Footsteps

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Growing for the Future

By Jim Peterson, Expansion Project Co-Chair

For many years the Tread of Pioneers Museum has realized that the old collections building was overcrowded, lacked needed environmental controls, and was unsafe for the collection and staff. The tiny building was not sufficient to serve our community’s treasures for the future. After many years of analysis by the staff and Board of Directors, working with architects, city planning, and city council, and fundraising, the museum has embarked on the much needed expansion project.

Construction of the new collection facility and exhibit space began on May 1 with estimated completion by the end of this year. The new building will add much needed exhibit space that will allow the story and heritage of Steamboat Springs to be told in greater detail. The new collection facility area will provide museum quality storage and curatorial work space to care for the many historical artifacts that are in the collection now and for those artifacts that will be added in years to come.

The new facility has been designed with adequate space to serve the community for the next 30 years. History is made every day, and this facility will allow the museum to preserve our history for future generations.

The financial ability to build this new facility was made possible by generous gifts from the Gloria Gossard Estate and the Crawford family, donations of all sizes from many community members, and grants from various foundations. We are thrilled to announce that we received significant grant funding from the Gates Family Foundation, Boettcher Foundation, El Pomar Foundation, and the Routt County Museum and Heritage Fund. The museum’s Board of Directors would like to thank everyone who assisted in the planning of this project over many years and to the community members who gave so generously to this project.
Curator’s Corner  By Katie Adams, Curator

This summer’s 14th annual Brown Bag Lecture Series at the Tread of Pioneers Museum is full of local history, guided tours, and fun! We guarantee you will learn something new about our area’s history and the people who have helped shape it. See the insert in this newsletter for a full listing and more information on the exciting series or visit www.treadofpioneers.org.

The Brown Bags begin with Arianthé Stettner chronicling the 150th anniversary of the 1862 Homestead Act. The Homestead Act provided free land for anyone who could live on the land for three years and cultivate a portion of the property. President Andrew Johnson estimated that settling the American frontier would require 600 years! In reality, homesteaders were able to settle the majority of the American West in less than 30 years. Learn the hardships and motivations of the Routt County settlers and homesteaders in the June 29th Brown Bag Lecture: “150 years of the Homestead Act in Routt County.”

Due to popularity, the Steamboat Springs Cemetery tour is back! Historian and cemetery board member, Jim Stanko, will lead visitors on a walking tour past the “Founders Tree” and through the “Settlers Section.” See where our brave homesteaders are buried, learn about interesting town characters, and locate the very first recorded gravesite – Belle Cantrell, 1882. “The Steamboat Springs Cemetery Talk and Tour” will take place at the cemetery on July 6.

Also not to be missed: John and Sally Wither remember their childhoods in “The Wither Family on Growing Up in Steamboat Springs;” Rose Horn and family tell about ranching near McCoy in “Horn Family Ranching on the Con-ger Mesa, Then and Now;” and Diane Holly recounts the life and talents of the Hitchens Brothers in “Ranching and Skiing, Hitchens Style.” Everyone is sure to enjoy a guided walking tour of Perry-Mansfield performing arts school and camp on Aug. 17, a vintage apron fashion show on Aug. 3, and a chance to hike and tour the rare Windy Ridge Archaeological site on Aug. 31. All of these topics and more are in store this year at the Tread of Pioneers Museum Brown Bag Lecture Series!

We hope to see you there!

Welcome Jill Lindstrom and New Volunteers!

In October 2011, Jill Lindstrom joined the small museum staff of two, as our museum assistant. Jill manages front desk and museum store operations and volunteer coordination. We are thrilled to have Jill with us. Here’s a little bit about Jill: “I grew up on a farm in southwest Iowa with four siblings. I went on to receive my B.A. degree in Art Education from the University of Iowa. I was married and lived in the Quad Cities for the next 25 years. I worked as an art teacher in the public schools for 15 years. I have two grown sons. My oldest son, Jim, is married to Jenny and lives in Manhattan, N Y. Jim writes computer programs for social workers, and Jenny is a psychiatrist. My younger son, Eric, and his girlfriend are lawyers and live in Sacramento, CA. As a family, we enjoyed vacationing in Colorado in the summer and the winter.

In the fall of 2005, I decided I wanted to live in Colorado permanently and moved to Steamboat Springs. I have enjoyed my time here and love learning more about the history of Steamboat Springs. I’m excited about my new job at the Tread of Pioneers Museum and the opportunities it gives me to learn more and to grow more friendships here in the valley.”

