



Season's Greetings
from your
Bonner Milltown History Center

Keeping our local area and timber heritage alive for the education and enjoyment of the public.
December, 2014

In 1955 Bonner met Hollywood as a film set for the movie Timberjack. Movie stars walked the streets, up close and personal to a generation of spellbound residents. The action packed movie featured the shay engine now on display at Fort Missoula. Missoula's Fox theater hosted the world premiere showing.

The opportunity to bring the Timberjack collection of movie posters and memorabilia home to Bonner has suddenly materialized. This collection consists of 21 Timberjack items plus a rare map of Riverside, Montana (now Milltown).

"Hurry back, hurry back, Timberjack" is the refrain of the movie's theme song. We couldn't agree more!

Photo above: Filming Timberjack. Republic Studios. Photo below: Part of the Timberjack Collection we seek to acquire. Original in color)

Relive "the UNTAMED...wild and primitive" Days of *Timberjack*



We've got the movie and popcorn. All we need is YOU! Come to the public showing fundraiser of the movie *Timberjack*, Friday, January 23 at 7 p.m. at the Bonner School gym in Bonner. There is sure to be a crowd so come and join the fun!

Suggested donation for admission is \$5 for adults and \$10 for families.

Enjoy popcorn and try your luck at winning a raffle prize. Take a chance to win homemade jelly, fresh apple cider, a Bonner history book or other great items. Tickets are \$1 or 6 for \$5.

Our fundraising campaign aims to raise \$3000 to bring back *Timberjack* memorabilia and to operate the Bonner Milltown History Center during 2015.

Synopsis: *Tim Chipman (Sterling Hayden) seeks his father's killers among lumberjacks and discovers that they are actually timber barons plotting to control timber sales. Chipman and bad guy Croft Brunner (David Brian) compete for Lynne Tilton (Vera Ralston) and a valuable patch of Montana timber in this movie based on a novel by Missoula author Dan Cushman and filmed partially in Bonner.*

The movie features scenes of the Bonner mill, the old Milwaukee Big Blackfoot Railroad bridge over the Blackfoot River, and the shay that worked in Bonner and is now on display at the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula.

The opening scenes are filmed in Polson and in the final scenes the locale shifts miraculously from McNamara's Landing to Glacier Park. Hollywood may not know tree species, but it can put together a dandy adventure tale!

Unable to Attend But Want to Donate?

Make your check payable to **Friends of Two Rivers - BMHC** or make the check payable to **Friends of Two Rivers** and write "**BMHC**" in the memo line to receive your tax receipt as usual. Mail to Bonner Milltown History Center, PO Box 726, Bonner MT 59823.

Friends of Two Rivers has 501(c)3 designation and provides free bookkeeping and tax reporting for the Bonner Milltown History Center allowing us to concentrate on historic preservation! The new check writing requirement reflects an IRS rule.

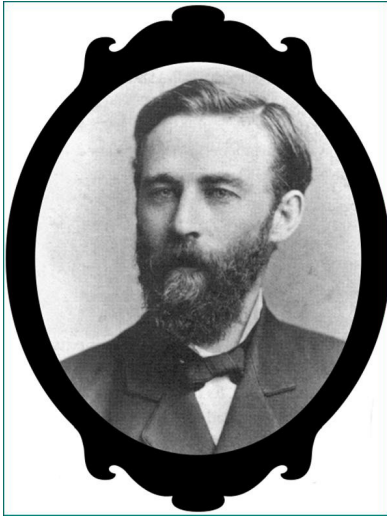
Roundtables Resume in February

Mark your calendars for the 2015 History Roundtable series. All programs are at St. Ann Catholic Church in Bonner at 2 p.m. and are free to the public.

February 15: Timberlands. The history of timber management at Bonner is a little known subject. Bob Lamley (ACM years), Tony Liane (Champion years), and Andy Lukes (Stimson years) provide a look at the history of timber management for the Bonner mill. These men were forest managers for the companies which successively owned the Bonner mill.

March 15: To be announced.

April 19: A.B. Hammond. Although the mill and town were named Bonner, it was A.B. Hammond working behind the scenes who controlled the origin and development of the mill. Panelists Greg Gordon, PhD, Hammond scholar and author of *When Money Grew on Trees; A.B. Hammond and the Age of the Timber Baron*, Dale Johnson, retired University of Montana archivist, and Ty Robinson, retired attorney for the Missoula Mercantile discuss this enigmatic character.



Hammond Roundtable Contributes to Missoula 150 Program

The Historical Museum at Fort Missoula has taken the lead in organizing Missoula 150 activities, the celebration of Missoula's 150th anniversary. BMHC's contribution is a Roundtable about the man who founded Bonner.

