



Stunning Scenes in Laramie

We opened this newsletter with the beautiful shot of the Ivinson Mansion laden in frost taken by Crystal Lawrence, and we close with this amazing view of hoarfrost on the Laramie River captured by Susan Simpson. Harsh contrasts from normalcy seemed to be the order of the day throughout 2020. See below how the smoke from the Mullen and Cameron Peak fires converged to fill the air south of Laramie in summer.

Historic Ivinson Mansion Laramie Plains Museum Newsletter

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Historic Ivinson Mansion

LARAMIE PLAINS MUSEUM

FEBRUARY 2021

MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER Join us!

If you haven't already, begin or renew your support for this very special showcase of Laramie, Albany County, and Wyoming history. Rather than an annual solicitation letter, we send our newsletter to give a visual on what membership supports and encourages. We are ever grateful for our members and benefactors, the foundation of our support and the reasons we can continue to dream and achieve, even during a year of pandemic! Everything you need for membership is in this newsletter, including a schedule of what we hope can be ahead in 2021. You'll learn about nominees for the Museum Association Board positions and some of the other fine folks who make the Laramie Plains Museum shine! Just open these pages to see some of what we're about, and then choose to become another great supportive presence so we can continue our preservation and celebration of Wyoming history!



Mansion in Hoarfrost by Crystal Lawrence, Running Cat Photography

NUMBERS TO NOTE: In “normal” times, I would use this section to report the number of people we had on the grounds with weddings, receptions, tours, meetings and special events in the previous year (we usually average 28,900) and laud the visitors (usually between 5000-6000) who experience guided tours of our historic house museum, including students of all ages and classrooms in Albany County, the state of Wyoming and the Rocky Mountain region. *However*, we are still reeling from the isolation of the 2020--2021 pandemic year so I’m unable to spout our exciting interpersonal activities. Instead, I’m going let a representative of one of the very important funding streams that happened in 2020 tell you about surviving the year. Though we had several naysayers in doubt about the transformation of the historic Stone Stable

from dilapidated rentals for college kids to the income-producing Loft Condos in honor of Mary Kay Mason’s desire and bequest, that income stream has been a saving grace, particularly with the slam of COVID-19 to the special events and rentals on the main property. Enjoy this uplifting report from Mason Loft Manager, **DOUG POWELL:**

After a rocky start in 2020, the *Mason Loft Condos* rebounded and bookings became very strong in late spring and continued to be supportive for the Laramie Plains Museum throughout the impacts of the coronavirus. When the pandemic hit in February we had close to a dozen future bookings that were cancelled. All was quiet, and as you know, worrisome about what we were all dealing with.

As things started to settle down a bit in late April and May, and some folks realized that a family style situation in Wyoming might actually be a safe place to get away, we saw a surge of bookings in the second quarter for later in the year. Bookings then remained surprisingly constant.

JOYCE & DOUG POWELL, Mason Loft Condo Designers, Managers, Cleaners, Coordinators

In 2020, we received 103 reservations for a total of 348 nights booked. We started the year with about \$9,300 in the checking account and gross revenue last year ended up at \$51,131.00. Expenses totaled \$26,887.00. **During the year we transferred \$30,000.00 to the operating account of the Museum.** Our ending balance in the checking account was close to \$3,500.00. As of this newsletter, we have received 37 reservations for 2021, for a total of 111 nights booked already.

We continue to use our booking agent, *Evolve Vacation Rental Network* which has proven to give us the maximum exposure possible. They, too, struggled early in the year processing all the cancellations and rescheduling bookings due to COVID-19, but seem to be back on track, and overall we are pleased with our association with them. We feel the short term rental concept for units like these has proven to be very beneficial. Not only does it maximize the exposure and income, it gives us a chance to keep up on the maintenance and repairs. We can, without reservation, state these upscale, lofted condos look and feel the same as the day they were completed.

We try to meet all the guests that stay in the condos, and make ourselves available to them if they have any issues. Everyone has been very pleased with the Mason Lofts and most folks say they will book again. Many of them already have.

We hope you find this look-back informative. We welcome any questions or inquiries you may have.

Happy New Year,
Doug and Joyce Powell
djpowell@bresnan.net

LARAMIE PLAINS MUSEUM ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

Alice Hardie Stevens Center—in person and virtual

The Annual Meeting is open to all Museum Association members and the general public. It is our report on the business of the Museum, our vote for new directors to the LPMA Board, and our recognition of those who have given in extraordinary ways to the welfare of the Laramie Plains Museum. We will be social distancing and wearing masks in our sanitized reception center, but if you would rather attend virtually,

Board Director, RJ Lara has you covered with ZOOM Meeting ID 934 8410 3300 (no passcode needed)

We hope to see you somehow!

(If you are wanting to know how to do these Zoom meetings that seem to have popped up everywhere, the Eppson Center for Seniors is offering special help with getting folks informed and involved with this safe, virtual method of interacting. Call the Center for more information or assistance 745-5116.)

“Snowbirds” continued

on his head, and the aforesaid zephyrs flop these around. . . We are having some elegant chromos of Nye made, and shall offer them as premiums for subscribers to the Sentinel, and when our readers see how he looks, they will not wonder that he has such a horror of a little wind.”

