



# Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum Chronicle

Volume 37, Issue N° 4

December 2017

## The Buried History of Jackson Hole's Cemeteries

By Samantha Ford

There's something different about the cemeteries in Jackson Hole. It's not the scenic mountain views, the adjacent ski trails, or the resident wildlife. During my first summer at JHHS, a visitor to the Research Center brought this difference to my attention. She had been up to the Aspen Hill Cemetery at the base of Snow King, and she was concerned about the bushes. "The bushes?" I asked. I had not yet been in town for more than a few weeks and was only mildly aware of where the cemetery was at the base of the ski hill. "Yes, your bushes have completely overgrown the graves. You can barely tell anyone is up there. Don't you care about those people?" I explained I was new to the area, I wasn't sure, and directed her to contact the town if she was that upset.

Having grown up in the northeast, I was used to large cemeteries with winding roads, ornamental willows, northern white cedars, and monumental gravestones. The design of our modern parks and recreational spaces can all be traced back to these curated cemeteries of the 19th century. Families used to pack up a picnic and spend an afternoon near their family plots, enjoying the scenery and quiet. The curvilinear roads slowed the pace of travel. The manicured spaces were meant for relaxation, repose and reflection.

I decided to visit the Aspen Hill cemetery to see the bushes this woman was talking about. After walking up the steep road I realized "bushes" was an understatement. What I found were numerous graves nestled between towering trees, shrubs, grasses, and a lone deer. It was a wild space,

*Story continues on page 4 >*





# Director's Note

## Mission Statement

*To collect, preserve, and explore the cultural history of Jackson Hole.*

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*Cover illustration of Joe Pfeiffer's homestead, by Robert Rudd*

As many of you know, the Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum (JHHSM) operates one of the largest collections of artifacts and public archive of images, historical papers, and maps in the region; the organization serves as the keeper of our collective Jackson Hole heritage. To accommodate these operations, the JHHSM manages three separate properties throughout the town of Jackson, all of which operate under a land lease. The JHHSM is making some strategic moves and we have some exciting news! The JHHSM, in cooperation with the land owner, has listed the property at 225 N. Cache St. for sale. Consolidating our capital resources means we can focus on securing and improving our two historically significant properties, youth programming, community events, and collections management. To remain relevant and fun in the 21st century, the JHHSM will focus on fostering powerful learning experiences, exploring new program formats, and reaching new audiences. While the next few years will be a time of transition, the JHHSM is pleased to proactively plan for long-term success. For additional information on our campus plan for the future, see Preservation 101 on page 9.

The JHHSM's goal to prioritize historic preservation while fulfilling the organization's mission and meeting community needs will be explored further during comprehensive planning. As dedicated members, we ask that you join us in this process of strengthening the JHHSM's position in the community and securing a long, vibrant future for the organization. I would love to receive your comments and suggestions as we begin this planning effort and will keep you in the loop as we move forward.

As we head into the winter season, we have some exciting public programming and exhibits planned. Make sure to stop by the Cache Street museum to read about the Jackson Hole National Monument and the creation of Grand Teton National Park. Or join us at one of our upcoming Living in the West presentations or our new "Brews & Banter: Local History Happy Hour." Dates, time, and location TBD – keep an eye out in the local newspaper and online.

Please contact me at [morgan@jacksonholehistory.org](mailto:morgan@jacksonholehistory.org) or 307.733.2414 with any comments or questions.

Thank you for your continued support, and have a wonderful holiday season!

*Morgan Albertson Jaouen*

Morgan Albertson Jaouen, Executive Director

Buried  
History

Director's  
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Upcoming  
Events

Buried  
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(cont.)

Collection  
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# Upcoming Events

Take a break from the holiday chaos to listen to stories, eat delicious pizza, and sip some brews!



## COMING UP NEXT: Second Saturdays

Starting in January, join us on the second Saturday of the month for family-friendly storytelling events.

### Living in the West

Inspired by "Voices in the Valley," Living in the West speaker series will feature Western storytellers and historians the first Wednesday of the month. Our first event will be January 3rd with Ken Thomasma.

### Brews and Banter

Starting January 25, come out to Local History Happy Hour to enjoy some local brews and conversation about Jackson Hole, then and now.

## Attention Teachers!

Bring Western history alive in your classroom with our new and improved traveling trunks! These experiential, place-based education resources meet core standards.

