



THE COBALT LODGE

Newsletter of the Cobalt Historical Society

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Cobalt Historical Society Annual Report 2017

This report was presented at the Cobalt Historical Society Annual General Meeting held in the Paul Penna Library, Lang Street, Cobalt, Ontario, Monday, February 5, 2018

2017 CHS Board Members:

Maggie Wilson, Interim Chair (replacing Vivian Hylands); Reg Holdsworth; Deborah Ranchuk, Recording Secretary; Kendra LaCarte, Interim Treasurer (formerly held by Jack Church); Reiner Mielke, Interim Trail Manager (formerly held by Reg Holdsworth); Dwight Brydges; Jim Eckert; Florence Dean.

Chair Report by Maggie Wilson

2017 was a year of many changes for the board, the greatest of which was the unexpected passing of CHS chair Vivian Hylands in April. Her vacant position was filled by Maggie Wilson on an interim basis. Reiner Mielke took over the role of Trail Manager, and later in the year, Kendra accepted the offer to replace Jack Church as Treasurer. These are all interim positions that will be voted on later in this meeting.

I'd like to acknowledge the continuing support of Jack Church and Reg Holdsworth as they guide we newcomers to the area and to the work of the Cobalt Historical Society. As well, I'd like to acknowledge Deborah Ranchuk's guidance. I have could not have done it without you. Thank you.

Preservation of the Heritage Silver Trail

Right-of-Way head frame roof repair fundraising campaign – by December 31, we had \$12,438. Funds were raised through newsletter to members, direct mailing to mineral clubs, auction of silver specimen from Vivian's estate, an indoor yard sale organized by Angela Hunter, and via social media.

New Signage on the Heritage Silver Trail – application for grants have been submitted to FEDNOR, Parks Canada, and Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC). The FEDNOR and NOHFC grants are in the application stage.

We are ineligible for Parks Canada funds since we do not own or lease the Right of Way Property. To address this issue, we have approached Historic Cobalt Corporation and requested that they pursue purchasing or leasing the ROW property from ONR.

We offered to accept responsibility for the Keevil and Town of Cobalt Walking Trails. To be finalized by Town Council.

We attended meetings with the Cobalt Coleman Environmental Advisory Committee. In December, the members of the CCEAC confirmed the need for the committee and proposed two ad-hoc committees, one related to water quality, and the other related to heritage. Work is ongoing to write terms of reference.

Promotion of the Cobalt Historical Society and the Heritage Silver Trail

Promotion of the CHS and the Heritage Silver trail was conducted primarily through social media – i.e. a new Facebook Page. Radio advertising for the Speaker's Symposium also brought attention to our agency as did media reports on the council meetings where CHS made presentations.

Through contacts on social media, the CHS has been approached for interviews by Bill Steer and CIM Magazine. CIM published an article written by Charles Dumaresq, promoting CHS and in particular the need to repair the ROW headframe.

Also via social media contacts we have recruited the volunteer services of Shannon Lathem who answers ancestry-related queries.

Publications and Presentations: Five issues of the *Cobalt Lode* newsletter were published. Work is underway to reformat the look of the newsletter. We also approved the designing and production of rack cards to be placed in tourist booths, hotels, motels, resorts and other public places. Most of the trail guides were given out to the community and to visitors we encountered on the trail.

Deborah re-published the CHS website heritagesilvertrail.ca and updates it regularly.

CHS held a Speaker's Symposium in June and five speakers made presentations. A book recording the talks *Selected Chapters of Temiskaming Heritage* has been prepared for printing. The 2018 symposium is scheduled for June 2, 2018.

Other Business

Application for Charitable Status was made in May, and a response from the CRA was received late December. The CRA recommends that we withdraw our application. Discussion ongoing.

The CHS office continued to be made available for the use of the Economic Development Officer Michelle Anderson who has been hired by Cobalt, Coleman and Latchford.

We continue our relationship with Agnico Eagle whose representatives have attended meetings and contribute to the newsletter.

Through Canada Summer Jobs, we arranged for a summer student who worked mostly at the Mining Museum, but did help out for a few hours with trail work.

Trail Report 2017 submitted by Reiner Mielke.

Work Done in 2017

√ Cleared brush and trees off Mckinley-Darragh mill site

√ Cleared 50% of the brush and trees off Nipissing Low grade mill site

√ Brushed out Townsite Mine area and cut trees blocking the view of the Glory hole

√ Cleared trees off the Crown Reserve hoist and brushed out road.