Laramie’s healthy climate

As early as 1878, editor Hayford was extolling the benefits of Laramie’s climate. While he did allow that if visitors had heart or “seriously diseased lungs” they might be likely to “have their days shortened as to be benefitted by coming suddenly from sea level.”

But for everyone else, even for people sick with consumption (tuberculosis) he felt it was proven that “soil moisture” was what caused the problem and the exceeding dryness of the atmosphere and the porosity of the soil was in great contrast to the “cold, damp, foggy atmosphere of the Atlantic States. . . where thousands of victims are carried off annually.”

In conclusion he wrote: “There is not probably a single feeble, dyspeptic, consumptive, over-worked denizen of the East who could not add years of pleasurable existence to his life by spending a few summer months here on the Laramie Plains, and among the adjacent mountains. To get the benefit of the climate, however, he should not shut himself up. . . but go out into the open fields, hunt deer, elk and antelope, catch the speckled trout . . . bathe in the warm springs, and thus put himself in direct contact with Nature’s healing remedies in her own laboratory.”

No doubt that is exactly the getaway that the snowbirds and reverse snowbirds are yearning for—they have been doing a brisk business in renting the LPM’s Mason Loft Condos this year and last. It is what drove one Laramie resident a few weeks ago to take a rejuvenating stroll on the Greenbelt along the Laramie River to witness the outstanding frosty scene you’ll see as you turn the page. **We’ve got it good in Laramie!**



Above: During our Wyoming 150th suffrage celebrations, Judy wore suffragist colors, sash, and hat and a big “Judy smile.”

Above right: Judy and Dennis swag the beautiful curtains she created for the Mrs. Iverson’s Sewing Room.

Judy Knight is one amazing, creative conduit of Albany County history. Her research and writings are gifts to our community. Rarely a week goes by that we don’t hear from someone who appreciates the articles of history Judy submits to the *Laramie Boomerang* newspaper. Judy’s articles were a special respite during COVID restraints, giving our community links to history that they awaited eagerly since many area museums were/are closed or have limited hours.

For years, Judy did so much volunteer work for the Laramie Plains Museum, we decided we better hire her, for even the small stipend we could come up with. And we then decided she absolutely needed a title, but what could that be when she is involved in nearly all aspects of what we do at this grand historic place?

Collections Manager! That title is pretty all inclusive, but even it doesn’t hold all that Judy has done for the Museum over the years to salvage, restore, reconstruct, uncover, and dig deeply into the history of our Laramie community. Judy’s hands-on skills with design and needles are also renowned. Her sewing and quilting projects have produced period-accurate pelmets (Victorian window coverings) in the Iverson Mansion and the Women’s History House. Stunning period reproduction quilts have brought in remarkable fundraising proceeds to many organizations over the years, including almost every *Evening at the Iversons*. It’s worth coming to the event just to see the quilt Judy will create to celebrate the historic theme of each *Evening*.

During this year of the pandemic, Judy and Dennis have kept themselves safely busy but sheltered from active work outside the home. Nevertheless, Judy has kept her hands in the history pot all along and we are seriously grateful.

A WINNING PIANO BAR!



Flew Wilson, a special friend of the Museum and a talented member of the Unexpected Company, won a piano bar! What’s that you say? Well we didn’t know either, but we do know that it’s pretty snazzy looking sitting in the Alice Hardie Stevens Reception Center now. Crafty folks, **Charmaine and Buddy Tapper**, took the old piano that sat in the Moose’s Lodge room, and upon which a century of tunes were played, and repurposed it. The classy “new” bar was then raffled off as a fundraiser for the

Moose, and Flew won it! Knowing it wouldn’t quite work in her home, but that it might be something special as a fundraiser for the Laramie Plains Museum, she donated it to us. Many coordinations later, long time Moose members and supporters of the Museum, **Joanne and Kevin Prah**, helped Flew and our men, **Stan Gibson and Ethan MacDougall**, get the bar moved from the Moose and into our Alice Hardie (it is still close to the weight of a piano, after all, and required some logistical expertise and heavy lifters!)

So now, we have this nifty piece safely here and we’re debating the best option for its future. Since it was so craftily reconfigured, maybe we’ll make it a raffle item for our July Art on the Lawn? Or maybe we’ll have it as an auction item for the Evening! It certainly will be a fun conversation piece until we decide. Thanks, Flew!



Standing with the newly transported bar is **Flew** and some of the masked moving crew: **Ethan MacDougall and Joanne and Kevin Prah**. All -round mover and doer, **Stan Gibson**, was just outside of this picture. Darn!

We're Not Really Snowbirds!

By Judy Knight, LPM Collection Manager and Well-Known, Much-Appreciated Guest Historian Writer for the Laramie Boomerang

Those of us reading this newsletter know that we are the hardy ones. Even in this pandemic year, we have decided to stay put and tough out the winter here. Sure, the museum is closed, we have to stay socially isolated in our family "bubble," but we could have hopped in our car, finding a short-term rental someplace else to escape winter.

