

# Footsteps



Volume 12, Issue 2

Fall 2011

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Festival of Trees is open daily: Saturday, Nov. 12th - Monday, Nov. 21st
- “Sign of the Times: The 1960s” and “Foundations of Steamboat: The Gooding Family” exhibits are now on display
- Shop the **Museum Store** for unique holiday gifts and reprints of historical photographs

*Now on display!*



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## Members' Night in the Trees – You're Invited!

Wednesday, Nov. 16th  
6:00 - 7:30pm

We would like to host you, our generous members, for this very special evening during the 17th Annual Festival of Trees. Come enjoy complimentary wine, appetizers, desserts, and live music, while mingling in the beautiful trees. Please call 879-2214 for more information. Don't miss the fun!

## 17th Annual Festival of Trees

The 17th Annual Festival of Trees is open daily November 12th through the 21st. Yampa Valley Bank and Ace at the Curve Home and Hardware generously sponsor this event. As always, the Museum will be transformed into a magical forest of beautifully decorated holiday trees created by talented local organizations. We are thrilled to have groups such as the Animal Assistance League, Whitman Primary School, and others give their time and creativity to decorate the trees. We would like to thank all of the decorators and local business sponsors who make this event possible.

Opening day of the festival is Saturday, November 12th. On Wednesday, November 16th, from 6:00 - 7:30pm, we will host museum members for “Members' Night in the Trees.” The popular Senior Tea is Thursday, November 17th at 2:00pm and 3:00pm. At the Senior Tea event, we will treat our local seniors to refreshments and holiday music.

We hope you bring your family and friends to this wonderful annual event. The event and the Museum are FREE to all Routt County residents. Don't miss the light and magic of the Festival of Trees!

### 2011 Festival Schedule:

- \* Nov. 12th - 21st - Viewing daily: 11:00am - 5:00pm
- \* Monday, Nov. 14th - Sponsor Night: 6:00pm
- \* Wednesday, Nov. 16th - Museum Members' Night: 6:00 - 7:30pm
- \* Thursday, Nov. 17th - Senior Tea: 2:00pm and 3:00pm (two seatings)
- \* Monday, Nov. 21st - Festival last day: 11:00am - 5:00pm

**Happy Thanksgiving!**

## Curator's Corner By Katie Adams

The 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division was an elite WWII Armed Service unit trained in skiing, climbing, and winter survival. Nearly two dozen Steamboat Springs men trained with this troop in Camp Hale, near Leadville, Colorado, and fought in Europe's high mountains.

These 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain veterans returned home after the War and were in a large part responsible for the growth of recreational skiing in Colorado. Ex-soldiers used their knowledge and training to lay out ski hills, build lodges, and improve ski equipment. Steamboat Springs local, Gordy Wren, did just this for his hometown. Wren returned from the War and set about developing the Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club, coaching up-and-coming athletes like the Werner kids, and helping lay out the Steamboat Ski Area. This November, the Tread of Pioneers Museum will expand on our 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division display in the

History of Skiing Exhibit. The display will include information on 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division Military medics. Come see photographs and artifacts used by medics and learn how skiing medic soldiers saved lives during World War II. The display will run November 2011 through April 2012.

Don't miss our upcoming art show! This winter the Tread of Pioneers Museum will feature the stunning photographs of Rex Gill. This artistic yet quirky local man will be featured in a photograph exhibition titled: "Rex Gill: The Man, The Mountains, The Desert." Gill's photographs have been newly framed and will be featured in this stunning black and white exhibition.

Rex Gill, a native of Christ Church, New Zealand, came to Steamboat Springs in 1918 to experience the uninhabited wilderness of Northwestern Colorado. While in Steamboat, Gill

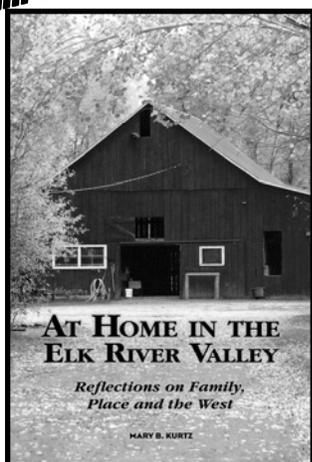
worked various jobs, built the Howelsen Hill lift house, and served as the ski lift operator for many years. All the while he still pursued his passion of hiking, taking photographs, and writing poetry. Gill moved away from Steamboat in the early 1970s to explore the desert lands of eastern Colorado; his desert landscape photographs are among his best work. "Rex Gill: The Man, The Mountains, The Desert" opens this winter in the Community Room of the Museum.



Rex Gill, "Fall's First Snowfall in Rocky Mountain National Park" C. 1930s

## Local Book Review

**On Sale Now in the  
Museum Store!**



*At Home in the Elk River Valley: Reflections on Family, Place and the West* by Mary Kurtz

"Readers who love the West will find Mary Kurtz's first collection of essays an insightful journey into the

history, natural world, and community of a special mountain valley near Steamboat Springs, CO."

"Walk through the Elk River Valley with Mary (Kurtz) as she shares her thoughtful perspectives on the people, history, rich landscape, and ranching traditions of the place she's called home for over 30 years.

