised apple and peach trees on the higher ground. After James' death, their son Ralph continued operation of the lands. He bought Hereford cattle and grazed his herd on higher ground which the family leased from the National Forest Service.

The Smiths expanded their variety of crops to include barley, oats, wheat, and corn. The small town of Colona sprang up and Ralph and Rose Smith participated in community events.

Eventually, their son Rollen assumed the position of running the ranch. He married Alyce Mae Soderquist and their children and grandchildren worked and played on the ranch, helping

with the haying and milking and riding ponies in their spare time.

Ralph and Alyce Mae's grandchildren were the fifth generation to call the Smith Ranch home. In August of 1988, the Smith Brothers Ranch was awarded a Centennial Farm Certificate from the Colorado Historical Society and the Colorado Department of Agriculture. This award signifies that a ranch or farm has been owned by one family for over 100 years.

In 1992, Rollin and Alyce sold their ranch to Vince and Joan Kontny. The Kontnys honored the Smith family by naming their ranch "Centennial Ranch." Vince and Joan have continued the tradition of maintaining the ranch as a working cow/calf operation. The ranch has been preserved in perpetuity with a conservation easement.

Ouray County Historical Society (OCHS) Evenings of History 2015*

- JUNE 16** GAIL SAUNDERS, OCHS PHOTO ARCHIVIST AND LOCAL HISTORIAN, *A LOOK INTO THE OCHS PHOTO ARCHIVES: MINES, MILLS AND MINERS.*
- JUNE 23** L. JACKSON NEWELL, EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY OF UTAH, *THE IRREPRESSIBLE L. L. NUNN: PIONEERING FROM HYDROPOWER TO EDUCATIONAL REFORM.*
- JUNE 30** ANDREW GULLIFORD, PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, FORT LEWIS COLLEGE, *SOLO IN THE SOUTHWEST WILDERNESS: GOING OUT AND COMING BACK.*
- JULY 7** ROBERT STOUFER, PROPRIETOR OF BUCKSKIN BOOKSELLERS IN OURAY, *MINERAL COLLECTING IN OURAY COUNTY.*
- JULY 14** JIM KORNBORG, RIDGWAY PHYSICIAN, *FRONTIER MEDICINE: THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF DOC ROWAN.*
- JULY 21** CAROLYNE KELLY AND TOM HILLHOUSE, FORMER PRACTICING ATTORNEYS, *JUDGE STORY – FROM REPROBATE JUDGE TO LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR –ROAD TO REDEMPTION.*
- JULY 28** ION SPOR, SUPERINTENDENT, TCW HYDRO AND RIDGWAY DAM, *THE HISTORY OF THE RIDGWAY DAM.*
- AUG 4** DON PAULSON, OCHS CURATOR AND EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY, CAL STATE LOS ANGELES, *THE RIDGWAY RAILROAD MUSEUM, PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE.*

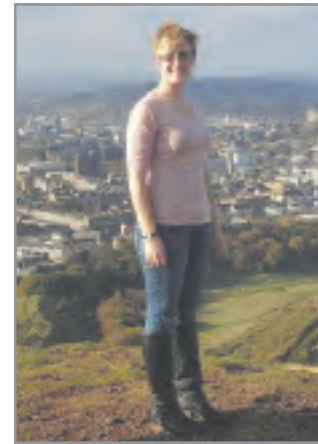
*THE FIRST SIX TALKS TAKE PLACE AT 7:30 PM AT THE OURAY COMMUNITY CENTER AND THE LAST TWO TAKE PLACE AT 7:30 PM AT THE SHERBINO THEATER IN RIDGWAY.

Stovicek joins OCHS for internship

Sarah Stovicek is the 2015 summer intern for

By Sarah Stovicek

the Ouray County Historical Society. Having grown up in Ouray, Sarah is very happy to be thrown into anything that has to do with Ouray history. When Sarah thinks back to her time at Ouray schools she remembers loving Native American and Pioneer history the most. Ouray's past is full of stories of mining and hardship. Sarah's favorite part about history is getting to see and research how other people lived in the same places we do today, but survived without all of the technology. Sarah believes it is a fun thought experiment for her to imagine herself living in any period of history other than the present.