We laugh at our friends and relatives who feel sorry for us because of the Wyoming climate. We know that we have it good—no traffic jams, no sirens blaring and no long lines. We like having neighbors who are pretty good at wearing masks when it counts. Best of all, we can easily walk to the great outdoors from practically any location in Laramie.

There are folks who do leave Laramie for the winter—we call them "snowbirds," and would never tell them to their faces that we envy them in the least, regardless of how we really feel.

The early snowbirds

I looked in old newspapers to see when "snowbird" was first mentioned and didn't find it at all, except for reference to sport shooting. In February 1879 the Laramie Sentinel reported several well-known men indulging in the sport, though maybe they were actually shooting at clay "pigeons."

Whatever it was, Dr. Finrock was the champion shooter though he was too modest to say how many he got. Edward Iverson only got three. The early press, by referring to "sparrows, snowbirds and finches that descend upon us in the winter," makes it sound like they were shooting at an actual bird species.

However, as soon as the golden spike was laid on May 10, 1869, erstwhile Laramie snowbirds could start booking tickets for San Francisco. The train didn't actually go all the way there, San Francisco Bay was an obstacle, so passengers were taken to boats that docked in the city itself. First-class passengers soon had all the comforts of home in Pullman's "Palace" carriages that included sleeping, lounging and dining cars. Other passengers toughed it out on crowded wooden benches.

California beckons.

As terminus of the Union Pacific Railroad, San Francisco enjoyed a boom. The population in 1860 was 56,802 and by 1890 it had reached 298,997. The entire state more than doubled in population in the 20 years between 1870 and 1890. For contrast, the entire population of Wyoming in 1870 was 9,118 and in 1890 it had grown to 62,555, so we had grown almost seven times in the same period!

But early reports from San Francisco did mention that though the grass and trees were green, it was cool and foggy often, with a winter damp that "penetrated to the bones" as one person put it.

San Diego is better!

It was well known that the sleepy mission town of San Diego at the southern tip of California was much warmer. But it also had a nice bay for trans-Pacific and other boats to dock, and the railroad barons of central California with their San Francisco investments intentionally blocked any rail access to San Diego. They refused to let anyone lay tracks over the main lines of the Central Pacific RR. Those switches for crossings were called "frogs," and an infamous "frog war" erupted at the inland California town of Colton in 1882.

It was the famed Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway (now the Burlington Northern Santa Fe or BNSF) that finally got the frog switch built in 1883, letting in a flood of snowbirds and others on the connection down from San Francisco. The UPRR offered special railroad excursion cars that would be transferred on tracks directly to

San Diego. Laramie mortician, J.W. Stryker, and his family were among the first to jump on that bandwagon with plans for the family to spend the winter of 1886-7 in San Diego.

Stryker's letters, published in the Boomerang in 1886, extol San Diego as, "the loveliest place I ever saw." He returned to Laramie, but went back in late April to escort his family back home. Col. John W. Donellan went, so did Laramie realtor C.H. Clark, who began frequent advertising in the Boomerang, offering "choice building lots" for those like him wishing to relocate. Former resident J.W. Meldrum was reported to have made \$30,000 with a partner in San Diego real estate speculation. The snowbird exodus had begun.

Edward and Jane Iverson began making trips to California in the 1880s. They even had intentions of moving permanently to San Diego. In August of 1889, their son-in-law Galusha Grow, a Laramie businessman and County Commissioner, made the momentous decision to move his family permanently to San Diego. But as we know, the Iversons resisted the urge to relocate, came back to Laramie and built their lovely home here in 1892.

However, as Kim Viner's extensive research shows, the Iversons were essentially snowbirds since they spent "a substantial amount of time in San Diego." Though Viner also reports: "after their son-in-law Galusha Grow died in 1903, their interest . . . waned, and they spent less time there." However, should you wish to enjoy the ambiance of San Diego, the Grow's 1895 two-bedroom vacation house in La Jolla is now a San Diego Historical Landmark and was for sale in 2018 for \$4.35 million, a price that included two other neighboring historic houses.

Winter is worse elsewhere!

Editor James Hayford of Laramie's 1869-1895 newspaper was the consummate Laramie booster. As long as he was publishing, he extolled Laramie's mild winters and poked fun at winter weather elsewhere. The January 13, 1873 Sentinel reported that snow in Milwaukee "has halted eight freight trains. Snow was packed so tight, he said, that: "snowplows have no effect, and it will have to be shoveled, since only the top of the smokestack of an engine marks the whereabouts of the locomotives."

In the same issue he reprints as a verbatim a news brief saying: "A morgue for noses, ears and fingers, where they are to be kept frozen until called for by their owners, is to be established at St. Paul, Minnesota. It was no uncommon thing in that city during the late cold snap to see citizens hunting along the pavement for lost members, inadvertently broken off while frozen, picking up and rejecting half a dozen, in some instances, before finding the one that would fit."

What's a little wind?

Hayford did allow that the wind occasionally blows in Laramie. On January 17, 1880, he reported: "We have had a few soft breezes whispering through the trees, even in Laramie during the past week. On Tuesday it actually blew down Dr. Harris' chimney. The people in the post office block were scared out of their wits for fear the building would blow down." That might have been about the time that the third story was removed from the drug store building that now houses Jeffery's Bistro at Second and Iverson.

