



Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum, *in association with the Smithsonian Institution*

Issue #67, Fall/Winter 2012

# Newsletter

## Museums & Radios... What are they thinking of now ...?

Museums are home to “things” - old and new, peculiar and mundane, enchanting and ghastly, fascinating and, quite frankly, somewhat wicked!

Radios are home to “sounds” - pleasant and contrary, rebellious and nonconformist, or time-honored and traditional.

But “things” and “sounds” are coming together in a new partnership between the Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum and Bisbee’s KBRP Radio!

To clarify, “things” are more than simple inanimate objects, devoid of stories. “Things” provide visual accents to any story! For example, a radio is more than a box with nifty dials and knobs with all kinds of coiled copper, transistors, and capacitors stuffed willy-nilly inside. A radio is a reflection of so many memories, the sum of which brings richness to our lives!

For me, listening to radio puts a smile on my face as it brings fond memories of my year as a teenage, total amateur “disk jockey” for the Seoul American High School radio hour, sponsored by the U.S. Armed Forces Radio, dedicating Simon & Garfunkle’s “Homeward Bound” to all our friends lucky enough to be going home. I must confess that I begin to feel old as I think back on that silver and black transistor radio I was so proud of, or that plastic pocket radio, of course in a hideous turquoise color, that proclaimed my “coolness” in the 1960s! I also have fond memories listening to Austrian and German political folksingers in the 1980s in Europe, or listening today to light jazz, Michael Bublé, Norah Jones, and French chansons on pandora.com or NPR’s “Wait Wait Don’t Tell Me” Saturday mornings on my iPhone! Thus the Museum-Radio partnership!

Charles Bethea, a member of the Museum’s Board of Directors (also a Bisbee High grad and Puma fan!), researches, writes, and voices the stories. KBRP Station Director Ryan J. Bruce provides the technical knowledge and support, bringing the stories to life.

*The Copper Chronicle*, a tip of the hat to the old Bisbee High School newspaper, also features local original music composed and performed by artistic luminaries Judy Perry and Nancy Weaver.



From Charles’ viewpoint, Bisbee is rich with history and great stories and the tradition of great storytelling is a cornerstone of public radio. He hopes *The Copper*

*Chronicle* captures listener’s imagination the way good stories should. A good story should make you listen to the end and say “I didn’t know that!” And you should want to not miss the next one.



For all of us who live in Bisbee, the program airs on 96.1 FM on Tuesday and Thursdays at 12:50 PM. The program will be rebroadcast on Fridays at 7:50 AM and on Saturdays at 11:50 AM. If you miss a broadcast and for our members living outside Bisbee, you can listen to the stories by

going to the Museum’s website [www.bisbeemuseum.org](http://www.bisbeemuseum.org) and click on the link or simply go to [www.thecopperchronicle.org](http://www.thecopperchronicle.org). The stories are downloadable through iTunes or a podcast. For the faint-hearted; i.e., those of us who look askance at our fast-changing communications technology and perhaps long for that simple radio, you can simply click through [www.thecopperchronicle.org](http://www.thecopperchronicle.org) and listen on your computer, iPad or tablet. Click first on the “archive” tab, a second click on which story you would like to hear, scroll down the page and click on “audio accompaniment.” Then sit back, relax, and enjoy!

*by Carrie Gustavson*



To tempt you, here is a sample of the Copper Chronicles.

*Radios in the Museum collection (top to bottom):*

*Bisbee Wireless Apparatus Co., replica of XT&L wireless radio (Hope Collection)*

*Westinghouse, Art Deco wooden radio (Padovan Collection)*

*U.S. Army Signal Corps BC-348-N receiver (Waterhouse Collection)*

*U.S. Army Signal Corps Radio tube checker (Waterhouse Collection)*

## Radios through Time



## “B” & the Copper Pick

Football is a cornerstone tradition in American high schools and Bisbee High has been playing since its earliest days. When fans around town talk about football sooner or later they get around to the second oldest high school rivalry in the U.S.—the

Bisbee Pumas vs. the Douglas Bulldogs.

The tradition began in 1906 and the teams have played more than 140 times. In some early years, they played twice a season. For a few years in the 1990s they missed playing and one year Bisbee won by forfeit. But the rivalry continues and passions about which team—or town—is more worthy are as strong as ever.



