



Winter 2009-2010 Vol. 4, Issue 1

CHSM

Conifer Historical Society and Museum

Meyer Home Feasibility Study

by Janet Shown and Suzi Morris

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photo by Elaine Hood

The Conifer Historical Society and Museum has negotiated a preliminary agreement with Norman Meyer and Norman Meyer II to conduct a feasibility study for establishing a museum at the Meyer home site in Conifer. The yellow, two-story Victorian home is an iconic scene that greets travelers along US Highway 285.

The feasibility study will include an architectural assessment of the historic home and a determination of the site's viability for public use. While no agreement for the establishment of a museum has been made, the Meyers have agreed that the use of the home as a museum would be a valuable asset to the community and the Front Range. The feasibility study is a first step in a long process that may result in the establishment of a public museum.

A long-time member of the Jefferson County Historical Commission, Norm, Sr. is active in promoting local and regional history of the Front Range.

*** DID YOU KNOW ***

**CHSM meets in the Aspen Park
ReMax office at 6:30 pm
on the second Wednesday
of every month.**

This issue of *CHSM* can be found at:
www.coniferhistorymuseum.org

Suzi Says

Letter to the community

by Suzi Morris, past CHSM President

Happy New Year!

It's a new year with new beginnings!

As we welcome in 2010, we also welcome a new Board of Directors for CHSM. Elections were held in November in compliance with our organizational bylaws. Our new Board assumed responsibility at our January 13 meeting. I am very pleased to announce that Janet Shown is our new President, Lucy Bambrey is Vice President Operations, Yvonne Ludwig is Recording Secretary, Marsha Petry is Treasurer, Grace Helker and Sue Hosier are Board Members-at-Large, and I will serve as Past President Member-at-Large.

In addition to our Board of Directors, CHSM has dedicated volunteers who are also working to achieve our organizational objectives. This outstanding newsletter will continue to be edited and produced by Elaine Hood. Barry Schwartz is our Webmaster - find us online at www.coniferhistorymuseum.org. Laura Debus markets our note card sets to community businesses. Other volunteers will continue to organize CHSM events and programs such as the Community Picnic and our Summer Lecture Series.



Suzi Morris

Jots from Janet

Letter to the community

by Janet Shown, CHSM President

If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday.
~Pearl Buck



About four years ago, Suzi Morris, Grace and Jim Helker, Yvonne Ludwig and other members of the Pleasant Park Grange recognized the importance of preserving the stories and memories of the Conifer area's settlement and growth over the past 150 years. Under Suzi's adept leadership, a Board of Directors was established and volunteers were recruited to establish a historical society and museum. Since that time, the group has displayed exhibits at community events, hosted events and historical presentations, preserved photographs and historical documents, built a Web site, produced quarterly newsletters, created and sold note cards, books and DVDs, and recorded oral histories of long-time residents.

It is with gratefulness and a great sense of responsibility that I and the 2010 Board of Directors prepare to carry on the mission of this dedicated group of volunteers and, in particular, Suzi Morris and the Pleasant Park Grange, whose vision it was to preserve and share the region's legacy and rich local history.

Janet Shown

Board of Directors

President	Janet Shown
VP, Operations	Lucy Bambrey
Secretary	Yvonne Ludwig
Treasurer	Marsha Petry
Member at Large	Grace Helker
Member at Large	Sue Hosier
Member at Large	Suzi Morris

Committee Chairs

Book Sales	Grace Helker
Newsletter	Elaine Hood
Note Cards	Laura Debus
Oral History	Elaine Hood
Web site	Barry Schwartz
DVD Sales	Suzi Morris
Photography Sales	Suzi Morris

CHSM is published quarterly for the Conifer Community, past, present, and future. It is intended to be an online publication with limited hardcopy distribution. Story ideas and contributions are encouraged. The photo of Norm Meyer's yellow house on the front page was taken by Lana Turner. Editor: Elaine Hood hood1959@yahoo.com

Marriage as the Early Internet?

Five Families in the Conifer Area

by Janet Shown

Before the Internet existed, some Conifer area residents connected through marriage! In a recent oral history interview, **Carl and Millie Kuehster**, Carl's younger brother **Bob Kuehster**, and their niece **Judy Janicek** talked about their shared ancestry of Patterson, Huebner, Kuehster, Evers and Perley families - all early settlers of the Pleasant Park and Critchell area.

"We were all related!" laughed Judy, remembering the many gatherings and dances where friends were kin and kinship was warm.