Hayford could not resist poking fun at his former employee, Bill Nye, saying this about the skinny, balding Nye in the March 6, 1880 edition of the Sentinel: "He is hollow all the way through. He admits that himself. There is no marrow in his bones, even. . . . When he walks around, the abdominal parities flap against the spinal column, and rattle like a paper bustle. . . . There are only six or seven hairs on



Galusha Grow family's snowbird getaway, now an historic landmark in La Jolla, a San Diego suburb.

A Winter Party: A Community Celebration in Wyoming's Outdoors

BY KONNIE CRONK, Curator

For at least two years in a row, Mr. C. P. Arnold, highly respected lawyer in Laramie, Wyoming, opted to celebrate his birthday, which occurred in the month of February, outside, be there snow, wind or rain (or all at once) but always with pleasant company. Mr. Henning Svenson was kind enough to take a photo, and we at the Laramie Plains Museum are lucky enough to have a copy to prove it! Not only was the "winter party" held outside, but it took place near a stream 24 miles north of town on C.P.'s ranch in an area called Millbrook. After reading the invitation, it seems our fellow Laramieites of 1925 loved the outdoors and the stark but beautiful landscape as much as we do today. The invitation alludes to those who ridiculed Arnold for his outdoor winter soiree, but others graciously accepted (as our lovely photo can attest). It seems those in the photograph are enjoying themselves. Perhaps, during this time of isolation and quarantine, we may find solace in nature, even during the winter. A socially distanced gathering in the great outdoors with family and friends can do much to cure the COVID-19 winter blues, at least for a short time.



Identified left to right: standing; Captain Robert Geitz, unknown, unknown, Carl Arnold (son of C. P.), unknown, unknown, Robert Homer, Axel Palmer, unknown, unknown, C. P. Arnold (author of the invitation), unknown, unknown, unknown, unknown child, unknown, unknown, unknown, unknown, unknown, unknown, and unknown. Seated; Amanda Palmer, unknown, unknown, unknown, unknown, Thurman Arnold (son of C. P.), unknown, unknown, unknown, unknown, and unknown. Do you recognize anyone in this photograph? The LPM can only identify 7 of the 36 people with some certainty. Please email Konnie at konniecronk@gmail.com if you recognize anyone or believe we mis-identified someone.

THE INVITATION

Winter Birthday Picnic, February 7th, 1925

The mind is its own place. (Milton) The sky, the fields and the woods console us. Too often men do not. (Voltaire)

"Another crisis confronts us. We face another frozen anniversary. Once more a winter picnic seems inevitable. Irresponsible people are active in spreading propaganda that I pull this winter picnic off every year to save expense. The rumor is widely circulated in this community that after hospitable entertainment in sheltered homes, graced with beauty in evening gowns and decorated with bald-headed intelligence in dress suits—after I have been fed up at generous tables, glittering with silver and shining with the art of Haviland and Limoges—I try to make a get-away by inviting people to a winter picnic at the river ranch, twenty-four miles from town, on the banks of an ice-bound stream, in groves of cottonwood and quaken-asp, where trees, not planted by the hand of man at the base of the Snowy Range, life the delicate lacework of leafless boughs into the brooding skies of February. They say that the whole affair is nothing but a barbarous social innovation. My defense is a challenge. The brave who are tender, the proud who are humble, the home-builders who are also lovers of the outdoors—they alone will hear it and respond. Why go to California? Do you miss the ocean? At least you'll be spared the horrors of Hollywood! Do you want to 'say it with flowers'? Think of something else! At its very worst our landscape is not disfigured with rose bushes in unseasonable bloom nor is the shrubbery littered up with old men in long beards who have fallen down trying to pick bouquets and then can't get on their feet without assistance. Are you afraid of the climate of our mountain plateau? Perhaps we can learn to love it. No missal illuminated by medieval monk—no Field of the Cloth of Gold—no summer sea lifting her isles of palm above the foam—no gorgeous East scattering with a lavish hand "barbaric pearl and gold," presents such pictures of form and color as do our own plains and mountains at this season of the year. Big bonfires among the woods will warm you clear thru when turning rapidly around. The food will be plenty and plain-baked ham with cloves stuck on the outside, Laramie prepared pork and beans with Mrs. Arnold's best brown bread, rivers of ranch cream and oceans of hot coffee, strong enough to cheer the faintest heart. I will make the coffee. Carl Arnold will cut a hole in the ice. Dr. Crane assisted by Thurman Arnold, will fill the brimming pails. Mr. N.E. Corthell will slice the ham. The head of the Department of Geology at the University of Wyoming will build the camp fires. One orange will be given each guest and no lady will be asked to do housework. There is no house. We will show you the nesting place of the white owl and the beaver's happy home, where the river bends. In many a bush, now leafless, you can find the hidden cradle, line with thistle-down, where thrush and bluebird fed their young last year, guarded from savage foes by the dagger thorns of the wild rose. And if you look up you will see either the snow or the sunshine, only the fool weather man knows which it will be, sift thru the tracery of trees. Leave the skeleton in the closet. Hunt thru your heirlooms for the head-gear Grandma and Grandpa used to wear. Ransack in the attic until you find that stout pair of outdoor boots. Bring along your own tin plate and cup, and a knife, fork and spoon, with one potato to bake in the hot ashes of roaring camp fires. Prof. Knapp will lead the singing, Miss Daisy Wharton again will play a vagrant tune on her gypsy fiddle. Mr. Svenson will take the pictures and Mrs. Connitt will be here from Cheyenne to sing the solo, 'We Have Come to the End of a Perfect Day.' We will leave Laramie at 10 a. m., starting, as usual, quite a distance this side of the cemetery."

