



Wyoming History News



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Heard on the Historical Trail



TIME, CHEESE AND PEOPLE IN STAR VALLEY

by Tom Rea, Editor, WyoHistory.org

The Society's speakers list continues to grow and includes topics ranging from women's history, to agriculture, to pioneer legacies. WHS member, Author and historian **Jefferson Glass** is the most recent addition to the list and noted he is available to present at county chapter meetings or events around the state. The full list is at www.wyshs.org, or email Society headquarters at linda@wyshs.org to get a copy.

Plan now to attend the **Historic Bishop Home's** annual fundraiser on August 19th, where President and Mrs. Abe Lincoln will be the special guests. For details email **Susan Bishop** at slbjcs1993@comcast.net. Advance reservations are required. Calls can be made to 307-235-5277.

Volunteerism — there are so many examples of what it means to people, and what it can bring to a nonprofit organization like the Society. We are seeking two individuals to fill vacancies on the board beginning in September. Members get to vote so, if you are interested, please submit your name as soon as possible. For details email linda@wyshs.org.

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More than eighty people from ages 8 to 96 were lucky to visit Star Valley for the Society's annual trek held the weekend of June 16th. Hosted by the **Star Valley Historical Society**, the group enjoyed two days of talk and bus rides where we learned about the area's history, geography, beauty—and isolation. Only two paved routes lead there. One heads west from Kemmerer, turns north, slaloms along the Idaho border past Cokeville, comes up over a high pass and descends finally into the drainage of the north-flowing Salt River—Star Valley. The other route comes south from Jackson, crosses the Snake River at Alpine and continues south through a narrow canyon of the Salt until the valley, green and especially lush this wet year—opens out.

Cheese, people say in Star Valley, is milk trying to become immortal. For five or six generations the dairy business dominated the valley; it's been called "Little Switzerland." But by the beginning of this century, dairying there had become economically unsustainable; the cheese factory in Thayne closed in 2005. Now, only one dairy remains in the valley—Shumway Farms, a boutique operation that makes thick, delicious yogurt and ice cream for tourists like us. Greco-Roman heavyweight wrestler Rulon Gardner, Olympic gold medalist in 2000, gained his great strength and good nature growing up on a Star Valley dairy farm; they were among the valley's earliest Mormon settlers.

Valley trails and paths were long used by Native people attracted by the area's plentiful game—and salt deposits. White people first came to the valley in fur trade times; the Lander Cutoff, a government-sponsored shortcut from South Pass to Fort Hall in present Idaho entered the valley from the south end, ran north 15 miles on the valley floor before exiting to the northwest. The road was finished in 1858 and became a well-used route for emigrants and commercial freight; within just a few years, we learned, enterprising freighters were using it to export industrial quantities of salt for use smelting impurities out of gold in the gold camps and mills of western Montana.

(Continued on page 5)

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**From the
 President. . .**

Hello Friends,

For some reason, once the July 4th holiday approaches, it feels like summer is truly upon us. I hope you all had a great time with family and friends to commemorate the Declaration of Independence. The Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources, Wyoming Humanities Council and others have begun planning for the 250th

Anniversary of the American Revolution, which will occur in 2026. In fact, in June, a new monument honoring the upcoming anniversary was installed outside of Fort Caspar. It is an "America 250" monument, sponsored by the Wyoming Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. I am hoping that the Society and Chapters will pitch in to help with the celebration. We will keep an eye out for any opportunities to participate.