The number of marriages and progeny among the five interrelated families would be hard to quantify. But the story begins with Carl and Bob's grandparents, Frederick and Lena Kuehster, who built a homestead ranch in the early 1870s at the end of what is now known as Kuehster Road in Pleasant Park. Their son Carl later married Gertrude Huebner, whose family had settled in Critchell township near the intersection of Kuehster and Pleasant Park roads.



photo provided by the Kuehster family

The Kuehster family in the 1940s: Mildred, John, Otto, Laura, Newt Jr. and Newt Sr. at the Kuehster ranch near Critchell.

Carl and Gertrude established a home close to the Kuehster homestead and raised Carl Jr., Arline, Marie, Hazel and Bob. Joseph Huebner, Bob and Carl's maternal grandfather, built the Pleasant Park School House, which

Carl and Bob attended with their three sisters. Many decades later, Bob held the post of Grange Master in the school that his grandfather built.

Marie Kuehster, sister to Carl and Bob, married into another homesteading family when she wed neighbor Jim Perley. Jim's grandparents owned the Ken Caryl ranch and built a large stone home there. Today, the Bradford-Perley mansion is a Jefferson County historical landmark. Jim's parents eventually sold the Ken Caryl ranch and purchased land on Sampson Mountain in Deer Creek Canyon. There, Jim Perley met Marie Kuehster, whom he later married. Marie and Jim's daughter, Judy, lives close to her uncle Bob Kuehster in Castle Rock during summer months and often visits Carl and Millie to share memories of their early life in the Critchell area.

Millie's paternal grandparents, Jacob Horatio and Francis Tidwell Pat

Marriage continued on page 4



photo by Janet Shown

A current photo of the interviewees: Carl Kuehster, Judy Perley Janicek, Bob Kuehster, and Millie Patterson Kuehster.

Marriage *continued from page 3*

tersen, settled near the Kuehsters on Black Mountain. Their son Newton Patterson married Mildred Evers from another family of early settlers. Although her family moved to Englewood, Millie attended the Lamb School on Kuehster road when she was eight. As a youth, she often visited her aunt Laura, who had married Frederick and Lena's son Otto Kuehster. It was at some of the many extended Kuehster family get-togethers that Carl and Millie got acquainted.

When they married after World War II, Carl and Millie followed in family footsteps by staying to ranch and lived just a few miles from Carl's parents. They raised three children there and, until recently, lived year-round in the home Carl and his family built in the 1940s. Carl, now 94, described the chores that started at dawn and often ended after dinner; the challenges of high country farming and ranching; the long months of winter when snow was deep and roads became impassable. "It was hard work," he remembered, but they stayed here because of deep family loyalties and a spirit of independence characteristic of early Conifer area settlers.

Today, their son Wes manages the ranch

with frequent help from his uncle Bob, who, at 83, still feels the call of the family home and land near Pleasant Park. Judy dotes on her uncles Carl and Bob and rarely makes one of her frequent summertime visits to Carl and Millie without fresh Pali-sades peaches or a blueberry pie.

When asked what they wanted people to know about life in the area before television, computers, and the Internet, all four agreed it was the close-knit community that they most valued. "You knew everyone you met," Bob noted. "You had to count on each other because some day you'd need help, too." Friends and family were important parts of their everyday life. And, sometimes, marriages made new family out of old friends - and created new lines of descendents forever connected by bonds born in the Conifer community.



photo provided by the Kuehster family

Carl Kuehster, Jim Perley and Judy Perley by the Kuehster sawmill steam engine, c. 1940s.

DVDs for Sale

Purchase three professionally produced DVDs featuring Conifer area residents describing their mountain memories from 'the good old days.'

All DVDs were filmed during the Arm-chair Adventure public presentations held in conjunction with the Mountain Area Land Trust.

The 2007 edition presents the stories and photos of Bob Kuehster, Jack Antweiler, Norm Meyer, Betty Fields Long, and Lucille Tanner talking about their family heritage in the Conifer area.

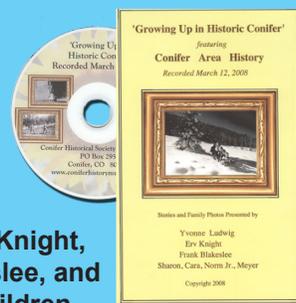
The 2008 edition features the stories and photos of Yvonne Ludwig, Erv Knight, Frank Blakeslee, and the Meyer children (Sharon, Cara and Norm, Jr.) recounting what it was like to grow up in Conifer years ago.

The 2009 DVD is a delightful presentation by local historian Hank Alderfer talking about the homesteads of the Conifer area.

Also available for purchase are homestead map booklets produced by Hank Alderfer, published in conjunction with his 2009 presentation.

Each DVD is only \$20

Call 303.697.0871



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- February 10** CHSM meeting; ReMax office, Aspen Park
- March 10** CHSM meeting; ReMax office, Aspen Park
- June 26** IMHS/CHSM Dog Walk at Motorhead Ranch