Here in Bonner, A.B. Hammond built the first permanent sawmill in Montana in 1886 and the company town to go with it. He was awarded two huge contracts to supply the Northern Pacific as it headed west. In Missoula he was the financier of so many businesses including the Missoula Mercantile and the First National Bank that he earned the dubious title of "The Octopus." It was observed that you couldn't even die in Missoula without A.B. Hammond who owned the cemetery!

This Roundtable panel brings a lot of expertise and some good stories, so come and learn more about the man who had such a major impact on Missoula and Bonner and then all but vanished from our current knowledge.

BMHC Volunteers Present Popular Programs to Area Groups

Bonner area history is too good to keep at home and thanks to Glenn Max Smith and Dennis Sain, our stories are traveling to interested groups who invite their knowledgeable and lively programs.

A School Becomes a Fan of Bonner History

Glenn led tours of his granddaughter's school to the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula to visit the streetcar and shay. Mac Palmer provided the history of these Bonner treasures. The fun didn't stop there as Glenn delighted the students (and their parents) with stories of growing up in Bonner and of the filming of the movie *Timberjack*. In fact, *Timberjack* and *Red Skies of Montana* have become school favorites!

Logging and Railroad History in Demand

Dennis Sain's presentations on logging camp history and local railroads are in demand. Dennis shared a logging camp history program with the Montana History Group in Missoula and recently spoke about the history of the Big Blackfoot Railroad at the annual meeting of the Seeley Lake Historial Society, a program welcomed as one inspiring a great deal of interest.

What's Next?

In 2015 Dennis will again speak about logging and railroad history in Ovando and in April Glenn will present the history of the mill to the Montana History Group.



Left: The shay, featured in *Timberjack*, is a popular exhibit at the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula.

Right: Dennis Sain answers a question about Big Blackfoot Railroad history.



A Walk Down Memory Lane.....

Willie Bateman's family lived and worked on Big Flat before moving to Milltown, Piltzville and Turah to the place where they would settle and where Willie and his wife Alice still live on the home place. Here is one of Willie's earliest memories of Christmas during the Depression in the 1930s.

An Unforgettable Christmas by Willie Bateman

The old ranch house was built with high ceilings and it had a big living room. Come Christmas time, Dad went out somewhere up on the hill and got a big fir that was about eight feet tall. Being as we didn't have electricity, we couldn't have lights on it. Mom had some lights from when they had lived on Harrison Street on Missoula's East Side. There were light bulbs shaped like birds and animals so we tied strings on them and hung them on the tree. Dad had a brakeman's lantern with a red globe in it so he put a nail in the ceiling, wrapped a long wire around it and hung the lantern on it about halfway down in back of the tree. At night when he would light the lantern it would give the tree and the tinsel a red glow. Presents we didn't have, but the Christmas glow was felt in the house and family. We had plenty to eat and that was the main thing. I'll remember that Christmas as long as I live.

Winter memories Thanks to Jamie Hay, Rich Hamma, Chuck Teague, Ed Olean and Shirley Olean Olson, and Jim Willis for sharing these photos!



L to R, top to bottom: Jennifer & Jamie Hay model matching red jammies Christmas morning, 1980. Karen, Rich and Ken Hamma show off their Christmas slippers, 1959. Santa was generous to Karen, Rich and Ken Hamma. They display their doll, bulldozer and Lincoln Logs in front of the tinsel Christmas tree, 1957. Chuck Teague learned to ski on the hills of Piltzville in the 1940s. Bonner School Christmas program, 1950s. Maybelle Hill and Vivian Lizotte iceskating in December, 1951.

A Walk Down Memory Lane.....

A Tired Old Sled by Chuck Erickson

I was tripping over my old sled down in the barn and remembered I need to bring it down to the History Center. I typed up this little page to go with it to provide some history and color for it so it's not just another old rusty sled. Below: Minie Smith accepts the well used sled. Says Chuck: "Thanks for giving my old sled a happy place to be. It sure brought me and a lot of kids pleasure over the years...been hanging in the barn for the last 35 or so. Kinda like 'Puff the magic dragon!'"