Active hands and minds are inspired to:

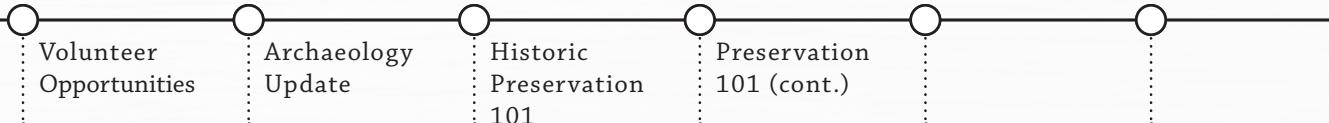
- BUILD Tipis and log cabins
- RE-CREATE Native American life
- DESIGN Quilts, period clothes
- EXPERIENCE Life on the Trail
- INTERPRET Western legends and myths
- SHARE First person stories
- WRITE Plays and newspaper articles

Trunk Topics include:

- FIRST PEOPLE Hunters and Gatherers
- MAPPERS AND TRAPPERS Explorers and Fur Hunters
- HARDY PIONEERS The Oregon Trail
- HOMESTEADERS Log Cabins
- CHARACTERS OF THE HOLE JH History

Curriculum is inspired by the diaries and oral histories of American Indians, fur trappers, explorers, pioneers, settlers, and curious kids!

To reserve a trunk for your classroom or for more information, contact Brenda Roberts, JHHSM Assistant Director at: 307.733.2414 or [brenda@jacksonholehistory.org](mailto:brenda@jacksonholehistory.org)





## Buried History cont.

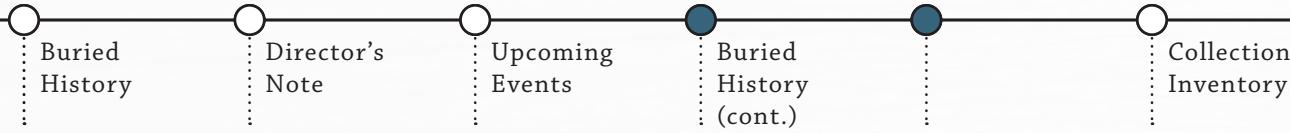
but people clearly visited it regularly. The older portion of the cemetery stands out, as the most overgrown, however the bright plastic flowers and trinkets stand out amongst the plants. These are clearly not forgotten people. I determined to figure out the story of this place and to have a better answer for the next visitor surprised that Jackson Hole has its own way of doing things.

Four years later, I finally dug into the history of Jackson Hole's cemeteries and the answer uncovered itself for me. A 1963 Jackson Hole Guide article gives an account of the present state of the cemetery, "...shaded by native evergreens, and quaking aspen, with beautiful native flowers blooming in season, and lovely native shrubs adding to its beauty." It's noted that visitors are often shocked by the "neglect" of the gravestones. The article was announcing

a fundraising drive by the American Legion to support the perpetual care of the Aspen Hill cemetery. It was carefully noted that this was meant only to clear obstructive shrubs, but the "wildwood beauty" would be preserved. It would seem this perpetual care fund would prove difficult to establish. In 1992, the Guide ran another article about the cemetery and its unique appearance. Most graves are organized into family plots, and it's up to the families to decide how to maintain them. Some want to leave them wild, some prefer manicured. The topography in some areas is rugged and steep, and a limiting factor in how much maintenance is possible.

It would seem the cemetery found itself in wildwood beauty in the first place by a disagreement spanning decades. In 1920, the

All photos taken by Sam Ford at Aspen Hill Cemetery.



cemetery was officially deeded to the town of Jackson, and a road was constructed for official access. Up until this point, burials in this area were haphazard, in the softer soils where the brush needed less trimming. Over the years, it was understood that the County was responsible for the road, and they owned the land. Because of this, the Town felt that it was the County's responsibility for regular upkeep of the graves. The County felt the Town owned the rights to the cemetery, so they had no jurisdiction for maintenance. This disagreement was fueled by lack of funds on either side for years, long enough for the rugged land to begin to reclaim the cleared gravesites. When the American Legion stepped in during the 1960s, many had come to appreciate the cemetery's overgrown appearance.