I was pleased to be able to attend the annual Trek in Star Valley, with approximately eighty others. We loaded onto two buses for two days of exploration. One was a large tour bus, and the other smaller. I enjoyed riding in the "small bus" and getting to know the area and other attendees. By the end of the night on Saturday, it felt like those of us on the "small bus" bonded as a group. The two buses traveled many back roads in the valley, seeing towns and historic sites. Among other stops, we visited the National Oregon/California Trail Center Museum in Montpelier

and a historic bank building which was robbed in 1896. The bank robbery was attributed to Butch Cassidy, Elzy Lay, and Bob Meeks. We had an exciting and adventurous trip on Crow Creek Road. I was able to spoil myself by stopping in at Shumway Farms for some farm-fresh ice cream. I had never spent any time in the valley. It was beautiful and full of history. I appreciate all the hard work and preparation of the **Star Valley Chapter**. It was a great, educational weekend. Next year's Trek will be hosted by the **Hot Springs County** chapter. I met a couple from Thermopolis on the "small bus." and they are excited about next year.

The Hiring Task Force has been hard at work. We received thirteen applications for the Executive Director position, which is an amazing response. We reviewed the applications, scheduled interviews, and hopefully by the time this newsletter goes out will have a person selected for recommendation to the Executive Committee. Our goal is to have the new director in place by August. This will give **Linda** time to train the new person and help prepare for the Annual Meeting. We will let you know when we have more specific updates.

This year's 70th Annual Membership Meeting will be held in Cody, sponsored by the **Park County Historical Society**. Make reservations now to attend this milestone event! In addition to the meeting, there is an Awards Luncheon and some tours. It is a great time for people from different chapters to get together and catch up, talk about how it is going, what is and is not working, plans for the future, etc.

Thanks for all your support,
Cindy

(Heard on the Historical Trail continued from page 1)

WANTED: Volunteers to fill two vacancies on the Society's Executive Committee. If you are interested in finding out more about the process and/or the commitment, please email linda@wyshs.org. Ballots must be provided to the general membership in advance of the annual meeting, so time is of the essence if you're interested.

The **South Lincoln County Historical Society** recently enjoyed a program about the Star and Blazon coal mines south of Kemmerer. The talk was given by **Norris Tratnik** and **Frank Scigliano**. The chapter will be hosting a Trek to these mines later this summer. If you are interested in going along please contact **Rosalie Tratnik** at chickenrose165@gmail.com.

The **Converse County Historical Society** will host Fort Fetterman Day on Wednesday, July 19th. For details email heidih02022@yahoo.com.

The **Cheyenne Genealogical & Historical Society** will host a Lakeview Cemetery Walk on Saturday, August 19th with two start times for tours. "Take This Job and Love It" will feature interesting characters who had unusual jobs in Cheyenne's history. No reservations are required but there is a \$10 entrance fee for adults; children aged 12 and under are free. Proceeds help fund book acquisitions for Special Collections at the Laramie County Library. For details email wendywyo04@aol.com, or call 307-630-0924 for information.

An open house at the **Hell Gap Paleoindian Site** will be held July 8th and 9th. There will be exhibits to enjoy with demonstrations held throughout the day. Hell Gap is a National historic Landmark located north of Hartville, Wyoming. This event is sponsored in part by the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund and the Wyoming Archaeological Foundation, among others. For details call the Goshen County Chamber at 307-532-3879.

The **Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum** will host downtown walking tours through September 23rd on Wednesday, Thursdays, and Fridays at 10:30 a.m. For information please email catherine@hacksonholehistory.org.

The **Sunrise Historic and Prehistoric Preservation Society** has activities scheduled through the summer for all ages. To find out more visit their new website at www.shapps.org, or call Geri at 307-532-3324.

By all accounts the **Capitol Avenue Bronze Project** has been a huge success. Many organizations and individuals sponsored bronzes of notable Wyo-

ming people, among them Nellie Tayloe Ross, Francis E. Warren, Therese Jenkins, Esther Hobart Morris, Willis Van Devanter, J E. Stimson, and so many more. Other aspects of Wyoming and Cheyenne's history are represented by statues of "The Promise of the Prairie," and "Family Ties." It is anticipated that more sculptures will be added as time goes by. When you're in Cheyenne be sure take a stroll down Capitol Avenue!