To illustrate just how deep those passions run, look no farther than that iconic symbol of victory, the Copper Pick. Each time the teams play their annual game, the winner goes home with the trophy. It started in 1944 when Douglas principal Charles R. Johnson suggested there should be some symbol that would represent good sportsmanship between the teams. Phelps Dodge came on board and funded the Pick’s fabrication. Designed by Paul H. Hubar of Douglas, it is an 18” replica of a miner’s pick formed out of copper mined in Bisbee and smelted in Douglas. The Pick’s first home after the 1944 season was the trophy case at Bisbee High School. Halfback Bill Penn finished his brilliant career with a 74 yard scoring dash that helped seal the Puma’s 21-6 win.

Over the years, the Pick has gone back and forth with the winning school celebrating and the loser lamenting, each vowing it will keep or recover the prize next season. The Copper Pick has come to symbolize one of Bisbee’s most revered traditions, and each year as the game approaches you can hear the excitement building in the hallways at the high school and around town.

But there was an earlier symbol of Puma pride in Bisbee. Up Chihuahua Hill just below the crest, a big letter “B” looks out over the town. It got its start in 1927 during a snowstorm when the first stakes were driven into the mountainside by members of the Hi-Y club. The plans and measurements for the letter came from mining engineer Harrison M. Lavender, who later led development of the open pit that bears his name. Local businesses donated about \$300 to pay the costs. Lavender had the boys use newspapers to lay out the design on Horace Mann field—the park next to today’s city swimming pool. An identical design

was laid out on Chihuahua Hill and the two were compared for accuracy. It was designed to be larger at the top so that when seen from the streets of the town below it would appear normal.

Dick Scott, one of Bisbee’s youngest entrepreneurs at 11 years of age, owned a string of donkeys he used for hauling wood. He offered his team and services to carry concrete, lime, and other supplies up OK Street to a trail that led around the backside of the mountain then up to the spot where the “B” was laid out. Phelps Dodge donated 3,000 lbs. of lime to whitewash the big letter. It took a few months to complete the job, but by early May 1928, it was finished. Most of the students at the high school helped with the project including the Puma Girls who kept the hardworking boys fed.

High school boys weren’t off the hook even after the “B” was done. Once a year starting in fall 1932, the sophomore boys (the lowest class at that time) and later the freshmen trekked up a long staircase from OK street to an outcropping of rock about halfway up the hill. There in what was for many years the final act of freshman initiation, they mixed lime with water and carried it in buckets and five gallon “GI” cans up to the “B” where the rock was whitewashed to make the symbol of Bisbee and Puma pride sparkle. That tradition continued for many years.

Of course the reason for the annual sprucing up was the Bisbee-Douglas football game, played through the 1963 season on Thanksgiving Day. The night before the game, students marched up Main Street accompanied by the band in a victory rally that ended up on Horace Mann Field. There a bonfire was lit as a signal to the Drillers high on Chihuahua Hill. The Drillers, students who served as a utility and security detail, outlined the “B” with kerosene soaked rags. When they saw the bonfire, they lit the “B” which burned brightly in the night sky, a symbol of the next day’s contest and the quest to keep or take back the Copper Pick. Long time Bisbee residents and high school alums remember the magical flicker of fire on the hill that symbolized Puma pride and town spirit.

Nowadays, the “B” can be seen every night. Modern technology has replaced the once a year tradition of burning rags with lights powered by the sun. They can even change color to celebrate special occasions. But the meaning does not change. It is Bisbee’s symbol and reminder of cherished traditions.

From 1928 until 1959, the “B” kept an eye on Bisbee High students who went to class in the big yellow building on High School Hill. Starting in 1934, each year’s school annual, the Cuprite, was introduced by a message to the students: the “B” Speaks. In that first Cuprite the big white symbol reminded the students of its presence in their lives.

I am the “B” of ’34.  
Of years gone by and many more.  
I shine by day and glow by night:



In fact, I am your beacon light.  
 The spirit of your school and I  
 Symbolize ambitions high.  
 In days to come remember me  
 And live the spirit of your "B."

School spirit and town spirit are inseparable in Bisbee. The annual grid-iron contest with Douglas continues a rivalry that has lasted over a century and enthusiasm for the Copper Pick is as strong now as it was in 1944. High on Chihuahua Hill, the "B" lights the night sky over the old town, an echo of those Thanksgiving Eves when everyone turned out to cheer the Pumas on to victory. Both remind us that we have been shaped by traditions that endure. Onward Bisbee.