The 1992 Guide article claimed, "In both design and actual appearance, cemeteries, at their best, are reflections of the communities they serve." This is definitely the case for Jackson Hole, where the earliest homesteaders were at the mercy of the wilderness they lived in. Jackson's cemeteries are a reflection of this, where the natural landscape is allowed to reclaim a small part of the individuals who carved out the first town sites. •

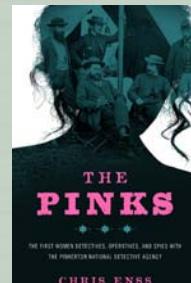
To learn more, visit <http://category/historical-atlas-of-jackson-hole/cemeteries/>



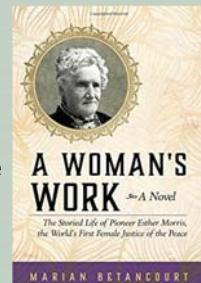
## Give a Good Read for the Holidays! The newest arrivals in your Museum Store:



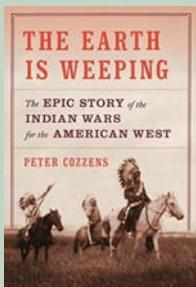
**Yellowstone Migrations:** Herds of Elk, Mule Deer, and Pronghorn Move Through the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.  
By Joe Riis; 2017.  
\$29.95



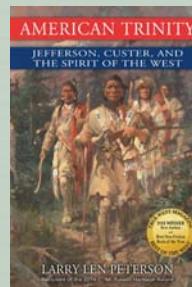
**The Pinks:** The First Women Detectives, Operatives, and Spies with the Pinkerton Detective Agency.  
By Chris Enss; 2017.  
\$16.95



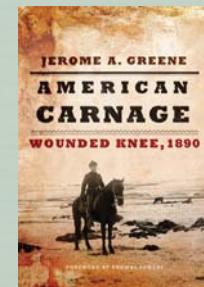
**A Woman's Work:** The Storied Life of Esther Morris, the World's First Female Justice of the Peace.  
By Marian Betancourt; 2017.  
\$16.95



**The Earth Is Weeping:** The Epic Story of the Indian Wars.  
By Peter Cozzens;  
2016. \$29.95

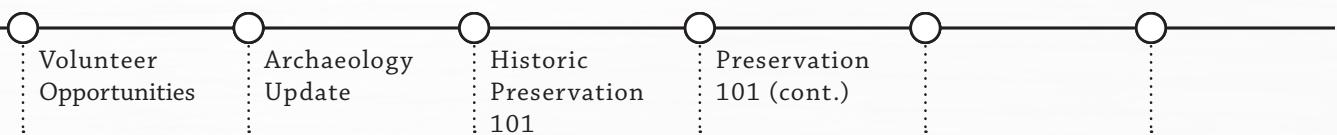


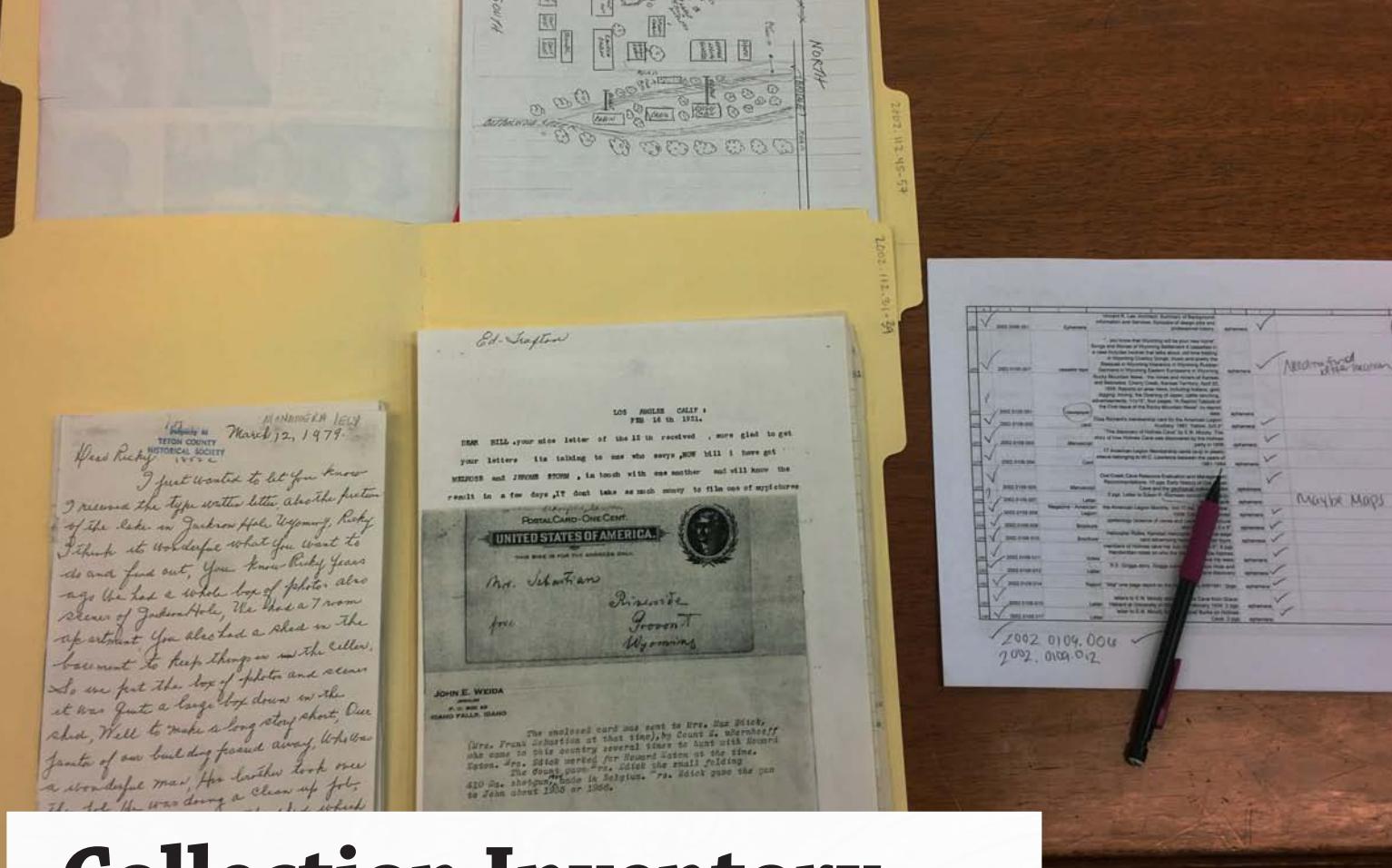
**American Trinity:** Jefferson, Custer, and the Spirit of the West.  
By Larry Len Peterson; 2017.  
\$29.95