C. P. Arnold [signed]"

What's Happening During Covid Shuttering

What's Happening During Covid Shuttering

Well, for one thing, we had some pretty great sparkle this past holiday season! On the opposite page you can see some of the repair and exhibit work we're continuing to do in the early part of this year, but over the Christmas season we focused upon the exterior of the Ivinson Mansion property. In spite of the inability to be open for our guided tours or hold our special events like Victorian Teas or the Holiday Open House weekend, we wanted passersby to know that we were holding on, hanging in, still working to preserve and showcase Albany County's unique history. **Stan Gibson** led the charge, working September—December, and often with our grounds man, **Ethan MacDougall** to string, fasten, replace and repair lights and timers so that the region's

finest historic house museum could shine brilliantly on its full square block. **TaDa! Beautiful job, Stan!** The compliments heard about the lit property were worth all your dedicated hours in the cold. Thank you!



The Museum has continued to offer updated news and history videos on the website laramiemuseum.org throughout 2020-1. In case you didn't get to see the beautifully decorated grounds, click on the site to take a drive-by tour of the incredible lighting. The website, itself, will also get a facelift in these early months. We're striving for an updated look with more user-friendly content, insight to our LPM Collection and greater promotion. Stay tuned! There's a great team making that happen.



Able to social distance outdoors, some of our volunteer gardeners and Feather Duster volunteers, **Judy Adams, Carol Hoff, Barb Rouse, and Annie Nelson** were hardy souls, helping with holiday décor set up and take down.

Louisa Gardener Swain cast her first vote September 6, 1870, in Laramie Wyoming. She was the first woman to vote in a general election with the same rights of suffrage and possibilities for holding property and political office as men in the state of Wyoming. 2020 was a special year of commemoration for Louisa, yet we were in a pandemic! **Weldon Tuck, Director of the Wyoming House for Historic Women and his Foundation Board**, orchestrated a lovely socially distanced celebration in September 2020 on the expansive east lawn of the Ivinson Mansion. The *pièce de resistance* was the bevy of women drivers of the **American Trucking Association** arriving to Laramie, the site of the famous vote, after driving cross country with incredible signage on their truck heralding the **150th Anniversary of Louisa's vote!** And even with the COVID-19 closures, friends remembered Louisa often throughout the year with the yellow roses of suffrage at the Plaza gate. Laramie Plains Museum staff chose to also add sparkle at Louisa's feet and poinsettias in her arms during the holiday season. It seemed only fitting that our lovely Quaker lady of Laramie should be honored even in the pandemic silence.



PROPOSED MUSEUM EVENT DATES



Art Fest on the Ivinson Lawn during Jubilee Days



Tea on Tuesdays



Evening at the Ivinsons'



Holiday Open House

February 21

Annual Museum Association Meeting
LPMA Members & Directors review the past year and look forward to better days ahead in 2021. Election of new Board Directors and honoring those who have given in special ways to the Museum.

May TBA

Regular Tours of the Museum Begin Again
Still uncertain about vaccines at this time, we remain cautious about opening for our guided tours. We will follow the CDC guidelines and our own insight with groups for the safety of our volunteer docents and our guests. Ordinarily, we open for tours on March 1st each year, but we are assuming it will be several weeks later, possibly early May in 2021. Again, everything we do is TBA/To Be Announced closer to actually happening this year.

May 25

1st Tea on Tuesday
We are going to plan that we can carry off these very special Victorian affairs occurring at 4:00 p.m. in the Alice Hardie Stevens Center one Tuesday each May, June, July. Not having Teas in 2020 was rough so we're holding positive thoughts we can safely pull them off this year.

Mid-June

Summer Touring Hours Begin as Junior Docents possibly can volunteer at the museum.

June-Aug

Wyoming Women's History House
Weldon Tuck, Director of the House is planning to follow the lead of the Laramie Plains Museum's with opening the doors of for tours of this significant site of Wyoming women's history. Watch for news of days and times for Louisa's gate to be open!

June 22

2nd Tea on Tuesday

July 11

Art Fest on the Ivinson Property
Artists, vendors, and authors are on the museum grounds the last Sunday of the Jubilee Days week. We hope to have \$2 walk-thru tours of the museum and some sort of safe way to offer refreshments while you visit the grounds.

July 20

3rd Tea on Tuesday

August 21

Evening at the Ivinsons'
End-of-summer celebration on the Museum lawn raises awareness and funding for this special slice of history. Look for invitations in early July. It's *the best* garden party each year, with great people, music, food, and auctions. Call the Museum office, 307-742-4448, if you're not on our list of past attendees or if you would like to be a sponsor or volunteer to help this year. It's a very special event in great support of Laramie's beautiful historic house museum.

