



SOCIETY FOR INDUSTRIAL ARCHEOLOGY

NEWSLETTER

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MONTANA'S IA, HYDROPOWER PLUS

For the third time in the last three decades, Montana's Klepetko SIA Chapter sponsored an annual fall tour for the national organization. Fifty members from around the country gathered in Great Falls, Oct. 8-11. We could not have asked for better weather—clear skies, warm temperatures, and peak autumn color.

Day One, a Thursday, featured an “early bird” tour to Ashgrove Cement, Marks-Miller (wood posts and poles), and the Archie Bray Foundation (former Western Clay). The crew at **Ashgrove Cement** provided an overview of the wet process of making Portland cement and a history of the company, organized in Sunderland, Mo. in 1882 and currently the operator of eight cement plants nationwide. Ashgrove built the 450-ft.-long rotary kiln at Montana

City in 1963 to produce cement needed to construct the Yellowtail Dam on the Bighorn River. The bulk process mixes silica, shale, limestone, gypsum, and iron into a wet slurry that is fed into the kiln, which is fired with 155 tons of coal, 75 tons of coke, and 950 tons of clinker per day to a temperature of 2,700°F. Many improvements have been applied to the basic process to reduce energy consumption and air pollution impact.

At **Marks-Miller** in Clancy, just south of Montana City, Gary Marks, the owner over the last 39 years, began the tour by demonstrating a computerized Komatsu machine that has been modified to pick up lodgepole pine logs and snip them to appropriate lengths for fence rails and posts. The machine employs an appendage (developed in Sweden) consisting of a mechanical wrist-action grabber and a chainsaw. Marks-Miller has two units so equipped; each can process about 500 logs per 10-hour shift. Marks-Miller buys logs measuring up to 10-in. diameter, including beetle-killed timber. The mountain pine beetle carries a blue-staining fungus into the wood below the bark, and it was quite noticeable once our guide pointed it out. This fungus kills the tree by cutting off the flow of water and nutrients. Interestingly, the dead trees

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Saul Tammenbaum

Generating hall at Rainbow Dam.

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- Slate of Candidates for 2016 SIA Election
- Steam Returns to La Esperanza Sugar Mill

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CALENDAR

2016

- Apr. 6–10:** Society of Architectural Historians Annual Conference, Pasadena, Calif. Info: www.sah.org.
- May 18–20:** Iron & Steel Preservation Conference & Workshop, West Lafayette, Ind. Repair, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic metals. Held at Purdue University, S-BRITE Center Bridge Component Gallery. Info: Vern Mesler, meslerv@gmail.com; (517) 614-9868.
- May 18–21:** Early American Industries Assn. Annual Conference, Harrodsburg, Ky. Held at Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill. Info: www.earlyamericanindustries.org.
- May 25–29:** Railway & Locomotive Historical Society Annual Meeting, Moscow, Idaho. Info: www.rlhs.org.
- May 26–29:** Construction History Society of America, 5th Biennial Meeting, Austin, Texas. Info: www.chsa-5thbiennial.org.
- June 1–4:** Vernacular Architecture Forum Annual Conference, Durham, N.C. Info: www.vafweb.org.
- June 2–5:** SIA 45th ANNUAL CONFERENCE, KANSAS CITY, MO. Members will be sent registration materials and tour itinerary in March. Info: www.sia-web.org.
- June 9–16:** Mining History Assn. Annual Conference, Telluride, Col. Historic mine, mining area, and hydroelectric plant tours. Info: www.mininghistoryassociation.org.
- June 16–19:** 6th International Early Railways Conference, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England, U.K. See article in this issue. Info: www.earlyrailways.org.uk.
- June 22–26:** Society for the History of Technology (SHOT) Annual Conference, Singapore. Info: www.historyoftechnology.org.
- July 28–31:** Petroleum History Symposium, Casper, Wyo. Paper sessions and field trips to the Black Gold Byway, Salt Creek oil field, and Teapot Dome. Info: <http://petroleumhistory.org>.
- Sept. 4–9:** Assn. for Industrial Archaeology Annual Conference, Telford, U.K. Tours include Grange Colliery, Wappenshall Canal basin, Iron Bridge, and Ditherington Flax Mill. Info: <http://industrial-archaeology.org>.
- Oct. 20–22:** Society for the Preservation of Old Mills (SPOOM) Annual Conference, Dayton, Ohio. Info: www.spoom.org.
- Oct. 30–Nov. 2:** Assn. for Preservation Technology International Annual Conference, San Antonio, Texas. Info: www.apti.org.