Old Courthouse Window Restoration Underway

Restoration of the Old Park County Courthouse windows is now in full swing! Contractor Chris Petralia of Common Ground Preservation is completing the work. Funding for the important project comes in part from a generous grant of $27,400 from the State Historical Fund.

Chris and crew member George McQueen have been busy carefully removing the historic wood windows which are then taken to the Common Ground workshop where Chris’s team painstakingly scrapes, sands, reglazes, repairs, and repaints the windows. The windows are then re-installed after the jambs and sills are repaired and repainted on site.

Much of the work will be completed before and after library hours, but feel free to stop by and see the work in progress. Chris and George will be happy to talk with you about the restoration process.

With a few exceptions, the windows will be restored to operable condition. The 1960s-era exterior storm windows (which are leaky and obscure the arched shape of the historic windows) are being removed. New, efficient, interior storm windows will be created reusing the glass from the existing interior storms. The new storms will provide better insulation, will allow the windows to be opened more easily, and will be less visually intrusive than the current storms.

The work will significantly improve the energy performance of the windows and ensure that the courthouse’s historic wood windows will remain intact for another hundred plus years.

The Park County Office of Historic Preservation chose to repair and restore the existing windows as opposed to replace them for a number of reasons. Changing the windows on a historic building is something like changing words in a sentence. What can seem like a small change can completely transform the meaning, resulting in inaccuracy, confusion, and misunderstanding. Preserving the historic wood windows that were installed at the time of construction allows the building to remain an accurate record of the types of materials and techniques that builders used in the 1870s when the old courthouse was constructed.

Windows are what preservationists call a character defining feature of a historic building. In other words, they are a critical part of what makes a historic building special. Different window styles were popular during different periods in history. You can often learn valuable information about a building just from the style and pattern of its windows.

Additionally, a particular window design is often an important feature of a specific architectural style. If the window design is changed, the building’s architectural and historical significance is (continued on page 8)
From October 31 through November 3, preservationists from throughout the United States gathered in Spokane, Washington, for the annual National Trust for Historic Preservation Conference. This year’s theme was “Beyond Boundaries” and many of the educational sessions highlighted innovative solutions for the preservation and interpretation of historic sites as well as creative partnerships between a wide variety of heritage resource groups.

During the conference, I was able to attend sessions that discussed the challenges of preserving historic resources in rural wilderness areas like Park County. In the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park, staff is bringing new life to historic buildings by establishing a network of overnight rentals. At the Ebey’s Landing Historical Park in coastal Washington, staff organizes preservation ‘field schools’ each year that teach community volunteers technical preservation skills as they work to rehabilitate historic buildings within the park. Staff from Olympic National Park and North Cascades National Park discussed the challenges of preserving both historic sites, such as log mining cabins, and wilderness character, and shared innovative methods for minimizing the impact of preservation projects on wilderness environments.

Other sessions focused on rural historic landscapes, programs for assisting owners in the preservation of historic barns and outbuildings, and innovative uses for historic agricultural properties such as farms and ranches. Overall, I left the event with many new ideas and the knowledge that the work we are doing here in Park County is up-to-date with leading preservation programs and practices throughout the United States.

—Amy Unger, Preservation Planner

The South Park National Heritage Area Management Plan is undergoing final review by the National Park Service. A draft of the plan is available for public review and comment on the NPS website at http://parkplanning.nps.gov/SouthPark. The NPS welcomes your comments and asks that you send them your thoughts by December 14, 2012. You may also call NPS historian Shirl Kasper at (303) 969-2232 to request a hard copy of the plan.

National Heritage Areas are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, and historic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape.

The Management Plan describes the Heritage Area’s management structure, boundaries, duties, mission, and goals. The plan incorporates an inventory of the Heritage Area’s natural, cultural, and recreational resources, and includes comprehensive policies, strategies, and recommendations for conservation, funding, management, development, and promotion of the Heritage Area. An implementation program is included that describes actions that governments, private organizations, and individuals have agreed to take to manage and protect Heritage Area resources. Sources of funding for carrying out the plan are identified, and an analysis of and recommendations for coordinating Federal, State, and local programs presented. An interpretive plan for the Heritage Area is also included.
Twenty Volunteers Help Prepare the Paris Mill for Winter

On September 29, 20 volunteers joined Park County staff members to help prepare the historic Paris Mill for winter and make minor repairs. Erica Duvic, Projects and Grants Manager for the South Park National Heritage Area organized the highly successful project with assistance from Park County Preservation Planner Amy Unger. Thanks to Erica and Amy's hard work and the efforts of our intrepid volunteers, we were able to complete all of the proposed work and more! Crews of volunteers cleared debris and brush from around the building, established drainage on the north and west sides of the historic mining building, applied corrugated metal to areas damaged by snowmelt and rain, secured the building by enclosing openings, and made repairs to interior staircases.