▲ Ouray native Sarah Stovicek is pursuing a B.A. in History at Regis University.

This summer while Sarah is fulfilling her internship requirements with the Ouray County Historical Society she is working most days in the Archives on Main Street, and a couple days a week at the Museum on 6th Avenue. Sarah is excited to get started with her hands-on historical experience here in Ouray. Studying old photographs, helping with Tuesday nights Evenings of History talks, and helping with the Open Ranch Days are just a few of the things Sarah will be doing with her time at her internship. The Ouray County Historical Society is full of amaz-

ing men and women who are passionate enough about history to volunteer their time and money to keep history alive. Sarah wants to take this as an example for her future endeavors and hopes to remember that history holds an important position in each person's life.

During the school year Sarah attends Regis University in Denver Colorado. With one year of school remaining, Sarah is in the midst of completing a Bachelor of Arts in History with a minor in Religious Studies. Sarah takes her studies very seriously and is considering going to graduate school following a couple year break after Regis. If Sarah attends graduate school she would like to go either for Archaeology or Museum Studies. She is hoping that this summer internship will help her make that decision more easily. After Sarah graduates from Regis University she is planning on doing a couple years of volunteer service through the Jesuit Volunteer Corps before she makes her decision on graduate school.

The Ouray County Historical Society has given Sarah an opportunity to learn and grow in a field that she loves and hopes to progress in. This summer is giving Sarah the chance to look into and better understand the field of history and the history of Ouray County.

OCHS 2015



CALENDAR

**Museum summer hours:
Monday thru Saturday
10am-4:30pm
& Sunday 12pm-4:30pm.**

JUNE

- 16** Evenings of History series begins each Tuesday @ 7pm. * See topics & dates as listed in Newsletter
- 21** Father's Day – free admission to Museum for Fathers.
- 27/28** Special Event -Centennial Ranch Open House - 11am-4pm each day. \$20.00 per person. Ages 19 and under free. Pay at door. Further information call 970-325-4576.

JULY

- 4** Lemonade & Brownies at Museum following Parade. 1950's Theme. Come and join us!
- 8** Guided Tour of Ouray Museum led by Curator, Don Paulson 9am \$10.00 per person (\$5.00 OCHS members). Call 970-325-4576 to pre-register.
- 11** Corkscrew Railroad Bed and Turntable Hike led by Don Paulson. \$10.00 per person Call 970-325-4576 to pre-register.
- 18** Guided Walking Tour of Cedar Hill Cemetery led by Glenda Moore. 9am – \$10.00 per person. Call 970-325-4576 to pre-register.
- 25** Guided Walking Tour of Historic Main Street in Ouray led by Irene Mattivi. 3pm – Call 970-325-4576 to pre-register.

AUGUST

- 5** Special Event -Guided Geology Tour of the San Juans led by Robert Stoufer and Larry Meckel - 7:30am-5pm – Call 970-325-4576 for details.
- 12** Guided Tour of Ouray Museum led by Curator, Don Paulson 9am \$10.00 per person (\$5.00 OCHS members). Call 970-325-4576 to pre-register.
- 15** Corkscrew Railroad Bed and Turntable Hike led by Don Paulson. \$10.00 per person. Call 970-325-4576 to pre-register.
- 18** Annual Quilt Show opens at Ouray Museum. Runs through September 29.
- 22** Guided Walking Tour of Cedar Hill Cemetery led by Glenda Moore. 9am - \$10.00 per person. Call 970-325-4576 to pre-register.
- 29** Guided Walking Tour of Historic Main Street in Ouray led by Irene Mattivi. 3pm -\$10.00 per person. Call 970-325-4576 to pre-register.

SEPTEMBER

- 17-20** Ouray County Railroad Days. See <http://www.ridgwayrailroadmuseum.org> for details.
- 20** Special Event - Vignettes of History 2015 – “Harvey Girls” 4pm-8pm . \$75.00 per person. RSVP Dinner and Performance. Call 970-325-4576 to RSVP. Seating Limited.