√ The Nipissing 96 site was closed and Agnico Eagle took down all the buildings and rehabilitated the site. At our request they moved the 96 hoist to the Right of Way site and the ore cars, motor, sinking bucket and sheave wheel to the headframe at Hwy 11 & 11B.

√ I put up a closed sign at the Nipissing 96 site and brushed out the viewing platform of Cart Lake which is still open.

√ Repaired Colonial Mine information sign.

√ Put up signs directing people to the 96 Adit and The Glory Hole

√ Repaired 3 broken windows in the Right-of-Way head frame and had two other broken ones boarded up. The site was vandalized and the lock broken off. Reg Holdsworth replaced the lock.

√ Replaced a broken door on one of the Right of Way outbuildings and had the town of Cobalt shore up

the foundation with broken rock

I gave a presentation to Coleman Council on the merits of declaring our sites Provincial Historic sites. As a consequence Coleman council passed a bylaw authorizing the formation of a Municipal Heritage Committee for that purpose.

I gave a presentation to Cobalt Council on the merits of declaring the Right of Way site a Provincial Heritage Site. The presentation was well received and the council is moving towards that goal.

Repainted, repaired and reinstalled two old Cobalt walking trail signs and repainted, repaired posts and installed 18 new signs at other sites.

I requested a cost estimate for replacing all our Silver Trail signs from Lakeview Signs of Latchford. A quote of \$139,612 was provided.

Work to be done in 2018

- Finish clearing the brush and trees off the Nipissing Low grade mill site.

- Replace the support legs on the Right of Way headframe

- Get the Right of Way site declared a Provincial Heritage site.

- Get the Nipissing Low and High Grade mills declared Provincial Heritage Sites.

- Repair the support posts and remount the sign for the Townsite Mine. It was blown off by wind in January of this year.

- Install two more town walking trail signs.

- Take an inventory of all our material assets.

Other plans for the future

- Replace the roof on the Right of Way head frame
- Replace all our Silver Trail signs.

- Consolidate all the trails in the area and produce new guide books.

- Close the Nova Scotia site as it is unsafe due to stopes collapsing causing sink holes.

- Consolidate and simplify the Silver trail by eliminating the sites further away that are seldom visited and replacing them with new sites closer to town.

Nominations for 2018 Board of Directors
Maggie Wilson; Reg Holdsworth; Deborah Ranchuk; Kendra LaCarte; Reiner Mielke; Dwight Brydges; Jim Eckert; Florence Dean.

As there were no other nominations, the Board was acclaimed, and the meeting closed.

The History of the Right-of-Way Mine

by *Reiner Mielke*

In 1905 by order-in-council, the Ontario government under Premier James P. Whitney turned over the task of managing the land and mineral rights in Cobalt to the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway Commission. The Commission decided to sell the surface rights separate from the mineral rights and in 1905 laid out a lot plan for the surface rights in Cobalt. On August 18th 1905 the commission auctioned off the lots to the public. This was followed in 1906 by the sale of three parcels of land for mining. One of these was the right-of-way between mile 101 and mile 105.

In 1906 the Right-of-Way parcel was purchased by the newly formed Right of Way Mining Company Ltd., under president Mr. T. A. Beument. This gave them the right to mine under the railroad right of way for a period of 99 years. In 1906 the Right of Way Mining Company constructed what we now call the Right of Way headframe to service a three compartment shaft (the #2 shaft) that was sunk to a depth of 43m. They also constructed a power plant and hoist room 15 metres east of the headframe.

That same year they also sunk the #1 shaft next to the T&NO tracks 183 metres north of the #2 shaft in order to mine the extension of the LaRose vein. From

these two shafts the Right of Way Mining Company produced approximately 86,000 oz. of silver in 1906.

In 1908 the two shafts were connected on the first level but by the end of 1909 all the known veins in the shaft #1 & 2 area had been worked out and attention then shifted elsewhere. Up to the end of 1909 the two shafts had produced approximately 1.5 million ounces of silver.

In September 1909 the company was re-organized and became the Right of Way Mines Ltd. For the next three years the #2 shaft sat idle but in 1913 the shaft was deepened to 114 metres and in 1919 a winze was sunk to a depth of 164m. During that time considerable development took place and some new veins were discovered. This resulted in the production of an additional 620,000 ounces of silver.

However by 1920 the ore had run out and the company went onto receivership. In 1922 the creditors formed the Right of Way Syndicate to manage the assets of Right of Way Mines Ltd. Then sometime in 1929 or 1930 Laurentian Mines Ltd. took over the assets of the Right of Way Syndicate and made a small test shipment of ore in 1930, this was followed in 1932 by a shipment of four tons of ore that yielded 7,327 ounces of silver.