Volunteers enjoyed a fun and relaxed work day with breakfast provided by the Mosquito Range Heritage Initiative and lunch courtesy of South Park National Heritage Area Executive Director Linda Balough and Park County.

The Paris Mill, located in Mosquito Gulch not far from the town of Alma, began operations in 1894. Constructed to process ore from mines high on Mount Bross, the building contains an amazing array of early ore processing equipment and is the best preserved building of its type in Park County.

The mill operated sporadically between the 1890s and 1961, following the boom and bust cycles of mining in the Mosquito Gulch. In the 1970s, the mill briefly returned to operation before closing for good.

Years of inactivity took their toll and in 2004, the Paris Mill was named to Colorado’s Most Endangered Places List. The following year the historic importance of the mill was officially recognized when Park County designated the impressive building as a Park County Local Historic Landmark. Preservation of the mill began in earnest in 2009 when Park

Nini Walker’s fourth- and fifth-grade art students at Fairplay Elementary School decorated the plywood used to secure the Paris Mill. Photo courtesy Jim Mills.
County acquired ownership.

Thanks to a grant from Colorado’s Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund, any remaining hazardous materials were remediated. Today work is underway to include the Paris Mill on the National Register of Historic Places.

Preservation of the Paris Mill is a high priority for both the Office of Historic Preservation and the South Park National Heritage Area. Additional roofing work will be completed this fall by local contractor Jeremiah Lindberg. In the coming months the OHP and SPNHA will pursue State Historical Fund grant funding for the preparation of plans for a phased rehabilitation of the building, with the ultimate goal of opening the building to the public as a mining interpretation site.

The Office of Historic Preservation and the South Park National Heritage Area would like to extend a huge thank you to all who gave their time to help preserve the Paris Mill:

- Ginni Greer
- Tammy Porter
- John Carr
- Christie Wright
- Taylor Roberts
- Tim Balough (crew chief)
- Mark Curtis
- Douglas Stephens
- Rachel Parris
- Ashley Bushey
- Megan Potter
- Kevin Frazzini (crew chief)
- Rory MacDonald
- Renee Pieper
- Paula Scanland
- Ryan Slowowski
- Peter Lubin

Look for more volunteer projects next spring at the Paris Mill and other historic sites throughout Park County. Hope to see you next year!

The north façade of the cyanide wing at the Paris Mill has been damaged by snow building up against the wood walls (top). Metal siding was installed on the lower portion of the wall along with a basic drainage ditch to help protect the mill from further damage (middle right). Temporary plywood enclosures were installed over all door and window openings (middle left). Volunteers at work (bottom).
The Babbling and Quist Liquor Store Designated Park County Historic Landmarks

On September 27, 2012, the Board of County Commissioners unanimously voted to accept the recommendations of the Park County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission and officially designate the Quist Liquor Store in Lake George and The Babbling near Shawnee as Park County Historic Landmarks.

Constructed circa 1930, the Quist Liquor Store is one of only a handful of surviving, unaltered commercial buildings from the 1920s and 30s in the community of Lake George.

John A. Quist, the son of Swedish homesteaders that came to the area in the early 1880s, worked on the railroad for much of his youth. After the Colorado Midland shut down, he returned to Lake George in 1921 to help run his family homestead. With the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, Quist took advantage of an opportunity to start his own business and opened what is believed to be the first liquor store in Park County after Prohibition. In doing so, Quist’s career path exemplified the changing economic patterns in southern Park County as the area’s economic base moved from a dependency on ranching and the railroad to small independent businesses.

The Quist Liquor Store also survives as a visible reminder of the significant role many members of the Quist family, including Alma Norton, Selma Stevens, John A. Quist, and Carl A. Quist played in the economic, cultural, and social development of Lake George.

