



WYOMING STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE NEWS

WINTER 2011

VOL. VII, No. 1

Trash to Treasure from the WPA

By Mary Hopkins, State Historic Preservation Officer



Randall J. Hopkins and the Virginia Pitman painting, "Four Phases of Labor." The painting has been restored and returned to the WSM's collection. Hopkins viewed the painting at the GSA art repository in Washington D.C. prior to its return.

Sometime in the late 1970's, the East Side School, now the Laramie Plains Civic Center and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was being closed and all educational functions were being moved to the new Laramie Junior High. At that time, items found in the school were being randomly tossed into the dumpster and one such item was a large oil painting entitled "Four Phases of Labor" by Virginia Pitman.

Being a masters degree student in Art at the University of Wyoming, and interested in the history of the state, my brother-in-law, Randall J. Hopkins, rescued the painting and kept it in storage for almost thirty years in various locations in the Laramie area. In 2008, he pulled it from storage and inquired if I would take it to the staff at the Wyoming State Museum (WSM) to see if they might have any interest in it.

This is the beginning of the story of the rebirth of this lost piece of Wyoming history and art. Jim

Allison, Jennifer Alexander, and Dominique Schultes, curators at the WSM inspected the piece of art, determined it to be federal property, and sent it to the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), Design Excellence & the Arts Division curator, Julie Redwine to be repaired, cleaned, and conserved. The GSA's Fine Arts Collection is "one of our nation's oldest and largest

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Trash to Treasure from the WPA continued ...

public art collections. It consists of permanently installed and moveable mural paintings, sculpture, architectural or environmental works of art, and works on paper dating from 1850 to the present” per the GSA Fine Arts Collection Website. In addition to their large art collection, the GSA is currently conducting a New Deal Artwork Inventory Project throughout the United States, thus this find was exciting to them.

During this same time, a New Deal context project was started by Dr. Michael Cassity for the Wyoming SHPO. He directed me to a 1980 article entitled “The New Deal Cultural Projects in Wyoming: A Survey and Appraisal” published in Vol. 52 No. 2 Fall addition of the Annals of Wyoming, by Dr. Herbert R. Dieterich. This article provides an excellent history of the Federal Art Program in Wyoming. Dieterich reports that in 1938, Federal Art Project supervisor and U.W. Art professor, E.E. Lowry submitted a report on the operation of the extension art galleries in Laramie, Rock Springs, Riverton, and Torrington. He

makes note of the problems in the retention of “removable” pieces of art, such as the Pitman painting, throughout the years; many were never permanently affixed and were replaced during redecorating and remodeling. Dieterich explains the context of art in the 1930’s in Wyoming, “Away from the population centers, creative talent was likely to be scarce, undeveloped, and not highly valued. As an item of public consumption and interest, the fine arts remained...largely outside of the consciousness of most Wyomingites.” However, this New Deal art gallery project brought a lasting appreciation for art to the state which remains today. Dieterich points out, “The extension gallery in Rock Springs was particularly successful. It operated without interruption and established a tradition (as well as an art collection) carried on today by the Rock Spring Fine Art Center.”

The Pitman painting represents more than just art, it connects us to the New Deal, Laramie’s historic East Side School, and helps to explain the history of art in Wyoming. It also creates a

bridge between historic preservation and the arts, telling the story of the New Deal and aiding in our understanding of this period in our history. It also demonstrates how art and preservation have a symbiotic relationship and can be used to educate and promote Wyoming’s past.

Prior to the painting being returned to Wyoming, the GSA used it during a recent filming of PBS’s “Antiques Road Show” which will be aired sometime in 2011. Hopefully, this painting will be included in the production as a backdrop on the discussion of the GSA’s Works Progress Administration (WPA) art collection. The painting was returned to the WSM in the fall of 2010 and is on permanent loan from the GSA. Plans are being made to exhibit this piece of art in the future at the WSM. If you are interested in seeing other works by this artist, “Youth and Ambition” is on display at the Albany County Public Library in Laramie. “Four Phases of Labor” is the only WPA era art in the WSM’s collection and it was only a few hours away from being sent to the Laramie landfill.



