On May 29th at 5:00pm, the Tread of Pioneers Museum opens its newest exhibit, “Soldiers on Skis: Colorado’s 10th Mountain Division,” in our main gallery. You, our generous members, are invited to this opening reception that immediately follows our 5:00pm annual meeting. The exhibit, created in partnership with the Aurora History Museum, focuses on the WWII special unit and the Routt County veterans who were members of the group. The exhibit will feature a 10th Mountain Division camping tent and other ski and military equipment from our local 10th Mountain veterans.

The 10th Mountain Division was an elite WWII Armed Services unit trained in skiing, climbing, and winter survival. The majority of the unit’s intensive training took place at Camp Hale, near Leadville, Colorado. The hand-picked division was created for unique and specific purposes during WWII including infiltrating Axis lines in the mountains of Italy. During this bitter campaign, 990 men died.

Like many other ski areas in the United States, Steamboat Springs capitalized on the extensive training and passion for skiing of skilled veterans of the 10th Mountain Division.

“Colorado’s first resorts were the sparkling vision of several soldiers on skis, who served during WWII in the specialized 10th Mountain Division. While training near Leadville, they glimpsed the mountains’ potential, held on to their dreams, then returned after the war to bring them to life.” (Rocky Mountain News, Nov. 13, 1988)

Steamboat native Gordy Wren joined the 10th Mountain Division after the 1940 Olympics was cancelled due to WWII. Wren was once known as the “greatest all-around American skier of all time.” In 1950, he became the first American ski jumper to exceed the 300-foot mark. He was the only American to qualify in all four Olympic ski events of the time: Slalom, Giant Slalom, Downhill, and Nordic Combined. During his career he was a ski instructor, Olympic Coach, and Mountain Manager at both Howelsen Hill and Mount Werner.

Other 10th Mountain Division members from Routt County include: William A. Bowes, Henry Buchtel, Roger Butler, Marvin Elkins, Fred Furlong, Quincy Ginter, Hans Hagemeister, Charles Hogue, Ed Jones, Arthur Johnson, Oley Kohlman, Bob Krear, George Orrell, Crosby Perry-Smith, Karl Schnackenberg, Rudi Schnackenberg, Paul Stettner, Gordy Wren, Don Kinney, Ralph Selch, Bud Werner, Chester Backes, and Robert Wright.


Learn more about this exclusive mountain warfare unit in this summer’s feature exhibit at the Tread of Pioneers Museum. In addition to the exhibit, we will open our Brown Bag Summer Lecture Series on Friday, June 27 with Flint Whitlock, author of Soldiers on Skis: A Pictorial Memoir of the 10th Mountain Division. Don’t miss it!
Lost But Not Forgotten

"We shape our buildings, and afterwards our buildings shape us." Winston Churchill

The “Lost Steamboat” exhibit is now open to the public at the Tread of Pioneers Museum. The display features historical photographs of significant buildings that are no longer standing. Whether lost through fire, demolition, or remodel, the buildings were an important part of the fabric of our community. The exhibit is a partnership between the Tread of Pioneers Museum, the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Historic Routt County, the City of Steamboat Springs, Kelly&Stone Architects, and Photographics.art.

“The idea for Lost Steamboat was generated while brainstorming an event for Colorado Architecture Month in April that would promote architecture through free events for the community,” said Adam Wright of Kelly&Stone Architects. The exhibit first opened at the Chief Theater for a Historic Routt County fundraiser on April 10.

“Lost Steamboat holds great significance for our community. Rarely do we take pause to evaluate the history of our architecture,” Wright said.

Arianthé Stettner, local historic preservation professional and a member of the Lost Steamboat committee, selected the images from the Tread of Pioneers Museum photo archives for the exhibit and researched the history for captions for each of the buildings in the exhibit. She shared the following: “Fire caused the loss of many of the town’s earliest structures. Wooden buildings such as the Cabin Hotel, the first Union School, and the Congregational Church were among its victims … as property owners changed and property values increased, buildings were (also) demolished to make way for larger structures and a variety of new uses.”

“The buildings in this exhibit demonstrate a wide variety of styles and materials, many of them unique to Steamboat Springs. Those constructed before the arrival of the railroad used local materials: lumber milled from nearby trees, stone from the quarry on Emerald Mountain, bricks fired at the Trogler brickyard on the outskirts of town, and river cobbles from the Yampa River. When the transportation of materials became more convenient and less expensive, construction options expanded. Today’s projects rarely use local materials.”

Make your way to the Tread of Pioneers Museum this spring and discover this rare glimpse of our lost architectural past. The museum is always free to members and all Routt County residents.

Volunteer Spotlights

Like most nonprofits, the Tread of Pioneers Museum relies heavily on the generosity and time given by volunteers. The success of the museum depends on a team of over 40 volunteers who contributed over 3,400 hours last year. Volunteers staff the front desk, conduct research, serve on the Board of Directors, work on special projects and events, lead school tours, and more.

Meet Cheri (Brunner) Daschle. Cheri grew up here in Routt County; her great-grandparents homesteaded in South Routt County in 1905. Cheri says, “being a volunteer at the Tread of the Pioneers Museum is wonderful: working with the museum staff, talking to visitors, and showcasing the amazing history of our Yampa Valley.” Cheri currently staffs the museum’s front desk, conducts research for special projects, and is transcribing the diary of pioneer rancher, Louis Summer.

Sharon Compestine, who was born and raised in Steamboat, still loves the beauty of the Yampa Valley. As a museum volunteer, she has gained knowledge of the area and feels volunteering is a positive way to give back to her community. She also enjoys visiting with people who come to the museum, as well as working with the other volunteers, staff, and board members.

After 17 years of coming to Steamboat for skiing, Anne Clardy traded the heat and traffic of Texas for the mountains and beauty of Steamboat last July. She volunteers at the museum because she loves learning the history of her adopted home and visiting with the tourists.

Our team of volunteers is lead by Tamra Monahan, our newest staff member. Tamra replaced Jill Lindstrom last July as our museum assistant in charge of managing the museum store, front desk operations, and volunteer coordination, among other duties.

Tamra and her husband Mike always wanted to live in Steamboat Springs; they finally made their dream come true last year when they moved from Denver. Tamra loves history and is excited about working at such a fine museum with wonderful people.

If you would like get involved at the museum, we would love to have you! We can match your skills and interests with museum needs and projects. Contact Tamra at 879-2214 or storemgr@springsips.com.
Looking Back - 2013 - 2014

Haunted Tours of the Crawford House - October 2013

Victorian Valentines Kids Program - Feb. 2014
Your summer program, tour, and event calendar is inside!

NOW ON DISPLAY!

Lost Steamboat:
A photographic exhibition from the Tread of Pioneers Museum collection of significant buildings lost over the years.

May 1, 2014 – Dec. 1, 2014
at the Tread of Pioneers Museum
8th and Oak Streets, Steamboat Springs, CO
www.treadofpioneers.org or 879-2214 for more information

Foundations of Steamboat:
An Exhibit Honoring The Summer Family

The Foundations of Steamboat Exhibit Series highlights families whose members have made a significant contribution to Northwestern Colorado. This year the Tread of Pioneers Museum honors the Summer family.

The Summer family ranching tradition lasted over 100 years, supported by Vernon Summer—a man who had ranching in his blood, a lifetime of hard work in his hands, and a love of the land and community in his heart.

On Display through February 2015

www.treadofpioneers.org • 800 Oak • Steamboat Springs, CO