Though the historic store is in urgent need of repair and has fallen victim to vandalism, much of the building’s historic materials and features are intact and have changed little since the 1930s.

Designation officially recognizes the value of preserving this piece of Lake George’s history and we hope to work with owner Gertrude Quist to develop a plan to stabilize the building next spring.

In continuous use as a vacation home since the 1920s, The Babbling is an exceptional example of recreational home development in the Platte Canyon area during the early twentieth century. Situated on 40 acres of picturesque mountain land, the Orahood family retreat is integrated with the surrounding wilderness and exhibits a level of sophistication and formality that reflects the family’s prominent position in Denver society during the time of construction.

Since Harper M. Orahood first arrived in Colorado in 1860, the Orahood family has made a significant impact on the history of Colorado and Denver.
The Babbling and Quist Liquor Store continued

establishing a highly successful legal practice in Denver, Harper M. (d. 1914), was instrumental in the early development of Black Hawk, Central City, and Gilpin County. Harper M.’s youngest son Albert Teller, and Albert’s son Harper M. both became well-respected Denver-area attorneys in their own right, with Albert serving as a Denver District Judge for a large part of his career and later attorney for the Fairmount and the Riverside Cemetery Associations.

Albert Teller Orahood was largely responsible for construction of The Babbling. He and his family combined whimsical features with rustic details to create a secluded oasis where the family could relax and pursue favorite pastimes such as fishing.

With high integrity and no contemporary intrusions, the property is an exceptional example of Rustic style architecture and picturesque landscape design set within a natural mountain environment. The Rustic style, characterized by its natural setting and the use of forms and materials that echo early pioneer cabins, gained popularity after 1910, especially in the mountain communities. The architectural significance of The Babbling and its outbuildings is further enhanced by the exceptionally well preserved context in which they sit. The Babbling is also unique in the number and quality of the man-made landscape features found on the site. The fountain, concrete bird house, and eclectic collection of stone features, urns, and birdbaths that dot the landscape convey a sense of humor and whimsy that was not uncommon in architecture of the 1920s and 30s. Designation officially recognizes the contribution that the Orahood family has made to the history of Colorado and the architectural and historical significance of this unique property.

PCHPAC Commissioner Rick Cluxton Resigns—Will Be Greatly Missed

Park County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission member Rick Cluxton recently resigned, citing a desire to spend more time pursuing his many hobbies, including hiking and fishing.

Rick’s practical approach to preservation and down-to-earth perspective were greatly appreciated by the Park County staff and his fellow commissioners. He brought years of experience rehabilitating historic buildings to the commission as well as special expertise in log cabin restoration.

To those who have had the pleasure of talking with Rick, his passion for log buildings is clearly evident as is his sincere desire to see the craft of log building carried forward by future generations.

During his lengthy career he dismantled a 1790s log home, restored, and re-assembled it for the Pine Castle Folk Arts Center in Orange County, Florida, and led the community of Hillsboro, Ohio, as they reconstructed a donated log house at the Highland House Historical Society Museum. After settling in the Guffey area, Rick worked extensively in Cripple Creek restoring 1800s buildings.

Though we are sad to lose Rick’s input at the monthly PCHPAC meetings, we are happy to report that he will continue to advise Park County on preservation techniques and the evaluation of historic log structures. We wish Rick the best and greatly appreciate his contributions to preserving Park County’s history.

Rick Cluxton at the historic VVN Ranch in Park County.
Behind the Façade: The Alma Ladies Aid Hall

Originally constructed during Alma’s mining heyday, this unassuming wood frame building has proudly stood at the side of Highway 9 for over 130 years. After first serving as the offices and scale house for the Fanny Barrett Smelting Works, the building was acquired by the Alma Ladies Aid in the 1910s or early 1920s. A stage and kitchen were added and the building became the site of a variety of community events including box socials, concerts, theater performances, Halloween parties, birthdays, and funeral receptions. Unfortunately, time and disuse has taken its toll on this once vibrant center of community life in Alma and the building is in danger of being lost forever.

In the late 1800s, Alma’s mining industry boomed and both the Fanny Barrett Mining Association and the Boston and Colorado established large smelting operations east of Main Street in Alma. What is today known as the Alma Ladies Aid Hall housed the offices of the Fanny Barrett Smelting Works until its closure in 1896. Oral history suggests the building later served as offices for the Moose Mining Company and the Dolly Varden Mine, while the scale house continued to weigh the burros and wagons that transported ore from nearby mines.