December 11,12

Holiday Open House
The community is invited to complimentary tours of the decorated, historic Ivinson Mansion, complete with treats, music & holiday sales. Come, be part of the wonder of it all!



Here's hoping we can have the positive energy of our junior docents back with us this 2021 summer!

Historic Ivinson Mansion hosting the Laramie Plains Museum



Name _____
 Address _____

 Phone: _____
 E-mail _____

Please make sure we have your correct name and address when you return this entire sheet.

2021 INVITATION TO MEMBERSHIP

ALL memberships are significant in support of the preservation and maintenance of this special historic place. Members and their guests receive admission to the Museum, 20% discount on purchases at the Carriage House Gift Shop, voting privileges, newsletters and notice of special events. Names of Benefactors and Businesses/Organizations at \$1,000 or above (and already-established Life Members) are permanently displayed in the Ivinson Mansion's *Hall of Donors*. Yearly Business Memberships are posted at obvious points around the museum and noted in the newsletter. Membership contributions receive acknowledgement, tax-deduction receipts and this year's member card.

_____ \$ 1,000 + Life Benefactor

_____ \$ 1,000 Business Benefactor (LPM website promotion, including a business link)

_____ \$ 250 Business Member

_____ \$ 500 Edward Ivinson Circle*

_____ \$ 250 Jane Ivinson Circle*

Edward and Jane Ivinson were instrumental in

_____ \$ 100 Family

the development of Laramie as a thriving town along the Union Pacific trail.

_____ \$ 75 Individual

_____ \$ 75 Senior Family

We have two membership categories reflecting the Ivinsons' benevolence with cultural and economic development. LPM Members who contribute at these levels will be acknowledged on the *EI Circle*

_____ \$ 50 Senior Individual

_____ Please accept this additional support to help the museum with the Alice Hardie Stevens Expansion OR a project that I/we would like to see done: _____

_____ Yes, I would like to make a gift to the future of the museum via the LPM Endowment Fund

\$ _____ TOTAL ENCLOSED

You are also able to renew or begin your membership at our website www.laramiemuseum.org with *Paypal*. If you run into a snag with this option, please call Mary at 307-742-4448

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

Check (made out to Laramie Plains Museum)

Credit Card (most all cards accepted): Account #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

The Laramie Plains Museum is a 501(c)3 non-profit association. Your membership and endowment support are tax-deductible to the fullest extent provided for by law. A receipt will be sent for *any* monetary contribution.

Laramie Plains Museum — 603 Ivinson Ave. — Laramie, WY — 82070 — 307-742-4448

Smiles All Around as the 3rd Floor Gets a Face Lift!

Smiles All Around as the 3rd Floor Gets a Face Lift!

It was a year ago we hired crafts men and women to refinish the historic wood floors on the 1st floor of the Ivinson Mansion. They also cleaned the original tiles and repaired loosened, peeling wallpapers. **Cowboy Moving** helped the curatorial staff move heavy artifacts that hadn't seen other locations in the Museum in decades. There were several thoughtful "resets" of exhibits and rooms so that our stories of history could be invigorated. We opened the Museum to the public, as always on March 1, 2020 and geared that things might be off to a slow start as spring break approached. Was that an understatement! March 13th, we heard even more worrisome news, and COVID-19 caused us to close our doors in immediate caution. We remained in lock down and isolation from interactions with the general public, but we still kept staff onboard for all of the behind the scenes work, research, and general business. Events and rentals of the grand property were cancelled and rescheduled. The budget took a hit, but as in past financially-worrisome years, we looked for smart answers. We made it through with stunning bequests from Jackie Bath and Jim Wear, the first round of payroll assistance from the government PPP program, a generous grant from the Guthrie Family Foundation, and donors like all of you stepping up as you realized our plight. We made it through and begin 2021 with heads held high and hopes for the vaccine and better days ahead.

This year, we are again using January and February to refresh and renew our beautiful museum and other buildings. **Crystal Griffis** tackled the oak floor trafficway in the Carriage House so that it is sanded, stained and recoated for protection once again—ready for business! Once **Luke Sweckard**, our faithful guardian angel and owner of **Sweckard Excavation**, and his crew fixed the minor roof damages he discovered were causing an interior leak to several Mansion third-floor areas, curator, **Konnie Cronk**, and registrar and assistant curator, **Amy Allen**, were newly inspired! The curatorial wizards envisioned not only repairs, but renewed looks to the whole 3rd floor! Not only patching and repair, but primer and new paint on the entire main area, maybe even scraping off the dated popcorn ceiling! The last real restorations up there were in 2006 when executive director, **Mary Mountain** and curator, **Joney Wilmot** filled cold air-leaking windows, painted the Girls' School room and the Native Artifacts room in the West Tower, and added a shot of color with one paprika-colored wall to help the Western exhibits "pop" on that floor. LPM member and volunteer, **Bill Werner**, helped Joney and Mary with that project.