In recent months, we have had a record number of new volunteers also join the museum team. We would like to officially welcome Ken Collins, Sharon Compestine, Vicki Franz, Candice Jones, Paul Knowles, Susanna Orzech, Ann Slagle, Julie Solley, and John Wither. John Wither and Paul Knowles also will be serving on the museum’s Board of Directors as we say goodbye to the Board members who have reached their term limits: John Marshall, Nancy Gray, Claire Fraser, and Jayne Hill. We are so very grateful for all of our Board members’ generous donation of time and energy over the years especially the recent fundraising and planning efforts focused on the museum expansion project.

If you or someone you know would like to become a volunteer at the museum, contact Jill Lindstrom at 879-2214 or mailstoremgr@springsips.com. We have many opportunities for your time and interests such as Farmer’s Market Children’s Activity Booth, research center assistance, Mesa Schoolhouse programs, front desk, and more.
Steamboat Exhibit in Denver

DENVER — Colorado’s new history museum, the History Colorado Center, opened on April 28 and is featuring an exhibit about Steamboat Springs in its Colorado Stories exhibit. It is one of nine different communities featured in the new 200,000 square foot, $110 million museum.

Visitors will revisit a pivotal moment in the history of skiing, when Norwegian ski champion Carl Howelsen built a wooden ski jump in Steamboat Springs and started teaching local children how to “ski sail.” Howelsen encouraged jumping competitions and founded a winter carnival in Steamboat that instilled a sense of exhilaration and excellence that continues to this day.

Steamboat has produced more winter Olympians than any other town in North America, and some of the exhibit’s key artifacts include skis, equipment, and medals from the town’s Olympic athletes, including Johnny Spillane’s 2010 silver medal. Other displays include a 1970s Steamboat ski resort gondola and a unique ski suit from Steamboat Springs’ legendary “Lighted Man.” And, as part of the interactive experience, visitors have an opportunity to soar off a virtual ski jump, learning the correct technique from Carl Howelsen himself.

“We are so grateful to the community of Steamboat Springs for their collaboration on this project,” said Bill Convery, State Historian and Director of Exhibits and Interpretation at History Colorado. “The Tread of the Pioneers Museum, the Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club, Johnny Spillane, and others in the Steamboat Springs community really made us feel welcome, epitomizing our message that we all need each other’s support to succeed in Colorado.”

The 9,500-square-foot gallery space that houses Colorado Stories features a diverse collection of times, places, and perspectives, with each community story addressing a common theme of how courage, resilience, and interdependence of Coloradans helped them to create successful communities even in challenging circumstances. Other stories featured in the History Colorado Center include Bent’s Fort, Silverton, the Amache-Granada Relocation Center, Lincoln Hills, Sand Creek, the Ute Tribal Nations, cultural communities in Southern Colorado, and Keota.

Discovery Kit Updating Project Complete!

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then what is the value of hands-on experience? The Tread of Pioneers Museum’s Discovery Kits have recently been revised and updated! Discovery Kits are hands-on learning trunks that focus on Routt County history in the broader context of state and national history. Each trunk consists of 10-20 artifacts, a comprehensive teacher’s manual, videos, books, and other resources that focus on a central subject of topic. The kits are interactive and have lessons and activities that give students a greater appreciation and understanding of history and the people who came before us. The teacher’s guidebook is designed for quick and easy application in the classroom.

The kits were originally created by the museum in the 1990s in partnership with several other educational and historical organizations. Over time, many of the items in the boxes became worn and/or out of date. To address the issue, in 2011, the museum hired a licensed elementary teacher for the Discovery Kit updating project. We updated the boxes by aligning the lesson plans to the new Colorado Department of Education State standards (revised Dec. 2009), reviewing and updating the resources, and organizing the materials for easier use.

There are now six updated Discovery Kits waiting for teachers, home school parents, or anyone who might be interested in these hands-on learning trunks: 1. Mining Discovery Kit (appropriate for grades 2-12) 2. Ute Discovery Kit (for grades 2-6) 3. Native American Discovery Kit (for grades 2-6) 4. Mountain Man Discovery Kit (for grade 4) 5. Homesteading Discovery Kit (for grades 2-4) 6. Archaeology Discovery Kit (for grades 3-7)

Since the updating project and subsequent outreach to teachers, we have seen a record number of teachers check out the kits. We have also received an overwhelming positive response to the kits and their hands-on application in the classroom.

For questions or to check out a Discovery Kit, please contact us at (970) 879-2214 or topmuseum@springsips.com.
Looking Back

Festival of Trees 2011

Board member Jim Peterson relocating the World War II snow cat to temporary storage - April 2012

Curator Katie Adams cleans an antique oil painting in the former collection house

Volunteer Marianne Capra as Margaret Crawford - March 2012