**American Carnage:** Wounded Knee, 1890.  
By Jerome Greene;  
2014. \$29.95

For museum store perks, become a JHHS member at <https://store.jacksonholehistory.org/pages/membership>





# Collection Inventory

**By Norah DeWitt-Hoeger**

The JHHS Research and Collections department is currently starting a 100% inventory of our entire museum collection. Inventories are essential for proactive collections management and give an up to date snapshot of each item's physical location, condition, and associated documentation. This will be a major, potentially multi-year, undertaking but will assure accurate recording and an authoritative understanding of our collection. Keeping up to date inventories of our collection provides a precise and efficient understanding of what the JHHS can offer to researchers, educators, students and the general public. It further helps when considering any future donations to the collection so that we may only accept those items that fill missing gaps not

currently illustrated by the collection. Collection management takes space, time, and materials; we therefore have to be strategic about how and when we grow the collection.

Our collection is divided into four general categories depending on the type of item by objects, photos, archives, and library. As of today, our collection includes over 7,080 objects, 18,500 photos, 8,050 archives and 3,700 library items.

I have started inventorying the archival collection because it is the most often used category by researchers and the general public. Most of our archives are housed in the Stan Klassen Research Center in the 225 N. Cache Street building, either in archival boxes or sorted



as ephemera and stored in file cabinets. I am currently working on our ephemera collection which is any assortment of collectible material created for short term use, such as cards, catalogues, postcards, single page or short documents, unpublished letters, articles, tickets, bookmarks, stickers and other miscellaneous items. We have over 6,000 items listed under ephemera, which also includes our audio and video clips, so I am currently working on confirming locations and updating any records as necessary to make them easier to locate in the future and most useful to potential users.

If anyone is looking for extra volunteer work and is interested in helping out with this very important project we would greatly appreciate it. It is very detail orientated work, however you will get a "behind the scenes" look at our collection! Please stop by the museum, call 307.733.2414 or email me at [nora@jacksonholehistory.org](mailto:nora@jacksonholehistory.org) and we can put you to work. Happy Holidays! •