Fremont County Museums (Lander, Dubois and Riverton) will host a variety of exhibits and activities throughout the season. Many of the talks will be presented by WHS members, including **Kylie McCormick** who will be at the Pioneer Museum in Lander on July 20th to give a talk titled "The Wyoming State Flag and the Women Who Made it Fly." To enjoy the full list of opportunities please visit www.fremontcountymuseums.com, or call any one of the individual museums for details.

The Society recently received a \$3,000 grant from the **Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund** which allows it to hire a professional videographer to edit and prepare oral history interviews for "Women of Wyoming," chaired by **Janelle Moloney, with Leslie Waggener and Linda Fabian**. We will keep you informed as work on this project continues.

Celebrated annually in September, Wyoming Archaeology Awareness Month (WAAM) consists of a series of statewide activities and programs devoted to discussing archaeological issues and to educating the public about the importance of preserving and protecting Wyoming's archaeological heritage. The centerpiece of WAAM is the poster we produce every year. It is distributed statewide, nationally, and internationally to more than 3,000 people and organizations. Wyoming posters have been honored with numerous awards in the State Archaeology Week Poster Contest sponsored by the Society for American Archaeology's Public Education Committee and Council of Affiliated Societies. To find out more about planned events and/or to receive a poster visit www.wyoshpo.wyo.gov.

The Executive Committee needs **YOU!** We're looking for two individuals to fill vacant seats on the board of directors. You'll never work with better people and have fun at the same time. For details, or to toss your name in the hat, please send an email to linda@wyshs.org.

Wyoming History Calendar

July 19-Douglas. The Converse County Historical Society will host Fort Fetterman Day from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For details email heidiho2202@yahoo.com.

July 20-Lander. The Pioneer Museum will host a program about the Wyoming Flag and its history, beginning at 7 p.m.

July 25-29-Nebraska. 41st annual meeting of OCTA. See website for details.

July 27-29-Powell/Cody. Annual Heart Mountain Pilgrimage. 307-754-8000 or info@heartmountain.org.

August 19-Casper. President and Mrs. Lincoln visit the Historic Bishop Home. Email slbjcs1993@comcast.net.

August 19-Cheyenne. Lakeview Cemetery Walk featuring those interesting characters who had unusual jobs in Cheyenne's history. Email wendywy04@aol.com, or call 307-630-0924. There is a fee.

September-Cody. 70th Annual meeting of the WHS. Register now.

September-Statewide. Watch for details about Heart Mountain Internee Sam Mihara's lecture schedule, or email Sam at smihara12345@gmail.com.

September-Statewide. Annual Archaeology Awareness Month. Visit www.wyoshpo.wyo.gov for details.

This calendar is not inclusive of all that is happening around the state. The Society's new website includes a calendar featuring a wide range of activities hosted by chapters and our partners. Take a look at www.wyshs.org/events. If you have something you would like listed please email linda@wyshs.org or rhein@vcn.com.

Wyoming History News welcomes information about events of interest to the general membership and others. Information should be sent at least a month in advance and should reach the WHN editor by the 15th. Send items to linda@wyshs.org

1953-2023

70 years of Sharing Wyoming's History Annual Meeting

Join us in beautiful Cody, Wyoming when the **Park County Historical Society** hosts the 70th annual meeting of the Society the weekend of September 8th. September is still tourist season in Cody so please consider making motel/hotel/RV reservations now. The listing below includes several of the many accommodations available. The full listing (including historic hotels) can be found on the Society's website, or you can call **Lynn Houze** at 307-250-2411. The registration form is in this newsletter, due no later than August 28, 2023.

HOLIDAY INN (Host Hotel)

1701 Sheridan Ave.
Phone: 307-587-5555

To get the special WHS rate reservations must be made no later than July 7th

This is our conference hotel and is in downtown Cody. A block of 15 rooms has been saved.

Room rate for 1 King or 2 Queens is \$179.00.

Rooms have coffee maker, microwave, and a fridge.

Our member meeting and awards luncheon will be held here on Saturday the 9th.