On May 4, 2010 John P. Laughlin of the State Historic Preservation Office was invited by Central Wyoming Community College (CWC) instructor Todd Guenther to provide a basic one-day lithic analysis workshop for CWC students. CWC was the recipient of a donated collection of projectile points amassed over a 40 year period from an area north of Rock Springs. The main task of the workshop was to separate the projectile points chronologically. Accurately identifying age from surface collected projectile points is not necessarily a straight-forward task, and Laughlin instructed the students on how to use morphological characteristics along with various projectile point chronologies to help place the projectile points in their respective time periods. The area of Wyoming where the projectile points were collected represents an overlap in land use by peoples typically associated with the Plains/Rocky Mountain region and those of the Great Basin region, and as such, a variety of sources were needed to help aid the workshop participants.

Salt Creek Trail-blazing

By Anne Toxey, Toxey/McMillan Design Associates

The Salt Creek Historic Mine Trail and Byway project is underway. Following a project kick-off meeting in June, Laura Nowlin and Ashley Rooney of SHPO met in Midwest with 13 members of the community and with the exhibit developers, Toxey/McMillan Design Associates (TMDA), on October 8th to discuss story lines and locations for the byway signs.

TMDA principals, Anne Toxey and Patrick McMillan, also spent a few days in the region conducting field and archival research and meeting community members who are involved in conserving Salt Creek's history. They were treated to a field exploration of the Salt Creek and Teapot Dome oilfields with geologist John Albanese. Archivist Teri Hedgpeth shared with them the related holdings of the Western History Center. They also talked with Casper College faculty who are developing materials related to Salt Creek history, including Jeff Sun and Ebba Stedillie. Professor Sun's GIS students have been mapping locations and buildings of the old oil towns and camps, while Professor Stedillie's students have been conducting oral histories of people who grew up in the region.

The interpretation being developed for the project includes historical, geological, and cultural content.



Scene from the Salt Creek Oilfield, image courtesy of Anne Toxey.



Salt Creek Oilfield Powerplant, 2010, image courtesy of Anne Toxey.

Historic Mine Trail and Byway Program

The Historic Mine Trail and Byway program was established by the Wyoming Legislature in 2005. The program was created for the purpose of designating and identifying historic mine locations, trails and byways linking historic mines within the state. Objectives of the program are to 1) Provide a precise history of mineral development in Wyoming; 2) Interpret the role of mining and minerals in the development of Wyoming's economy; 3) Identify and describe Wyoming's mining and mineral development heritage.

The program originally operated under a commission created by the Wyoming State Legislature. During the 2009 Legislature, the program was moved to the Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office Monuments and Markers Program. The Monuments and Markers program coordinator currently administers the Mine Byway program.

The Monuments and Markers Advisory Committee approved the Salt Creek Oilfield Byway in April 2010. Toxey/McMillan Design Associates is currently developing interpretive materials for the Byway.

Mammoth Quarry Investigation

By Paul Sanders



Visitor Center/Museum (left) and Administrative Building (right) at Mammoth. Photos courtesy of Elaine Skinner Hale, National Park Service, Yellowstone National Park

In the summer of 2009, the National Park Service, Yellowstone National Park, requested that OWSA investigate an area near Mammoth that was said to contain historic rock quarries. The sandstone rock in these quarries was reported to have been used to build the characteristic, early historic buildings that make Mammoth (formerly Fort Yellowstone) so distinctive, and a National Historic Landmark. Aubrey Haines in his 1977 two-volume book “The Yellowstone Story” reports that Fort Yellowstone was established in 1891 with 12 wood buildings constructed by that fall. Additional buildings were constructed in 1893 and 1897, but it is the 1909 buildings that are of concern. Haines notes that “It was the work completed in 1909 that gave Fort Yellowstone its characteristic appearance. Seven stone buildings were added: a three story, two-troop barracks (the present administration building), a BOQ or bachelor officer’s quarters (now the park museum), a duplex to house two captains, a field officer’s quarters (presently the residence of the park superintendent), two large cavalry stables, and a combined blacksmith shop and stable guard. The stonework for the 1909 buildings was done by Scottish masons using sandstone quarried from the hillside between the Gardner River

and the present campground. Sixty years of exposure to sun, wind, and rain have given those walls the same gray-and-tan coloration as the cliffs of nearby Mount Everts; otherwise, time seems hardly to have touched them.”