This old sled logged many years and miles and crashes on the McCormick Hill in Old Milltown before the Interstate went through. Many a young Erickson kid along with all the others in the neighborhood went careening down the hill at breakneck speed, squealing with delight and anticipation to see how far out on to the river

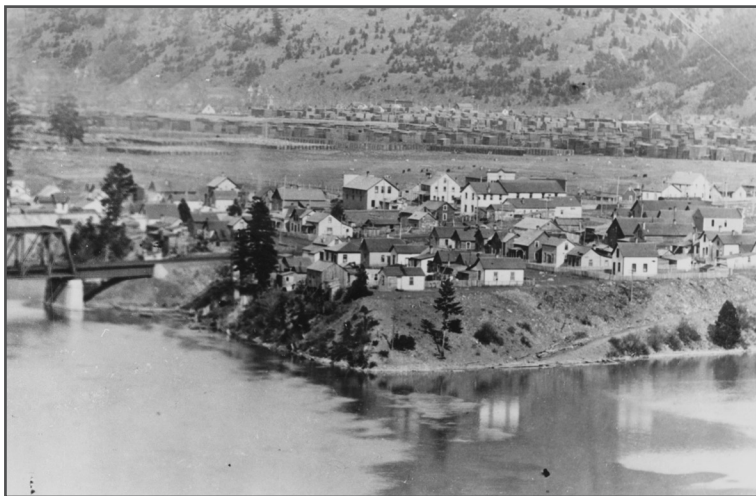
trying to go as far as possible.

I remember as a kid our dads would prepare the hill for us by dragging us down the hill in big old coal shovels to pack down the snow. I think every kid had an old wax candle in his pocket and would wax his sled runners in anticipation of setting a new

land speed record!

This sled went for many trips down the Bonner Hill behind what is now the Bonner Post Office too! In later years it was used on the lower Gold Creek road. Back then there was little or no traffic on the weekends. The log trucks were parked down at the logging camp and the drivers were home with their families. The lower three or so miles were well glazed from the trucks going up and down during the week. We would take a running start up where the gravel pit (shooting range) is and head down the road picking up speed all the way. It wasn't very far to where you would have to use the whole road to broadside around the curves. It seemed like a long ride but usually took a little over 3 minutes!!

This old sled provided many years of fun and good exercise and a few knots, bruises and cuts for generations of kids. It never needed recharging or program updates. It needs a new board - not sure what happened to the missing one. Other than that it's all programmed for laughter and fun and more memories for generations to come!



Kids could slide down McCormick Hill in Milltown and far out onto the reservoir before I-90 was built.



Chuck recalls many a death defying ride down the sled run on Bonner Mountain behind the Post Office.

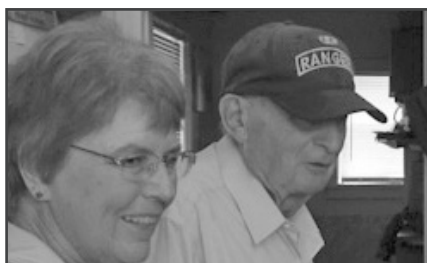
More McCormick Hill Memories Before Chuck's time, preparing the sled run turned it into more of a luge run as Willie Bateman recalls. "Over on the bank of the river there was a hill coming off the bench down to the Clark Fork River that was part of the old Mullan Road. The hill was called McCormick Hill...Boy, what a sledding hill. Some of the bigger kids would stomp the snow down, then carry water up in buckets and pour it on the trail. Then, when it froze it would be solid ice all the way. You'd go out on the ice and go halfway across the river."

Willie Bateman Donates Rare Book from Original Library Car

Willie Bateman regularly contributes books and historic items to BMHC. One book, in particular, caught the eye of Minnie Smith who recognized it as coming from the collection in the original ACM library car being restored at the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula. ACM provided library books to men in the logging camps in this car. The Museum curator confirmed the book's authenticity and was particularly excited that it had an original book plate, the only one she had seen. Willie agreed to donate the book to the Historical Museum's library car exhibit which will be opening soon.

Jack Demmons Donates Years of Research to BMHC

Longtime friends of Jack Demmons gathered at the History Center to recognize Jack for his dedication to Bonner area historical research and to thank him for returning six boxes of documents gleaned from past issues of the *Missoulian*. A treasure trove of information about Riverside Park, the streetcar, and building the Milltown Dam have already been organized and BMHC volunteers anticipate a productive winter sorting the documents and organizing them according to an outline prepared by Jack.



Judy Matson & Jack listen to stories recalled by Jack's longtime friends. Jim Willis and Willie Bateman attend to honor Jack. Kim Briggeman delivers the first two of six boxes of research.



Can You Donate to our Fundraiser?

Please send a donation! Make your check payable to **Friends of Two Rivers - BMHC** or make the check payable to **Friends of Two Rivers** and write "**BMHC**" in the memo line to receive your tax receipt as usual. Mail to Bonner Milltown History Center, PO Box 726, Bonner MT 59823.

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Rebekah McDonald Enhances the History Center Collection and Exhibits

Rebekah McDonald is providing professional collection upgrades and exhibit recommendations to the History Center thanks to a \$1000 grant awarded to BMHC by the Matthew Hansen Foundation. Rebekah has already started her work and will complete the project at the end of January.

