

History of the BMHC

The Bonner Milltown History Center was established Fall, 2009, and opened in January, 2010. It is located in the historic Bonner Post Office building, constructed in 1942.

The BMHC is a volunteer organization inspired by the Bonner Area History Roundtable. Volunteers have enabled the Center to be open to the public several hours each week.

Collections include, but are not limited to, work in the forest industry, history of the Milltown Dam (cooperatively with the Milltown Redevelopment Working Group), local railroad history, stories of the ethnic settlers of the area and related commercial and social institutions.

The Bonner Milltown History Center has received invaluable encouragement and support from community organizations including the Bonner Area History Roundtable, the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula, the University of Montana Archives, the Milltown Redevelopment Working Group, and Friends of 2 Rivers and from Scott Cooney, Blackfoot Land & Water, Inc., who has provided the home for the Center.

Photos courtesy Jack L. Demmons Historic Photo Collection

Season's Greetings from Bonner Milltown History Center



The Margaret Hotel in winter

*Keeping our local area and timber heritage
alive for the enjoyment and education of the
public*



Winter of 36-37

On living in the “chicken coop” house in winter:

“When this chicken coop or this house became available we got a chance to get a house. Those 3 houses were called chicken coops...they were worse than bad...in the winter time the windows would freeze over and you’d take your hand and you’d smear and before you could get your eyeballs perched up there, it was froze over again. There was no insulation in it...but my gosh, you took what you could get....[Later] so we had a three bedroom house...oh, it was fantastic.” Interview with Lu Waddington



Thanks to volunteer Anna Sain for creating our logo.

Contact Us

Drop in: Bonner Post Office Building

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The Bonner Milltown History Center celebrates its first year with joy and appreciation for the enthusiasm and gifts offered by our generous patrons.



ACM store in winter

If you haven’t yet visited the History Center, please plan to stop in. You will enjoy glimpses into our forestry, mill, and social history. Even better, you can be a part of the movement to preserve our rich history by manning the center for a couple of hours or helping on a research project, for example.

The primary role of the History Center is to gather photos, documents and oral histories to add to the store of knowledge of our truly unique place in Montana and US history. If you have photos or videos of life in the area or stories to share, please let us know!

Our winter history series will resume after the first of the year. We are also planning a Bonner Day in conjunction with the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula. Watch for details about these and other programs coming in the New Year!

[Our house] was directly across from the wonderful hotel...at that time, the last house on the second block as you came into Bonner and actually it was a very great location because not only could we look over at the hotel and we could play over on the lawn but you could also see the old teepee burner at the Bonner mill and from my room at night that was like watching fireworks every night before I went to sleep. My mother didn’t agree with that when she would hang her washing outside...that was the day before clothes driers...so the women did not appreciate the teepee burner too much but as youngsters we thought that was a wonderful thing.” Interview with Lois Fuller Johnson