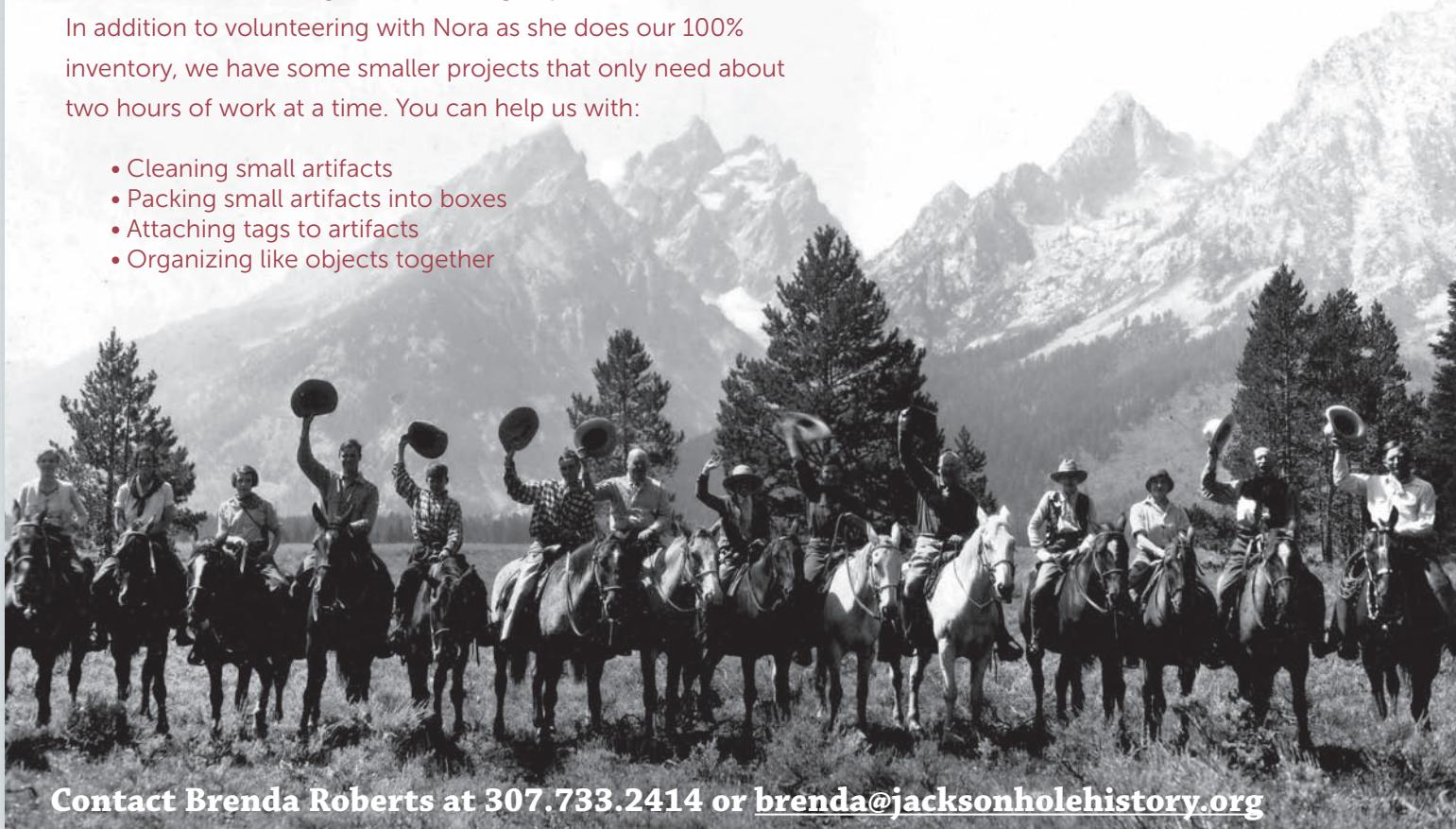


## Join the JHSM Crew!

Volunteer with us and get an insider's glimpse into the museum.

In addition to volunteering with Nora as she does our 100% inventory, we have some smaller projects that only need about two hours of work at a time. You can help us with:

- Cleaning small artifacts
- Packing small artifacts into boxes
- Attaching tags to artifacts
- Organizing like objects together



Contact Brenda Roberts at **307.733.2414** or [brenda@jacksonholehistory.org](mailto:brenda@jacksonholehistory.org)



Volunteer  
Opportunities



Archaeology  
Update



Historic  
Preservation  
101



Preservation  
101 (cont.)



# 2017 Field Season Update

## Making Sense of it All

**By Rebecca Sgouros and Matt Stirn**

It's that time of year again when staff archaeologists Matt Stirn and Rebecca Sgouros have packed up their field equipment, closed up the Linn Site dig, and are returning to the office to decipher the results from their research season. This year Stirn and Sgouros conducted two field expeditions, one into the high Tetons with volunteers from Wilderness Adventures and the other a reconnaissance survey of the relatively unexplored Gros Ventre Range.