Join her as she introduces you to modern-day pioneers whose stories inspire and entertain. Meet a long-time rancher who hunts mountain lion where "no man has ever walked;" a larger than life grandmother (usually seen wearing bonnet and baseball hat) who never quite matched anyone's image of a rancher; and visionary land preservationists who protected the valley they loved for generations to come.

Sometimes poignant, always introspective, and informative, *At Home in the Elk River Valley* ultimately nudges each of us to contemplate deeper defini-

tions of family, community, and the physical place we call home."

"The foals huddle together in the snow-covered meadows. A winter storm flies in from the west. With long coats and a quiet mood, they give in to the bleak nip and chill, joining mother cows, the deer and the elk, the grosbeaks, and the porcupines in relinquishing the day to the elements, adopting patience and a certain stillness necessary for survival."

"...Through her (Kurtz's) reflections, we gain awareness of how closely tied we are to the past. This memoir is about change, loss, rejuvenation, and hope that is best enjoyed by the fireplace or under a shady elm to transport you into the slower pace of rural living." ~Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, author of *You Can Write Your Family History*

Pick up your copy in the Museum Store today! All museum members receive a 10% discount.

# 2011 Highlights By Candice Bannister, Director

2011 has shaped up to be another busy year with a myriad of programs, events, tours, and outreach. We hope you, our loyal members, have enjoyed these programs and will share your interests and suggestions for future programs.

Here is just a sampling of the heritage events and programs that we offered throughout the year: Ghost Stories of Historic Colorado, Ute Indian Beading Workshop, Legendary Ladies of the West, Vintage Ski Fashion Show, Pioneer Christmas Stories, Family Scavenger Hunts of Downtown's Historic Buildings, Victorian Valentines, open houses at the historic Crawford house and the Mesa School, historical book signings, film showings, the Leckenby and Larson Pioneer Awards, the Yule Log Hunt, the 4th of July Pioneer Day Block Party, and much more.

Once again, through a partnership with Yampatika and Historic Routt County, we presented weekly historic

walking tours all summer long including Mineral Springs, Olympic Heritage, and Downtown Historic Walking Tours. These tours have become sought after attractions for visitors who want to learn more about our area's rich history.

This year's Brown Bag Summer Lecture Series on Fridays was one of our best years yet. Topics ranged from genealogy, to Pleasant Valley ranching, quarter horses to family histories. The highlight of this year's series was a tour of the local cemetery with local historian, Jim Stanko.

Though the museum is visible and out in our community through our educational programs and outreach, much of what we do is behind the scenes. We are proud to report that we recently launched our database of historic photographs online. Now over 6,000 images, that have been digitized and catalogued over the past ten years, are all searchable online. Photos can be utilized for research or purchase. Log onto

[www.treadofpioneers.org/photos](http://www.treadofpioneers.org/photos).

Other projects of significance:

~History of Steamboat multi-media video exhibit is now open.

~We have added many kid-friendly "touch" and interactive exhibits throughout the Museum.

~We have made significant upgrades to our History of Steamboat Exhibit.

~Our History of Skiing Exhibit now includes a digital display that showcases all of our local Olympians.

~We conserved eight, valuable, Edward S. Curtis Native American portraits.

~We opened Sign of the Times: The 1960s and Foundations of Steamboat: The Gooding Family exhibits.

~We hosted an exhibit this fall honoring the Colorado Grand Masons. The exhibit featured Abe Lincoln's walking stick and Thomas Jefferson's violin!

If you have not been by in a while, we invite you to come on down and see all that is new...and old!

*See you at the Museum!*

## Letter from the President



Dear Museum Members,

The Tread of Pioneers Museum has been in existence for over 50 years. The Museum's most important purpose has always been to preserve and safeguard its collections so that it can accurately and faithfully convey the stories of the people and places of Routt County and Steamboat Springs. Our Museum has outgrown its current space and ability to adequately serve its visitors and honor its contributors. The current collection facility is overcrowded, without proper environmental controls and provides unsafe working

conditions. The Board of Directors has voted to proceed with an expansion project.

The Museum expansion project

will consist of a new 4200 square foot building and will feature:

~Space for the Museum's collection with appropriate care and storage

~Curatorial work area

~Museum quality HVAC system, proper security controls, and fire suppression

~Improved lobby and handicapped access in the new building

~State of the art multi media technology and interactive hands-on elements

~Collections that will interpret stories of the Routt County and Steamboat Springs area's agricultural, mining and

industry, unique skiing and Olympic heritage, cultural traditions and family histories.

The new facility will be built on the Museum's current property at the corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Oak Street. The new Collections and Exhibits building will be attached to the current Museum building. The Museum Board is implementing a capital campaign to fund the Museum's expansion. The goal is a \$1 million project. We have already secured \$700,000 and hope to raise the additional \$300,000 from Routt County residents, private foundations, area businesses, government agencies, and other sources.

I ask that you join us today by giving what you can to help fund our needed Expansion. Please feel free to contact me at 970-819-1367 with any questions.

Sincerely,  
John Marshall, Board President

**Tread of Pioneers Historical Commission**

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**Looking Back on 2011**

Mesa Schoolhouse Program - Sept. 2011



← 1960s Exhibit opened in June 2011

Gooding Family Exhibit →  
opened in October 2011



Judy Green received the  
Leckenby Pioneer Award -  
October 2011