As a part of OWSA’s investigation, additional archival research on the rock quarry was obtained by Robert Rosenberg of Rosenberg Historical Consultants. He found that during the early construction phase of Fort Yellowstone, there were two stone quarries that were used for building materials. On November 22, 1907, Major Allen sent a sample of building stone from each quarry to the Quartermaster General for examination. He stated in a letter to the Quartermaster General that “Although the stone from each...has been used in foundations of the various buildings here and for the entire construction of the house of the U.S. Commissioner... (stone from both being used in this house), the quarries are not yet well opened up.”

Allen continued in his report that “The stone in the lower quarry is more easily worked and is more

consistent, but some of the stone in the upper quarry has a remarkably fine appearance.” The upper quarry, in the gulch above the laundry, is about 700 yards from the flag staff... The lower quarry is about one mile below the flag staff on the right of the road leading to Gardiner...” The upper quarry was located in Clematis Gulch, which is a small valley, just west of Mammoth.

Captain Joseph R. Castner, QMC, took charge of new building construction at Fort Yellowstone in March 1908, and wrote a long letter to the Quartermaster General stating his reasons for the use of stone over brick or frame buildings: 1) the post commander wanted stone; 2) stone was easily obtainable; 3) stone offered fire protection; 4) stone was relatively cheap; 5) stone possessed architectural values. He stated that the local quarries were not of a quality suitable for cut rock and that he recommended that wherever possible “rock face” be used. He also stated that stone in the water table, sills, and lintels should be procured from Columbus, Montana. It was a light-colored, very fine sandstone that Capt. Hiram Chittenden (Chief

... the large rocks piles were demonstrably linked to construction of the magnificent historic buildings farther up the hill a hundred years earlier.

Engineer in Yellowstone) had used for similar elements in the U.S. Engineer's Office.

In November 1911, W.D. Lovell, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, who was the contractor for the construction of the post chapel, requested permission from the Office of Constructing Quartermaster to use the stone "from the usual place about one mile from the post towards the Gardner River." The site was further described in another letter as "the quarry below drill ground in the ridge which extends toward the Gardner River and about one mile from the military reservation of Fort Yellowstone." The stone was also used to construct a bridge at Yellowstone, Montana in 1914. The quarry was eventually closed and reclaimed by 1935.

OWSA staff members, Paul Sanders, Carmen Clayton, and Bill Scoggin were able to document a number of quarry pits, rock debris piles, and some scattered metal cans and other items associated with the quarrying operations. The quarry pits were mostly located along either side of a long, narrow ridge with outcrops of sandstone. Pits were dug into the side of the ridge, with some as large as 275 feet long by 100 feet wide. The pits are now filled with piles of excavated rock that are likely the result of the cleanup and reclamation efforts in 1935. Other piles of excavated rock were also scattered along the base of the quarry pits. The presence of a 25 pound blasting powder can and a number of rocks containing drill holes indicate that explosives were used in the quarrying process. Only one small area contained some broken beverage bottles and food cans that may have been left by the stoneworkers.

There was no evidence that would suggest the rock was shaped at the quarry area before being transported to the building locations. That is, we didn't find any areas with small rock chippings that would result from shaping the angular quarried rock into square or rectangular blocks. We did find a number of narrow, overgrown roads, leading from the quarry pits up the hill to Mammoth that were used to transport the rock. Most of the area is now covered with tall sagebrush that masks much of the former operation. It is likely that many of the people that use the former roads to the quarry pits as a footpath to the Gardner River walk by with little notice of the large rocks piles that were demonstrably linked to construction of the magnificent historic buildings farther up the hill a hundred years earlier.