Wilderness Adventures volunteers from around the country joined JHHSM archaeologists and Dr. Rich Adams (Colorado State University) on a 5 day backcountry survey. They mapped and re-recorded several known sites, discovering several additional diagnostic projectile points that have helped refined the dates for those sites. Additionally, the team identified several more fragments of soapstone bowls, furthering our understanding of soapstone use and past diets in the area. This was a unique and exciting partnership for both staff and students - after all how many 6th-8th graders get to participate in actual archaeological research? JHHSM is currently working on plans for a similar program in 2018, stay tuned for updates!

Stirn and Sgouros have now spent eight years working in the Winds and five years in the Tetons and have long wondered what the human presence in the Gros Ventre was like. This September they partnered with JP Schubert, Bridger Teton National Forest Archaeologist, to conduct an exploratory survey of the Gros Ventre



*Rebecca Sgouros holds fragments of a broken soapstone bowl.*

Mountains. A team of archaeologists and volunteers spent five days exploring the backcountry, monitoring melting ice patches, and recording new sites. In total, they recorded nine new sites, including a possible prehistoric hunting camp located along the edge of an ice patch. The team also recorded several soapstone vessels, grinding stones, and remapped some of the only known petroglyphs in Teton County.

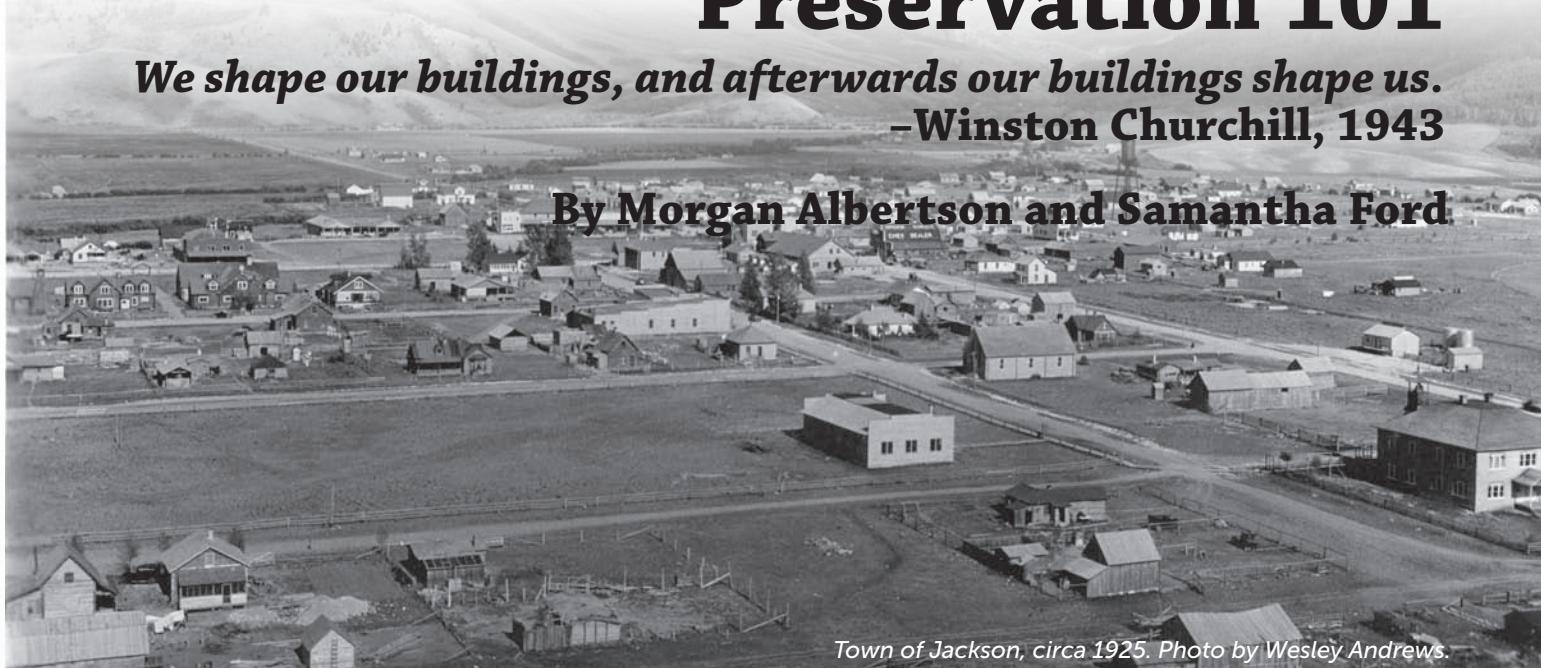
This project was made possible by Ed and Shirley Cheramy and the Frison Institute of Archaeology at the University of Wyoming. Many thanks also to Linn Outfitters for their tireless efforts!