So new restorations were on the horizon; we needed to tackle some significant repairs in this new year of 2021. When you dream of renovations like that, *who ya' gonna call?* **Ron Olsen, Joyce Powell, Chris Walrath!** Ron was advisor for the repairs and Joyce and Chris joined the LPM staff team to scrape, patch, prime and paint. The energy was remarkable and within two weeks, they were done! The 3rd floor is fresh, clean, newly invigorated and just waiting for all of the inspired new exhibits showcasing local ranches and ranchers—of both cattle and sheep, the migration westward via the Union Pacific, the stunning native artifacts in our Collection, the lawmen and out-laws, and so much more. The third floor canvas is new and inviting and ready for exhibits and visitors!



Smilin' Joyce Powell and Konnie Cronk



Left: Christel Walrath, LPM Board President Above and Right Circles: Amy Allen & Crystal Griffis

Smiling Stan Gibson

Director, **Mary Mountain** kept everyday operations and logistics of the Museum (bills paid, correspondence answered, inventories started) while the team transformed the 3rd floor, and then took everyone out for more smiles, toasts and cheers to the work well done! What a showcase for the expanded exhibits! You must come check it all out once we open for tours again. Maybe May?

NOMINATIONS FOR 2021 LARAMIE PLAINS MUSEUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHERI BELLAMY—2ND TERM—filling a one-year opening

Cheri is willing to step up to take on the remaining year of Steve Maki's term on the LPMA Board as he and Lissa move from Laramie to Alabama! We will certainly miss Steve as a director, and we are grateful for Cheri's willingness to offer her experience and *continuity of care* for this beautiful place. Cheri has been very productive in these first years of retirement from her distinguished nursing career and as UW Academic Lecturer, as an active Board member, Board Vice President, and senior docent for tours of the Iverson Mansion. Married to Bill Bellamy, descendant of Mary Godat Bellamy—first woman in the Wyoming Legislature and founder of Laramie Woman's Club—Cheri brings special funding support and insight to the history that we celebrate, preserve, and teach here at the Laramie Plains Museum. We are pleased to have her service again for another year.

DEBI OCKERS

We are delighted to announce that Debi is willing to return again to our Board of Directors! Now in retirement from her decades of gracious service as the executive director of the Iverson Home for Ladies, we were able to entice her again. The sister organizations of Iverson Home and Laramie Plains Museum at the Iverson Mansion have been a blessed partnership with Debi as our go-between all these years. Debi has lived in the Laramie area ever since she came to UW as a freshman in 1970 where she was bewitched by and eventually married athlete Fred Ockers. Fred's family was long established in Laramie, so when Dan Nelson asked the Ockers to be involved in the rescue of the dilapidated Mansion, it was a natural. Fred and Debi gave flashlight tours at night to help raise funds and awareness of this historic landmark and their love and appreciation for the Iversons and their majestic home has remained steadfast. "The Museum was important to my work at Mr. Iverson's other great legacy, the *Iverson Home for Ladies* and highly significant to Fred's promotion of Laramie as the Executive Director of the Albany County Tourism Board. We have three grown children and grandchildren who keep us on our toes. I, again, consider it an honor to be a part of this impressive Board and will continue to do my best for the well-being of this grand estate. *Evening at the Iversons*' is one of my favorite projects and now I have the extra time to make it be better than ever! I look forward to that!"

BRIGIDA (Brie) BLASI

Brigida (Brie) Blasi grew up in southwestern Wyoming and has been working in the field of public history for over 15 years. While working on her BA in Humanities and Fine Arts from the University of Wyoming in the early 2000s, she scheduled a private, off-season visit to the Laramie Plains Museum where a dedicated and knowledgeable volunteer docent showed her just how engaging and inspiring museum interpretation could be. The rest, as they say, is history. Motivated to aspire to a career as a museum professional, she went on to earn an MA in History with a concentration in Public History from New Mexico State University in 2007. She worked for national and state institutions in New Mexico and Texas, including becoming Curator of a house museum for the Texas Historical Commission. She taught museum studies at the University of Texas at El Paso before returning to Wyoming to become the Curator and later the Executive Director of the Sweetwater County Historical Museum in Green River. Brie has also served on several boards in Wyoming including the Alliance for Historic Wyoming, the Green River Historic Preservation Commission, the Sweetwater County Museum Foundation, the Green River Development Fund, and Wyoming Writers, Inc. among others. Recently, she accepted the newly created position of Public History Educator at the American Heritage Center and she looks forward to expanding the AHC's instruction and outreach to students and the public—along with the opportunities available to her in Laramie, including giving back to the institution that first inspired her career path.

BERNIE HORST

"I am very interested in becoming a member of the Board of the Laramie Plains Museum. I have always been impressed with the professional management of the Museum. It adds so much to our community. I was involved with the restoration of the Stone House and the enlarging of the Alice Hardie Stevens Center. I also serve as a docent at the Wyoming House for Historic Women. On January 11th, I celebrated my 10th anniversary of living in Laramie. My husband, Bob, and I moved to Laramie from Rock Springs, to be near our son, Brian, and his family due to Bob's progressive motor neuron disease. While in Rock Springs, I was busy with various activities—I was a stay-at-home mom while our three children were not in school, the manager of our family-owned laundromat, and taught in Sweetwater School District #1 for 30 years as an elementary teacher. An experience I had in Rock Springs relative to this board position was serving on the board of the United Way of Southwest Wyoming. Sorry, I do not remember the number of terms I served on the board. Since I was working full time, I did not serve as an officer of the Board. I do remember assisting the treasurer in matching checks with invoices to prepare them for mailing. I also served on the UW Allocations Committee. In Laramie, I served two three-year terms on the Board of the Eppson Center for Seniors, holding positions of secretary and vice president, as well as chair of the Fundraising Committee. Although we Eppson Center directors went through some rocky times, I am proud of our work and the results of my six years there."