In 1934 Cobalt Properties Limited acquired the mining rights to the area from Laurentian Mines Ltd. but nothing was done until 1939 when they de-watered the #2 shaft to a depth of 109m. However, there are no reports of any mining activity by Cobalt Properties.

In 1941 Silanco Mining & Smelting Corp. took over Cobalt Properties Limited. This was essentially a paper takeover since Silanco was the controlling shareholder of Cobalt Properties Limited. There is no record of Silanco doing anything with the property, and in 1951 the mining rights were acquired by Hellens Mining & Reduction Ltd.

Records show that in 1952 Hellens Mining & Reduction Ltd. re-conditioned the #2 headframe which was then acquired by Cobalt Consolidated Mining Company Ltd. in 1953. Between 1953 and



1910- Right of Way mine.

1954 Cobalt Consolidated did some underground exploration but this did not lead to any production.

In 1955 Silver Miller Mines sub-leased the #2 shaft and headframe in order to gain access to their Chambers-Ferland property which is east of and adjacent to the Right of Way property. They held this sub-lease until the end of 1957.

In October 1957 Cobalt Consolidated Mining Company Ltd. was renamed Agnico Mines Limited and in 1958 Agnico did some underground exploration with 350 metres of drifting and 121 metres of raising. Unfortunately nothing of economic significance was found and the property has been sitting idle ever since.

In 1972 Agnico re-organized to become Agnico-Eagle Mines Ltd. and in 1978 Agnico-Eagle gave up the mining rights to the Right of Way property. The ownership then reverted back to the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario Railway Commission which by this time was called the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission, having been renamed in 1946. The Ontario Northland Transportation Commission currently owns both the surface and mining rights to the Right of Way property.

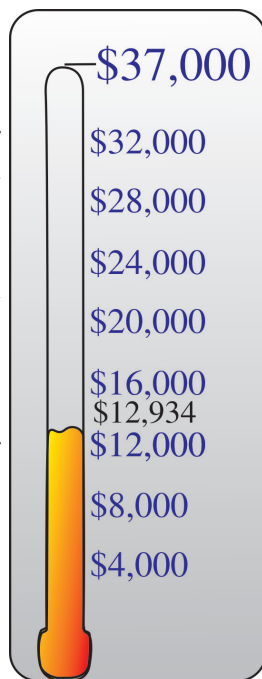


Fund Raising Update

GREAT news regarding our fundraiser to fix the roof on the Right-of-Way Mine! We are now set up to accept your donations online! If you wish to send us an Interac e-transfer from your bank, please use our email

chs@heritagesilvertrail.ca

If you are local to Cobalt, your donations (cash or cheque payable to *Cobalt Historical Society*) can be left at the book store downtown, 50 Silver Street, across from the Fraser.



Cobalt High School Reunion 2018

The 2018 Cobalt High School Reunion will take place Friday, August 3 to Sunday, August 5. A brief schedule of events includes a meet and greet games night/ karaoke at the Miners Tavern Friday night, Saturday museum tours, Historic Legacy Fund display, memorabilia displays, mini putt tournament, camping at the Cobalt Lake Park, barbecue get together at Bass Lake (swim, canoe rides, food), a dinner at the Community Hall with entertainment, pancake breakfast at the Golden Age Club and possible inclusive service at St. James Anglican Church. Courage-Honour-Service!!!

If anyone has memorabilia, please bring it to the reunion. This event includes all years, staff and students of CHS.

Anyone wishing to pre-register for the 2018 Cobalt High School Reunion should email Linda Leo Alkema at chsreunion.linda@gmail.com so we can get an idea of how many people are coming for the dinner specifically.

FaceBook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Cobalt-High-School-Reunion-2018-465481773814193/>

Selected Chapters of Temiskaming Heritage Chapter 2 coming June 2nd, 2018

We have booked the Golden Age Club, 22 Argentite Street, Cobalt for our upcoming Symposium June 2nd, 2018. Details on speakers in April Newsletter, and probably before that on the website.

Save the date.

Submissions for the Newsletter are most welcome. So if you have some piece of history to share please let us know.

Membership Renewals

A new membership form for your 2018 membership was enclosed with the December newsletter. We hope you will continue with us. We're looking to accomplish bigger and better things. If you've lost the form, they are available for download from the website.

Between newsletters, stay current with our website and Facebook page.