2017 was an exciting season as JHHSM got to introduce a new generation of students into archaeology and expand their local research partnerships. Now Matt and Rebecca have the onerous task of trying to extract meaning from the volume of data collected throughout the summer. Artifacts will be sent out for radiocarbon dating, obsidian sourcing, and food-residue analysis. They are currently compiling reports for the US Forest Service and are planning a public presentation for later this spring regarding their results. •

# Historic Preservation 101

*We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us.*  
—Winston Churchill, 1943

By Morgan Albertson and Samantha Ford



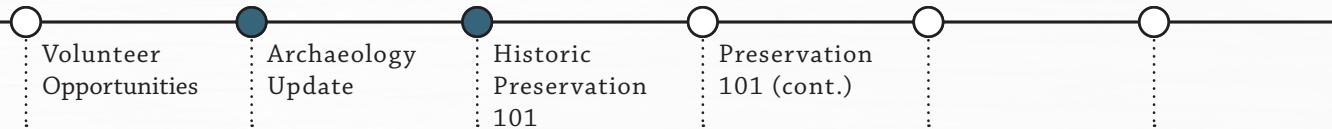
Town of Jackson, circa 1925. Photo by Wesley Andrews.

The Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum is committed to the collection, preservation, and exploration of Jackson Hole's history, which materializes in many different forms. Traditionally the JHHSM has focused on museum objects and archives, however, historic architecture also plays a significant role in illustrating the history and evolution of the valley. The interpretation of our "built environment" is found in the field of historic preservation. Historic preservation champions historic buildings that are well designed, expertly crafted, and reflective of the changing needs of our communities. These historic resources connect us with our past in meaningful ways and can be adaptively reused to fit modern needs. Historic preservation has been proven to meet a wide range of public goals including small business incubation, affordable housing, sustainable development, neighborhood stabilization, job creation, promotion of the arts and culture, small town renewal, heritage tourism, economic development, and much more. Most historic preservation guidelines are established at the Federal and State levels of

government, and it is up to local communities to promote and pursue historic preservation on the ground. While historic preservation efforts are often misunderstood as conflicting with present-day progress and civic development, historic preservation has proven to be an invaluable tool and community asset that balances old with new.

In 1966, the National Historic Preservation Act was created to formally protect our nation's historic resources. The National Register of Historic Places, National Historic Landmarks and State Historic Preservation Offices were founded as part of this Act. Landmark status is the highest designation a building can receive, and it is reserved for only the most significant contributors to our nation's history. In Jackson Hole we have two National Historic Landmarks: the Jackson Lake Lodge and the Murie Center. To be considered "historic" a resource must be at least 50 years old, according to the criteria outlined in the National Register nomination process.

*continued on next page*



Prior to 1966, there was no formal designation process for historic buildings, structures, or sites (battlefields). They were not part of city planning methods, and municipalities rarely had any guidelines or criteria for the treatment of these resources. Although there was the 1906 Antiquities Act, the establishment of the National Park Service in 1916, and the 1935 Historic Sites Act, there was no formal education or awareness on best practices for preservation. Today, preservationists use The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties as guidelines for how to treat, repair and remodel our historic buildings. For example, brick mortar before 1860 was more flexible than the modern cement we use today. If the old mortar is replaced with its contemporary counterpart, the older bricks will break as the building continues to settle. Aging building materials experience a dynamic process over centuries of use, and they aren't necessarily in need

of replacement if the proper care is taken to ensure their durability.

In partnership with the Teton County Historic Preservation Board, the JHHSM is doing its part in preserving its historic buildings and sharing the importance of historic preservation with our community. Looking towards the future, the JHHSM plans to focus on securing and improving its two remaining historically significant properties to create a cohesive campus of historic buildings. As a cultural institution, we are excited to invest in the buildings located at 105 Mercill Avenue and 105 Glenwood Street. Both of these properties have immense historic character and have remained the face of our local history museum over the years, in a town where many historic buildings have been lost. These buildings are a part of the community's historic fabric and offer really unique spaces to carry out the organization's evolving needs.

