

BHS Curator's Report – Spring 2026

by Kathy Howard

After preparing the new exhibits for our “Winter in the Valley” displays, the workload turned back to cataloging the items that have been donated and collected over the years. Prior to the opening of the Museum, donations were housed at the Society’s chalet as well as at Board members’ homes and also in storage units. All of these items have been moved to the Museum for sorting and processing. Since mid-January 2026, over 150 previously uncatalogued items have been processed with new catalog records added to our PastPerfect database.

The first step in the cataloging process is to assign two numbers to the item. The first number – the accession number allows us to keep track of the source (donor information). The second number, known as the object id number in the PastPerfect database is the unique number assigned to each item. This unique number allows us to retrieve an item from wherever it is stored in the Museum collection.

Every catalog record in PastPerfect displays the exact location of each item in the Museum collection. Most books are stored in the Museum’s “library”, filed by author name and available for browsing by any of our visitors. Miscellaneous documents, photos and actual objects are stored in a different manner in boxes or folders. The Museum has a number of file cabinets currently holding over 300 folders where various papers and newspaper clippings, etc. are stored by subject. Objects, photos and other documents are each stored separately in clear, archival zip lock bags labeled with the item’s object id number. These bagged items are then stored in a series of plastic boxes. Wherever possible, boxes have been labeled by broad subject class – railroads, skiing, schools, etc. - and items that can be grouped by a subject are boxed together. Miscellaneous items are boxed by id numbers. This system works very well for most items in the Museum collection. The exception to this storage system is the problem encountered in storing large items or most framed documents, maps, paintings, posters and prints.

The Society currently rents two storage units. These offsite areas hold items which cannot be stored in the Museum. Excess shelving, display cases/platforms, leftover construction materials, etc. are all stored in an unheated unit. Museum collection items are stored in a climate-controlled unit. Plans for spring 2026 include organizing this storage unit to allow us easy access to all of the 100+ items stored there. The plan is to set up shelving for organizing large items. Most storage items have been bagged/boxed and labeled but some items too large for a container are tagged with the id number. Custom bins have been built for the storage of framed items. Although these items in storage won’t be immediately available to Museum visitors, we hope to provide 24 hour turn around for retrieving storage items when requested.

Our PastPerfect database allows for the attachment of images to the catalog record so we will be photographing each of these stored items. Eventually, all of the items in the entire Museum collection will have a digital image attached to each catalog record. Anyone with an interest in photography who has time to volunteer would be welcome to join this project. Many documents and papers can be scanned and the digital image attached to the catalog record. Our postcard collection is currently in the cataloging process, but we hope to attach a scanned image of each card to the catalog record. We would welcome any help with this project as well.

If you would like to volunteer to be a part of taking the BHS into the future, please contact us by [email](#) at or call (603) 374-5037. Better yet, come in for a visit and let us know directly that you would like to be a part of the process!