GREG BAUMAN—filling the remaining two-year term of a departing director

"I am excited to get to know all of the great people who work together to highlight and safeguard this wonderful piece of our community's history and would like to take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about myself. I have been a resident of southern Wyoming all of my life. Born in Evanston, I spent the better part of my upbringing in Baggs. After graduating from Little Snake River Valley High School I moved to Rock Springs to attend Western Wyoming Community College. It was there that I met my beautiful wife Tasha. When she moved to Laramie to continue her education at the University, I was not long in following. We have lived here ever since. To me Laramie has always had the rich sense of community and history that comes with a smaller town, while offering amenities and opportunities that are generally only found in much more populated areas. For the first few years that we lived here I worked in retail management at the local Hastings. For the last ten years I have worked for our City in the Utility Dept, the last eight of which as a Water Treatment Plant Operator, and have just recently graduated from the University of Wyoming with a Bachelor's in Business Administration. From early in my residency here, the Iverson Mansion has held a special place in my heart. To me it has been a place of learning through the number of tours I have taken of the Mansion itself, a place of gathering, both joyous and sorrowful, attending private functions in the Alice Hardie Stevens Center, and a place of community revelry during Holiday Open House and *Evening at the Iversons*' events. Dearest to me still, it was the beautiful backdrop of where my wife and I, like so many others before and since, spoke our wedding vows and began our married life together. For all of these reasons, I am honored to be invited to join this distinguished Board."

Laramie Plains Museum Directors are Unsung Heroes, But Oh-So-Vital to the Museum's Smart Accomplishments.

FOUNDING BOARD OF DIRECTORS of LARAMIE PLAINS MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

Max Fisher
Katherine Greenaway
Wesley Johnson
T. A. Larson
Robert Mullally
Richard Nelson
Alice Hardie Stevens

THANK YOU TO The 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS of LARAMIE PLAINS MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

Jacob Anfinson*
Karen Bard
Cheri Bellamy
Sandy Blair*
Jacob Felton*
Karen Lange
R.J. Lara
Steve Maki*
John Nutter
Lorraine Van Zee
Christel Walrath

Asterisked names are those directors whose terms are up, who are moving from the area, or taking care of other bigger commitments at this time. Please thank these fine folks for their dedicated service when you see them. We are fortunate to have had their insight and excellent support during the time they were with us.

Look on the opposite page for the brief bios of nominees for new positions so you can feel informed as you mark your ballot(s). We've got some excellent folks stepping up in service.

From Mary Mountain, Executive Director

Several years ago, when I was looking for a way to recognize the inspirational service provided by those who serve on our Laramie Plains Museum Association Board of Directors, I found a lovely crystal vase that has this inscription:

"Successful is the person who leaves the world better than they found it, who never fails to look for the best in others, and give the best of themselves."

It has become a tradition at our Annual Meeting each February to give these beautiful vases to our outgoing directors, small but notable tokens of thanks for their servant hearts for this special place of history. I can honestly say that my 21+ tenure at the Museum has been graced by outstanding Boards. Directors with insight, advice and support that have been the buoys needed as we made it through some tough financial straights and dreamt of ways to maintain, expand, enhance, and promote the history showcased on this dramatically-saved historic property.

From that earliest Board that helped with the salvage of this grand slice of Laramie's history, through the years of survival and vision, we have stood strong because of our faithful Boards, members, and volunteers. We are a truly remarkable, thriving nonprofit organization because of the standards those dedicated people have set. In the modern vernacular, they have been *social influencers* all along, guiding and influencing the smart decisions and promotion of the Laramie Plains Museum Association.

We are losing some excellent, longtime directors this February, and we will miss them. But I also know we are gaining, as we always have, with the new directors coming aboard, new perspectives and energized helping hands for this place to continue to shine brightly. Thank you, all, for the service you give and the difference you make. We are all better because you have been with us.

MEMBERS: Please use the ballots below to vote for candidates. Feel free to write in a candidate of your choice. There are five slots open with this election, so all candidates are possible directors. A write-in with enough votes can replace one of the nominees in the roster.

Return to the museum in time for the count at the Annual Meeting, February 21, 2021

Family and Benefactor memberships use both ballots

2021 Ballot Laramie Plains Museum Board of Directors	
_____	Cheri Bellamy (1 year 2nd Term)
_____	Debi Ockers
_____	Brie Blasi
_____	Bernie Horst
_____	Greg Bauman
_____	write-in option

2021 Ballot Laramie Plains Museum Board of Directors	
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_____	Bernie Horst
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