## Here are a few reasons for supporting historic preservation in your local community:

### Economic Benefits

- Historic preservation of a community's unique historic resources supports local economic development through the creation of skilled preservation jobs, use of local materials for maintenance and rehabilitation, and generation of tourism.
- Heritage visitors, attracted by a community's historic resources, stay longer, visit more places, and spend more per day than other tourists.

### Social Benefits

- A mix of historic and modern buildings provide a visual diversity and unique physical appearance to neighborhoods.
- Historic buildings are primary sources that provide first-hand immersion in "place based" learning and an opportunity to understand, visually and physically, the many layers of cultural history.
- Preserving original buildings that still meet modern needs adds a sense of authenticity, originality, and permanence to a community.

### Environmental Benefits

- Historic buildings represent an enormous amount of embodied energy, the energy and tangible resources it takes to produce a new building. Rehabilitating a building rather than scrapping it and starting new capitalizes on the existing materials, transportation costs, and construction labor already put into the building.
- Many older buildings were constructed with inherent efficiencies such as appropriate site orientation, operable windows, passive heating and cooling systems, and light maximization.
- "The Greenest Building is the one already built" (Carl Elefante). Recent calculations indicate that it takes 35-50 years for a new energy-efficient building to save the amount of energy lost in demolishing an existing building.

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The Deloney Store (1906) is one of the earliest buildings in the Jackson townsite, indicative of a growing community. Charles Pap Deloney opened the first general store in Jackson Hole in his home located on Cache Street. By 1906, he had outgrown the small one-room space and constructed one of the only buildings in town out of brick. On the south side of the building, there is a small window where you can see the bricks. Deloney often left the store open when he left town, and his neighbors would leave small slips of paper listing what they owed him. The one item he always locked up in his safe was candy, as it proved too tempting. The safe also acted as the area's first bank, as many area ranchers stored their checks here after selling their cattle. Deloney offered a wide variety of items, from washtubs to denim overalls. His general store was often the social hub of town, as neighbors who lived miles apart could catch up on news. In 1958, Jackson Hole Museum founders Homer Richards and Slim Lawrence opened their museum in the old Deloney Store. Today, the building still serves as exhibit space open seasonally to the public.



The Karns cabin (1898) is a classic early homesteader-style cabin. It is one of few examples of the saddle-v corner notch in Jackson Hole.



The Mercill cabin (1945) was built as a private vacation retreat for the Coey family. In 1945, Horace and Louise Coey contracted local Jackson Hole carpenter Jack Kranenberg to build a modest log cabin as their vacation home. In 1950, Grand Teton National Park expanded and the Coey cabin on Warm Springs Road was now part of an inholding. The Park acquired the land, and donated the cabin to the Teton County Historical Society in 1982. The cabin was transported 5 miles south to Mercill Avenue in Jackson, where it underwent an extensive renovation. A new basement was dug and a large addition nearly doubled the interior space. It has served many JHHS needs over the last 35 years including office, archive, and educational programming space.



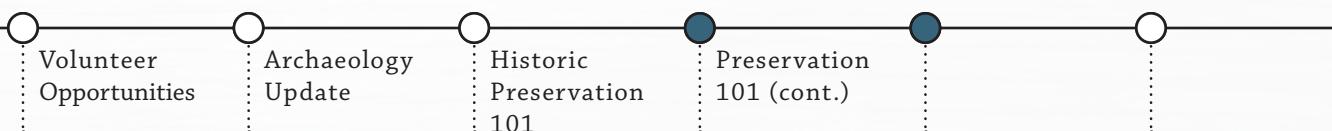
The Shane cabin (1953) was built as a set piece for the famous western movie *Shane*. While the building style was a re-interpretation of what the old homesteads looked like, it tells the story of growing commercial tourism in the valley, capitalized on and fueled by Hollywood. •



*Top to bottom: Deloney Store (now JH Museum); Karns cabin; Mercill Cabin; Shane Cabin.*

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Jackson Hole Historical  
Society and Museum  
presents the  
14<sup>th</sup> annual

# old Tyme Christmas

With JH Fiddlers and  
Byron Tomingas.

**The Wort Hotel  
December 14  
7:00pm**

Come early to enjoy  
fiddle music by  
the fireplace!

For more information,  
visit [jacksonholehistory.org](http://jacksonholehistory.org)