View of one of the quarry pits and excavated rock pile.



Drilled rock.

2010 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT FORT LARAMIE NATIONAL HISTORICAL SITE

By Danny Walker, Assistant State Archaeologist

The 2010 archaeological field season at Fort Laramie National Historic Site started with high water on the Laramie River from rain and snow melt in the Snowy Range. This high water was present for almost a month and resulted in major damage to the river bank downstream from the fort buildings. Measurements of this river bank between 1994 and 2010 show a minimum of 27 meters (90 feet) of the area called the Quartermaster Dump were lost to the high water. An unknown amount of archaeological materials were lost, both features and artifacts. Currently, the National Park Service is investigating possible mitigation methods for the erosion, including further stabilization of the river bank.

THE QUARTERMASTER DEPOT AT FORT LARAMIE, WYOMING TERRITORY

An integral part of any military establishment is the Quartermaster Depot. An army cannot exist without supplies, especially in what was to become Wyoming territory during the last half of the 1800s. The Fort Laramie Quartermaster Depot was east of the main fort buildings throughout its existence, being shown in a series of yearly maps. The exact location of the last depot buildings dating from the early 1870s through 1890 has never been established. An analysis of gradiometer surveys conducted in 1994, 2003, 2004 and 2010 has finally revealed the foundations of 7 of the 9 buildings. Physical conditions of the foundations remain unknown until ground truthing can be accomplished.

PERSONAL SANITATION AT FORT LARAMIE, WYOMING TERRITORY, 1849-1850

An almost automatic topic in the Post Surgeons monthly reports throughout the military occupation at Fort Laramie was sanitary conditions concerning both water supply and waste disposal. Water supply problems were solved after the Civil War when drinking water began to be taken from the Laramie River ABOVE where garbage was thrown into the river for disposal. Human waste disposal continued to be a problem throughout the occupation, with up to 600 soldiers stationed there at the peak population, culminating in a concrete sink flushed daily by a water ditch into the Laramie River. Standard sinks have been archaeologically investigated since the early 1980s, showing many of the concerns and corrections listed in the surgeons' reports to be accurate. Two wood-



lined sinks were excavated in 2010, one below the 1866 Infantry Barracks which appears to be 15-20 feet long and the second in the Quartermaster Dump area below the main fort proper. This latter feature was exposed during spring high water at the Fort. A third privy was excavated in 2003 near the Matron's Quarters west of the Hospital. While associated with three different social groups, all show similar construction and maintenance.

WHAT WAS GOING ON AT THE FORT LARAMIE 1866 INFANTRY BARRACKS IN 1890?

Archaeological investigations at the Fort Laramie 1866-1890 2-Company Barracks in 2009 and 2010 ended with more questions than answers, chief among them being what was happening inside the barracks in 1890 as the fort was being decommissioned. The adobe structure lost its roof and floor in 1893 and by 1898, the adobe clay began sealing the archaeological record. Artifacts dating from throughout the 24 year occupation of the building were recovered, but most appear to have been lying on the floor when the structure was abandoned, including over 50 shoes and boots recovered from only 10 square meters. The variety of recovered artifacts suggests the structure was used as more than a barracks when occupied by the last soldiers stationed at Fort Laramie. The big questions are: why was there evidence for women's clothing in the structure; why were there perfume bottles found; why was a ceramic doll head recovered; why did most of the shoes and boots have their upper leathers cut off before abandonment; why does it appear a large number of uniform parts were abandoned? These questions will have to wait for further investigations, utilizing both archaeological and historical records.

Fort Sanders, A Public Archaeology Project

By Joe Wheeler, Graduate Student, U.W. Anthropology

Fort Sanders, Wyoming was established by the Army in May of 1866 to protect emigrants traveling across the Laramie Plains and the Overland Trail stagecoach route from Indian attacks. The constructed part of the fort covered approximately 40 acres to the south of the Lodgepole Creek Trail. By 1869 the surrounding military reservation encompassed a full 81 square miles and included all of the modern-day city of Laramie. The fort was abandoned in May of 1882, its buildings auctioned off, and the land ultimately opened to civilian claims. Today only the ruins of the Guard House, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, and partial walls of the magazine remain above ground.