Perhaps as early as 1910, the Alma Ladies Aid Society, a local community service organization, acquired the building. During the 19th and early 20th century, Ladies Aid organizations were formed throughout the United States, providing women with an opportunity to serve their local communities through fundraising activities and direct assistance to local residents in need.

The Alma Ladies Aid was an important social outlet for local women, many of whom hosted Ladies Aid luncheons and gatherings in their homes. At the Alma Ladies Aid Hall, the women held bazaars, dances, dinners, and other fundraising events benefiting groups like the Alma School. In 1936, the hall hosted church services during the construction of the new Alma Community Church. Classes were held in the Hall after fire destroyed the Alma School that same year.

Many of Alma’s oldest buildings were lost to major fires that occurred in 1907 and 1937, making the preservation of the town’s remaining historic buildings all the more critical. Though modest in size and unpretentious in design, the Alma Ladies Aid Hall is particularly significant for its contribution to mining history in Alma during the 1800s and the central role it played in the social life of the community during the early 1900s.

In an effort to help preserve this important piece of Alma’s history, the Park County Office of Historic Preservation and the South Park National Heritage Area commissioned architect Bret Johnson to prepare a stabilization plan for the building. The plan includes removal of the east kitchen addition which has collapsed and no longer contributes to the historic significance of the building. Bret and a structural engineer examined the building and provided plans to make temporary repairs to the roof, secure the building, and temporarily support the structure via a system of interior bracing. The work is intended to remove potential public hazards and preserve the historic building until a comprehensive rehabilitation plan can be developed.

The Town of Alma will be taking bids on the stabilization project in the coming months with the work potentially commencing next spring. Contact Nancy Comer, Alma Town Administrator, at 719-836-2712 for more information.
Old Courthouse Window Restoration Now Underway continued

greatly diminished and an important part of its meaning is lost.

Second, historic wood windows have a unique appearance that is difficult to replicate. Today’s window manufacturers use different standards, different materials, and detail their windows differently than window manufacturers did in the 1800s and early 1900s. Modern windows rarely feature true muntins (the wood strips between the glass panes) like the windows at the old courthouse. Manufacturing new windows to exactly match historic windows can be very costly, making repair of the existing windows often the more cost effective choice.

Finally, saving energy and supporting sustainability is important in today’s economic environment. However, the energy savings touted by replacement window manufacturers are often exaggerated. In most cases, a fully-restored, tight-fitting, properly functioning wood window combined with a quality storm window will have the same insulating properties as a double-glazed replacement window.

Furthermore, studies have shown that the payback period for new replacement windows can take decades. In that span of time, it is likely that the new windows will have to be replaced again, since most replacement windows have a lifespan of only 20 years. Historic wood windows, constructed of old-growth lumber and superior craftsmanship, will last up to 5 times longer than replacement models, namely because the wood is durable and they are easily repaired. When a component of a replacement window fails, the whole window will have to be replaced.

When you factor in the cost of the energy required to extract, process, manufacture, transport, and install new replacement windows, restoring and properly maintaining historic wood windows becomes the more sustainable and environmentally responsible choice.

Learn more about the energy efficiency of historic wood windows at the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Preservation Green Lab website.

Paint analysis suggests that the exterior of the courthouse windows was painted a dark reddish brown when the building was first constructed in 1874.

Phase I of the Fairplay Cultural Resources Survey Completed

Since coming to Park County in July, survey intern Hanna Eckroth has been busy documenting homes and buildings in Fairplay as part of the first ever cultural resources survey of the town. Hanna carefully documented the physical attributes of over 200 buildings within the survey area in an effort to identify historic homes and buildings in Fairplay that may be eligible for historic designation. The survey effort is funded by a generous grant from the South Park National Heritage Area.

By completing the survey, the Office of Historic Preservation also hoped to discover whether there is potential for a historic district or districts in Fairplay.

Phase II of the survey effort will involve conducting additional research to determine the historical significance of the buildings identified as potential landmarks and whether or not they are eligible for designation on the local, state, or national level.

When Phase I and II are complete, the end result will be a thorough, well-researched record of the significant historical and architectural resources located within Fairplay.