Beartooth Inn

2513 Greybull Hwy, 307-527-5505 Located just west of the Cody Airport on the north side of the highway. Cost for King or 2 Queens is the same @ \$129.00 (including tax). A block of 10 rooms has been reserved. A coffee maker, a microwave, and a fridge are in each room. And....a continental breakfast!! Lots of parking and is quiet. When calling please mention Park County Historical Society or Phyllis Preator's name who made the arrangements. Cancellations requested 48 hrs. prior to arrival.

Cody Motor Lodge

1455 Sheridan Ave 307-527-6291

Located in downtown Cody near Wells Fargo Bank.

Price for a double queen is \$310. If 4 people stay in the room the price is \$320.

King's Inn

524 Yellowstone Ave. (Out the "west strip" past Dairy Queen but before Walmart) Phone: 307-527-6604
Closed right now so prices are based on off-season rates. \$169 for 1 King; \$179 for 2 Queens

American Inn

508 Yellowstone Ave. 307-587-7716

1 King \$219; 2 Queens - \$209. Deluxe Continental breakfast incl. waffles

Hampton Inn and Suites

8 Southfork Rd, 307-587-4505

\$249 - 1 King or 2 Doubles. Suggest call the hotel directly for best rate.

For the entire listing visit <https://wyshs.org>

Trek—Continued from Page 1

Mormon settlers from Utah and Idaho territories came into the valley in the 1870s. They began the dairy business there, also running beef cattle and hundreds of thousands of sheep, which grazed all summer on the high mountain slopes. Montpelier, Idaho, on the Oregon Short Line Railroad, was a harrowing four-day-round-trip wagon journey to the southwest. There, Star Valley-ites shopped, loaded their cheese and wool onto trains—and banked.

One August day in 1896, George Waite of Star Valley was in the Montpelier bank with his four-year-old son, George Albert. For generations, we learned, George Albert told how his father and a few other customers were persuaded by some men with pistols to turn to the wall of the bank and place their hands high on the wall. One of the pistol men, whom George Albert remembered clearly as he'd worked around his father's ranch the previous summer, leaned down and gave the boy a penny, telling him to run across the street and buy some candy. Until then the man was known, among other names, as George Cassady—only after that robbery did newspapers attach to him the name "Butch."

Of course, there are plenty more stories in the valley—outlaw stories, freighting stories, survival stories and stories of romances gone wrong and right. Only in the 19-teens did Star Valley's isolation become less severe, when a bridge was built over the Snake River at the north end and a better road—the Convict Road—built in from the south by inmates released for the purpose from the State Honor Farm in Riverton.

Though the dairy farms are nearly all gone and there are few sheep, there are still plenty of beef cattle in the valley. And the valley remains heavily Mormon; a new LDS temple, a 12-foot gold-leaf statue of the Angel Moroni topping its 123-foot spire, was completed in Afton in 2016.

We offer special thanks to Star Valley Historical Society members **Ron and Claudia Anderson, Kdell Bagley, Karen Fluckiger** and others, for hosting us last weekend. These gatherings are a great way to understand how geography and topography shape what happens in a place over time—and to meet people of all ages fascinated by the idea. The September meeting will be in Cody the weekend after Labor Day. Hope to see you there!

Editor's Note: Thanks to Tom Rea for this article, and to Heidi McCullough for the photos!



The bank of Montpelier—the site of a famous bank robbery on August 13, 1896.

Historic stone church, Auburn, Wyoming



The valley was lush, green and overflowing with wildflowers!



A perilous drive on mountain roads, handled skillfully by a trusted driver!

2024 Calendar of Wyoming History Available *NOW!*

Yes, already! Photographs for the 2024 Calendar of Wyoming History were submitted by fifteen small museums or individuals in response to our request earlier this year. The photos selected represent a broad spectrum of activities held across Wyoming in her early days. Subject matter ranges from branding to mining to families to stage stations and more. The ever popular tidbits add humor and history to the well-liked calendar. Special thanks to **Vicki Schuster** for her design and graphics skills, and to editors **Charlene Busk**, **Mike Jording** and **Linda Fabian**. As of now you can pick up your calendar at the following bookstores and/or museums, or email Society headquarters at linda@wyshs.org to have one sent. Vendors and individuals welcome!