Rebekah comes to the History Center with a solid background in historic interpretation. As an AmeriCorps member, she created two interpretive exhibits at Lone Pine State Park. Recently Rebekah assisted Mike Kustudia, park manager at Milltown State Park. We are indeed fortunate to have her services and appreciate her expertise.

Banner Signs Will Be Available for Sharing Bonner History

Bonner Milltown History Center received a \$1,350 Preserving Missoula County History grant to produce two interpretive banner signs about Bonner history. Content for the signs will be taken from the interactive timeline map website project produced under a Montana History Foundation grant last year.

The portable signs will enable BMHC volunteers to easily illustrate significant periods in area history and to make attractive exhibits available to other institutions.

The banners will be designed by Joanna Yardley of My Design and should be completed later this spring.

THANK YOU

We appreciate donations to the Bonner Milltown History Center this year to date. Don't see your name? Please let us know as we want to include everyone.

Randy Alford, Donna Anderson, Dick Anthony, Willie Bateman, Russell and Roberta Bemis, Mike Boehme, Bonner Homes Management, Bonner School, Bob Brewer, Kim Briggeman, Jerry and Maryann Buckhouse, Stan Cohen, Maurice Darrington, Chuck Erickson, Don Felton, Jim Fortheur, Friends of 2 Rivers, Rick and Judy Gendrow, Kirt George, Jim and Pat Habeck, Bruce Hall, Rich Hamma, Mike Heisey, Hellgate Forge, Victor and Iona Hangas, Thomas Henderson, Diana Hendrix, Jim Hill, Jard Hirsch, Clifford Iverson, Dale Jacobson, Norman Jacobson, Tony and Joan Jasumback, Bob and Lois Johnson, Dale Johnson, Tom Johnson, Mike Kustudia, Libby Langston, Bob Lamley, Paul and Peggy Layton, Lee Legried, Keith Lerback, Lola Leprowse, Andy Lukes, Charles and Sheila Long, Gary and Judy Matson, MCAT, Alan McQuillan, Mineral County Museum, Mike Nelson, Missoula Rural Fire Department, Steve Nelson, Ed Olean, Shirley Olson, Wally Otterson, Lavonne Otto, Ken Peers, Lefty Pleasant, Potomac School, John Price, Dennis Sain, St Ann Catholic Church, Brent Schaffer, Steve Schombel, Dick Shimer, Joan Seiffert, Glenn and Sharon Smith, Minnie Smith, Rick Swanson, Bill Taylor, Jack Thibodeau, Shorty Thompson, Chuck Teague, Don and Germaine Trenary, Marvin Troutwine, Karl Uhlig, Bill Unger, Red and Pat Watson, Chris Weatherly, Sandy Wilborn, Jim Willis, Danya Zimmerman, Les Zimmerman

Don't Miss Tuesday a.m. Coffee!



Jim Willis extends a standing invitation to you to attend Tuesday morning coffee at the Bonner Milltown History Center.

Drop by anytime between 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. to enjoy lively conversation centered around our history. Topics may be inspired by a new donation, a current news story, or whatever strikes the fancy of the group on hand.

It's no secret that you'll also get a sample of the tastiest cookies in town. Whether your favorite is chocolate, raisin, or mincemeat, every Tuesday there is a cookie freshly baked by Jim that's sure to please.

Can't make it on Tuesday? You are welcome every Wednesday and Thursday afternoon between 2 and 4:30. We look forward to seeing you!

tworivershistory.net Offers Local History On Demand

If you live out of town and want to know something about the Bonner mill or missed a Roundtable program that you really wanted to attend or enjoy listening to stories of living and working in Bonner related by old timers, visit our website tworivershistory.net. It is open 24/7 and is being constantly updated. An animated timeline map of the area's history, videos of the Roundtable programs, local history, and links to important sites such as the Demmons Collection on-line are featured. Visit today!



BMHC Is Social!

The Bonner Milltown History Center has a Facebook page. "Like" us for occasional announcements and photo albums recalling our historic past.

BMHC Volunteer Committee: Jim Willis, 258-6134; Judy Matson, 258-6335; Minie Smith, 543-5115; Dennis Sain, 549-5782; Glenn Max Smith, 825-6478; Willie Bateman, 258-6620; Lee Legreid, 549-2270; Bob Lamley, 721-6544. *We'd love to see your name here too!*

The Bonner Milltown History Center is located in the Bonner Post Office Building, 9397 Hwy 200 E., Bonner MT 59823. Hours: Tuesday morning, 9:30 - 11:30; Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, 2 - 4:30.