The land where the fort had stood is parceled out among fourteen private and two corporate landowners, the State of Wyoming, and Albany County. Since August of 2009 University of Wyoming Anthropology Graduate Student Joe Wheeler, with the help of the Wyoming State Archaeologist's Office and the SHPO Cultural Records Office, has been conducting archival and archaeological research on the site. Albany County has given permission to perform geophysical research,

pedestrian survey, and archaeological excavation on their entire three acre parcel around the guard house. Other landowners have also given their permission to conduct research at the site. Prior to this study, only one archaeological survey had ever been completed at the fort, a water line survey in 1995.

In May of 2010, 35 community volunteers participated in a pedestrian archaeological survey on the County, State, and several

privately owned parcels of the fort. This was followed by soil resistivity and magnetometer testing led by Dr. Danny Walker, the Assistant State Archaeologist. Excavations, under the supervision of State Archaeologist Dr. Mark Miller, began in September. Each investigation has indicated that far more of the fort remains in the archaeological record than had been previously believed.

Because of the complex government/private landownership issues and the need for volunteer help and community support, Wheeler has been active in "getting the word out" through briefs on the history and archaeology of the fort to local governments, Certified Local Government organizations, civic and school groups, as well as professional and avocational archaeologists. The ongoing effort has produced a much better local understanding of the fort and its importance from the standpoint of research and historic preservation. Fort Sanders has yielded a true public archaeology

project. Among the possibilities under discussion are future stabilization and possible restoration of the Albany County owned Guard House. In the

longer term the building may be used as an interpretive visitor center focusing on the importance of the fort as a hub in the communication routes of the nation's westward expansion. Wheeler is optimistic about the site's future, "The citizens of Albany County and all of Wyoming have a remarkable archaeological resource here. The community is increasingly aware of what remains of Fort Sanders, and there is tremendous potential for future research. Though I hope to use the work here in my Masters thesis, more gratifying has been the opportunity to work with and learn from the many professional archaeologists, landowners, SHPO experts, and community members who have become interested in the project."

There are hundreds of military sites in Wyoming, and the research methods being employed at Fort Sanders are helping to set a standard for other investigations around the state.

There are hundreds of military sites in Wyoming, and the research methods being employed at Fort Sanders are helping to set a standard for other investigations around the state. Few of these sites are so strategically located within a community that they have an immediate potential to further cost-effective scientific study, local historic preservation efforts, and public education. Wheeler's research is a timely effort to bring these varied interests together.



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Lights On! the Hynds

What can you do with a vacant building – one that is large, requires lots of rehabilitation for modern use, and one that has been vacant for 24 years? You turn the lights on.

That's the simple – yet challenging – approach that a grassroots group in Cheyenne developed as a way to address the vacant building situation in downtown Cheyenne. Turning the lights on was coupled with the appeal of an arts program – and a project was developed.

This past summer, the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund awarded a \$49,500 grant to help with the first steps in the rehabilitation of the Hynds Building. The rehabilitation will create warehouse-finish art studio spaces, restrooms, security, and a multi-use space for the community. With multiple partners in the community coming together, including the Cheyenne Arts Council, the University of Wyoming and Laramie County Community College, it is anticipated that art classes

and an artist-in-residence program will be established in the Hynds. Additional partnerships with the Downtown Development Authority will help create viable business alternatives for the building.

The lights came on in the Hynds Building on Friday night, September 24 as the general public was introduced to the project. The *Night D/lights* featured the work of artist Brian Haberman, champagne, and desserts provided by Chef Gary Treahy of the Plains Hotel. Architect Glen Garrett had overseen the cleaning out of the main floor of the Hynds Building and its transformation into an art gallery. Nancy Abraham, as chair of the Lights On! Group, marshaled a group of volunteers that made the evening a success.

The formula for this successful program has as many variations as vacant buildings throughout Wyoming. Art, music, education, volunteers make things happen: what's the mix in your community?