Cheyenne	Wyoming State Museum
Cody	The Thistle, Legends and Park County Historical Society
Douglas	Converse County Historical Society
Gillette	The Rockpile Museum and Campbell County Historical Society
Guernsey	Guernsey Super Foods
Lander	Pioneer Museum and Fremont County Historical Society
Laramie	Second Story Books, Laramie Plains Museum and The Curiosity Shoppe
Lusk	Stagecoach Museum
Point of Rocks	Conoco, Mile Post 130 on I-80
Rawlins	Carbon County Museum
Sheridan	Sheridan Stationary
Sundance	Crook County Museum
Sunrise	Sunrise Trade Co.
Wheatland	The Wanderer on Gilchrist and The Wandering Hermit



Just in time for the 4th of July! These “dynamite men” as they were called, worked for the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company at Sunrise, Wyoming, and are featured in the 2024 Calendar of Wyoming History. Pictured (left to right) are Joe Francescato, middle person unidentified, and Joe Caligiore. *Photo courtesy of the Hartville Museum and the Sunrise Historic and Prehistoric Preservation Society.*

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS AND THANK YOU DONORS

At Large

Robert John, Denver CO
Bob and Sandy Riggle, Bunceton MO
Charles Rankin, Helena MT
Lynn Kelley, Green Valley AZ

Fort Bridger Historical Association

Wyatt and Misti Lingle, Mt. View

Fremont County Historical Society

Beverly Swistowicz, Lander

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**Above and Beyond Dues contributions go directly to the Society's operating fund unless specified for the Foundation.*



Register now to attend the 70th Annual Meeting! Special thanks to the **Park County Historical Society** for hosting this anniversary event. The registration form is enclosed in this issue of *Wyoming History News*, and needs to be returned no later than August 28th. Make your hotel reservations now (see page 6).

One of the highlights of the Annual Meeting is the Awards Luncheon where we celebrate those individuals nominated for special awards that draw attention to Wyoming's history. The registration form can also be found online at www.wyshs.org. More details about the event will be forthcoming.



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Permit No. 71

Reserve your hotel NOW for the 70th Annual Meeting in September. See page six. Registration enclosed. Due 8/28/23.

Address Service Requested

UPDATED SEARCH ENGINE LOCATES WYOMING HISTORY WITH ONE CLICK

The Wyoming State Libraries Digital Suite Collections underwent a seven month process to create an easier way to navigate through collections on Wyoming from federal documents to the places, inventors, and business owners that make up Wyoming history.

“As the digital collections approach one million files, updates to the system create an easy and fast way to make information readily available and improve service to the public,” said Travis Pollok, Legislative Librarian at the Wyoming State Library.

The Wyoming State Library Digital Collections Suite upgraded searching features for more than 960,000 digital records in five of the six collections. These include Wyoming Places, Wyoming State Publications, Wyoming Legislation, Wyoming Inventors, and Wyoming Trademarks. In Wyoming Places information about locations as well as modern and historical information on those places

are found. Located in Wyoming State Publications and Wyoming Legislation are the government archives that contain bills, state publications and federal documents that pertain to Wyoming. The last two collections updated are those dealing with businesses through the Wyoming Inventors database and Wyoming Trademarks database.

“With multiple collections the key aspect to the digital collection upgrade is the search engine,” said Pollok.

The change to the search engine is that of the small icon transitioning into a corner tab search engine. This transition creates a more visible and faster tool for patrons to use when engaging with their interest in Wyoming history. While the process is made easier, those who have previously used the digital collections will find a similar look and feel to the previous search.

For assistance with searching the Wyoming Digital Collections, contact your local library or contact the Wyoming State Library at statelibrary@wyo.gov or (307) 777-6333.