*by Charles Bethea*

## November is the Museum Membership Month

*Time for that annual membership renewal, perhaps consider a membership upgrade, or bring your friends into the Museum family!*

With a history deserving of National Landmark status, it's only fitting that Bisbee's past be captured and reflected in a museum like no other. The Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum takes you and your family back in time to the days of the Arizona Territory, telling the story of a copper-mining town's role in the industrialization of America, a history of your grandparents' generation.

An Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, the Museum offers an interactive trip back in time for the whole family. The American Industrial Revolution not fun to learn about? Think again! Why copper? Find out! The Museum offers the stories of how people reacted to family and social issues through the last 125 years and how their responses helped shape the city, the state, and the nation. So... **Put Bisbee's Past in Your Future** by supporting the Museum through your annual membership.

All basic memberships include:

- *Unlimited free admission* to  
 Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum  
 Muheim Heritage House
- *2 Free Museum Admission Passes*
- *10% discount* on all purchases in the Museum Store
- *Museum Newsletter*
- *Advance notice* and a preregistration period on all Museum events
- *Members-only section of our website*

**If this box is checked,  
 your membership is due!**



Check your newsletter mailing label  
 to find out your current  
 membership status.

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Individual</b>       | <b>\$30</b> BASIC package  |
| <b>Family</b>           | <b>\$40</b> BASIC package  |
| <b>Patron</b>           | <b>\$75</b> BASIC + 2 Museum passes  |
| <b>Patron Affiliate</b> | <b>\$75</b> BASIC + Smithsonian membership   |
| <b>Life</b>             | <b>\$350</b> = No more annoying annual reminders to renew your membership + recognition name plaque displayed in Museum! |
| <b>Heritage Keeper</b>  | <b>\$500 - \$2,500</b> Annual Donation   |
- The Heritage Keeper level is an exciting opportunity to support the museum with an annual donation by members or businesses:
- Unlimited free Museum admission or small group tours with Museum Staff (reservations required)
  - Use of Museum facilities for small meetings or receptions (once annually, reservations required)
  - Donor recognition in the Museum Newsletter

**Make checks payable to  
 Bisbee Council on the Arts & Humanities  
 PO Box 14  
 Bisbee, Arizona 85603**

or pay online at  
[www.bisbeemuseum.org](http://www.bisbeemuseum.org)  
 click "Join Now" tab



## Heritage Keeper Members

Associated Fire Consultants • Bisbee Daily Review, Patricia Wick • Charles Henry Bethea • Calumet & Arizona Guest House • Golder Associates • Justice Financial • Save Our Stairs, Inc. • James Stewart • The Warne Foundation

**Remember us in your will & estate planning.  
A bequest can perpetuate your annual gift!**

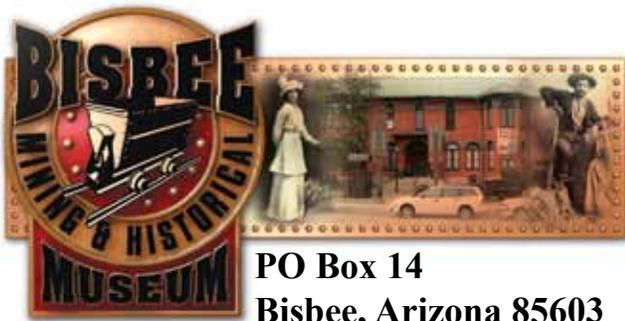
Let's say your annual gift to the Bisbee Mining & Historical Museum is \$500, the entry level into our Heritage Keeper membership status. A bequest to us of just \$10,000 can be endowed so that it distributed \$500 each year (5% of the principal) to support our work. Even a small bequest, when endowed, can have a significant impact on funding our important programs. Ask us about the many endowment opportunities available to you and how you can create a meaningful legacy through a well-planned charitable bequest. For further information, contact Carrie Gustavson, Director, at (520) 432-7071 or by email at [carrie@bisbeemuseum.org](mailto:carrie@bisbeemuseum.org) for details and references.

**We would like to thank the following for their wonderful support:**

**Alice Metz Bequest**

**John & Sylvia Iriarte Riddle Bequest**

**Joy & John Timbers Bequest**



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**A NEW MUSEUM - RADIO PARTNERSHIP**