The information gathered will be used by our office only to identify historic properties and determine their eligibility for landmark designation. Information about the properties determined to be historic will be shared with the property owners along with information about the advantages of historic designation. It is our hope that many owners will choose to pursue designation, perhaps now or in the future. However, they will be under no obligation to do so. In Park County, owner consent is necessary for our office to pursue landmark designation.

The results of the Phase I survey effort will be presented to the Town of Fairplay and the public on December 3rd at 7:30 at the Fairplay Town Hall. All are welcome!
Park County Seeks New Historic Preservation Advisory Commission Member

The Park County Office of Historic Preservation is accepting applications for appointment to the Park County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (PCHPAC). The selected candidate will be presented to the Park County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for appointment to fulfill the remaining portion of a vacant term ending in 2014. At the expiration of that term, the applicant may apply for re-appointment to a full, three-year term.

The seven-member Park County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission (PCHPAC) was established by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) in accordance with the requirements of the National Park Service and History Colorado as part of the Certified Local Government program.

The Commission serves to advise residents of Park County and the BOCC on matters pertaining to the preservation of Park County’s historic and cultural resources, reviews nominations and makes recommendations to the BOCC regarding the designation of Park County Historic Landmarks and Districts, and reviews applications for Colorado historic preservation tax credits and local preservation grant requests. PCHPAC members serve on a volunteer basis and meet once a month on the third Saturday of the month.

Park County is seeking candidates with a background in historic preservation, architecture, planning, and/or building construction and historic rehabilitation. However, a strong commitment to preserving Park County’s cultural heritage is the only experience necessary. Residency in Park County is strongly preferred but not required.

Interested parties may submit resumes to the Office of Historic Preservation, PO Box 1373, Fairplay, CO 80440, or by email to historicpres@parkco.us. For more information, email Amy Unger at historicpres@parkco.us or call 719-836-4292.

Preservation Resources (for a complete list of resources visit our website at parkco.us)

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<th>Local Organizations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Park County Local History Archives</td>
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<td>(719) 836-4183</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.parkcoarchives.org/">http://www.parkcoarchives.org/</a></td>
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<td>Park County Historical Society</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.parkcountyhistory.com/">http://www.parkcountyhistory.com/</a></td>
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<td>State Organizations</td>
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<td>Office of Archaeology &amp; Historic Preservation</td>
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<td>(303) 866-3395</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.historycolorado.org/oahp">http://www.historycolorado.org/oahp</a></td>
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<td>Colorado Preservation Inc.</td>
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<td>(303) 893-4280</td>
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<td><a href="http://coloradopreservation.org/">http://coloradopreservation.org/</a></td>
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<td>Colorado Historic Newspaper Collection</td>
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<td>Grants &amp; Tax Incentives</td>
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<td>Colorado Grants and Financial Incentives</td>
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<td>Technical guidance on preserving, rehabilitating, and restoring historic buildings.</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm">http://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs.htm</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Preserving Historic Wood Windows</td>
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<td>National Center for Preservation Technology and Training</td>
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<td><a href="http://ncptt.nps.gov/">http://ncptt.nps.gov/</a></td>
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<td>Sustainability and Historic Preservation</td>
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In 1999, the National Park Service recognized Park County as a Certified Local Government (CLG), a designation that grants the county the ability to officially develop standards for the designation of local historic landmarks and establish an advisory commission dedicated to the preservation and rehabilitation of Park County’s historic buildings and sites.

The Board of County Commissioners appointed and authorized the Park County Historic Preservation Advisory Commission to make recommendations for the identification, designation, and preservation of Park County’s historic resources. The Park County Office of Historic Preservation was created to carry out this mission.

The Office of Historic Preservation staff is ready to help owners of historic properties extend the useful life of their property and preserve their piece of Park County history for future generations to enjoy. We can assist with applications for local landmark designation; provide property owners with technical guidance and preservation expertise as they develop plans for the repair, rehabilitation, or restoration of historic properties; assist with applications for preservation grants; and partner with organizations interested in preserving and promoting Park County’s rich cultural heritage.

If you would like to learn more about what the Park County Office of Historic Preservation has to offer, contact Amy Unger, Preservation Planner, at (719) 836-4292 or email aunger@parkco.us. We look forward to hearing from you!