

# P. L. Historical Society



*Serving The Palmer Divide Area Since 1956*



### In case you wanted to know:

- **Museum hours:** 10-2 PM Sat. and 1-4 PM Wed., June to Aug.
- PLHS President: Phyllis Bonser
- Vice-President: Al Walter
- Secretary: Maggie Williamson
- Treasurer: Victor Vaile
- Museum Director: Roger Davis
- Board Members at Large: Georgia Follansbee, Pat McCarthy, Judy Harrington, Rhett Walter
- Editor: Dee Kirby
- Managing Editor: Cris Bonser
- Mountain Lion: "Old Disappearance"

### Inside this issue:

<i>Communities of the Palmer Divide</i>	2
A Message from the President	2
Upcoming Events	2
Monthly Program Recap for August through October	3
The Glen Park Companies and Their Chautauqua's	4

## Rodeo Women

By: Dee Kirby

For more than 120 years, women have competed in rodeo events. During the 1910s, 20s and 30s, rodeo gals paved the way for today's prestigious Women's Professional Rodeo Association. They participated in Roman-and relay-style races, rode broncos and bulls, specialized in bulldogging, trick, riding sharp shooting, fancy roping and barrel racing. They drew their rides from the same stock as the guys, and, like the guys, they suffered the hard knocks of bruises, broken bones and even death. In spite of the risks, the gals loved the excitement, attention, the money, and the nomadic lifestyle of the rodeo circuit.

The women were raised to ride, break horses, cut cattle, deliver calves, brand, rope and shoot. They sat tall in their saddles beside the men as equal partners in the toil of ranch life. In early rodeo days, they worked alongside the men, were paid fairly and treated with respect. The early Wild West shows were considered the first equal-opportunity employers.

In 1912, Francis Sperry Steele and Goldie St. Clair squared off at the first Calgary Stampede that promised a winning purse of \$1,000. St. Clair earned big points when she rode Red Wing, a killer horse, to the fin-

ish. Steele, too, rode Red Wing, who had stomped cowboy Joe LaMar to death earlier in the week. She outscored St. Clair because she rode slick saddle, which meant the stirrups were loose, unlike St. Clair's, whose stirrups were hobbled or tied down, thus **Steele's strength was all her.** She won the \$1,000 check, a tooled leather saddle, an engraved gold buckle and the sweetest words to her ear, the first "Lady Bucking Horse

**Champion of the World;"** a title she would defend and win again.

Colorado-born Marie Keen Gress, a champion trick rider, told a reporter in 1997 at age 83, "To be honest, I got into it for the money. I could make \$300 for eight minutes work during the depression."



## *Communities of the Palmer Divide: Monument Ice Harvest*

By: Dee Kirby

---

Anybody can make history; only a great man can write it.

~Oscar Wilde

---

**Monument's first icehouse** was built on Monument Lake in about 1901 by W. E. Doyle and Thomas Hanks. Several unidentified men use a saw



powered by gasoline to cut the ice. Before the saw was available, ice was grooved by horse-drawn grooving knives that cut the ice into a parallel block pattern. Then a tool with prongs on one end was used to cut the ice into cakes. A pike pole pushed the cakes up the chute into the ice-house, where the cakes were covered in sawdust. In winter, a man could work 10-hour days for seven days a week and earn 40 cents per hour. A man with a team of eight



horses earned \$2 per day. In 1909, Doyle bought out Hanks and constructed five new icehouses.

---

## A Message from the President



As I write this, it is with a little nostalgia since it is my last as president of the Palmer Lake Historical Society. These last seven years on the Board (two as VP and five as President) have been a real learning experience. I

have learned so much about local history and especially enjoyed meeting and working with all of you. I thank you all for this opportunity and for your support, confidence and help. I look forward to continued involve-

ment with the Society. In closing I wish you all a very happy and prosperous New Year!

Phyllis V. Bonser

---

## PLHS Upcoming Events

All upcoming events held at the Palmer Lake Town Hall on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month.

No Meeting: Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays.

---

January 19, 2012, 6:30 PM:  
**Annual Potluck Dinner and Membership Meeting. Meat Provided.** Bring a side dish or dessert to share.

February 16, 2012, 7:00 PM:  
**"Frank Lewis-Dale Jones Gang."** Dwight Haverkorn tells of the gang that killed nine police officers between 1913 and 1918 and had a deadly shootout in Colorado Springs in September 1918.

March 15, 2012, 7:00 PM:  
**"Colorado Railroad Ice Houses."** Bill Reich relates the results of his research into the railroad ice houses in Colorado, including the local Doyle ice house.

---

Mark your calendars so you won't miss these upcoming events.

---

## August: The Walls Talk: Historic House Museums of Colorado

Text paraphrased from Bernard L. Minetti's article in our Community News

Tom and Doris Baker, publishers of Palmer Lake's Filter Press, walked back in time when they presented Patricia Werner's book, *The Walls Talk: Historic House Museums of Colorado*, which PLFP published. Stricken with a grave illness, Werner had but a few months to complete her six-year book project that guides the reader into the homes and the lives of settlers, traders, trailblazers, adventuresome professionals, merchants, and silver kings.

Tom Baker said that each museum in the book that was an actual dwelling place is now open to the public and represents the

life of the people who lived there. The book describes the architecture, the history of each house, and brings to life the inhabitants through their stories. The Bakers



noted that William Humphrey commuted from Evergreen to Denver in a Model T for 30 years in order to live in the house he loved which is now a historic "house" museum. In Cripple Creek, visitors can tour Pearl DeVere's "parlor house" in the red light district where she ran her successful business.

They said that the MacGregor Ranch in Estes Park "offers a window into the past for its visitors." Percheron draft horses and ranch hands still work the hay meadow.

For more information about the book and Werner, contact the Bakers at :  
1-888-5770-2663.

## September: Two Wheels and a Path

Text paraphrased from Bernard L. Minetti's article in our Community News

Douglas County archivists Johanna Harden and Annette Gray discussed the great interest in bicycling during the 1890s. In 1897, the Denver Cycle Path Association had just opened the 11-mile Denver-Littleton Cycle Path. Ten months later, a new organization was formed to extend this path to Palmer Lake.

The presenters indicated that the young town of Castle Rock in 1897 needed to

"hustle" to ensure the path went through their town. Though Colorado Springs supported a flourishing tourist industry, it was not interested in the proposed cycle path.

On April 7, 1899, the Castle Rock Journal reported that Sen. Ammons had successfully gotten a bill through the legislature that provided an appropriation of \$5,000 for the completion of the path. However, major opposition to the proposed construction blocked a "Dream" that never really came to fruition. Today, portions of the

path have been incorporated into the Colorado Front Range Trail.



## October: Railroads of Colorado

Text paraphrased from Bernard L. Minetti's article in our Community News

Claude Wiatrowski, known for his book, *Railroads of Colorado*, entertained an audience of 70 Historical Society members and visitors with a detailed history of Colorado's narrow and standard gauge railroad systems.

One notable railroad system was the Denver and Rio Grande that established the town of Durango in 1879 and arrived in Durango in 1881. Construction to Silverton was completed in 1882. The line hauled silver and gold ore from the San Juan Mountains. Today, it operates as a tourist attraction between Durango and Silverton, providing amazing views.

The Manitou and Pike's Peak Railway Co., begun in 1889, utilized a special "rack rail" that meshed with a "cog wheel," which was placed in the center of the two rail tracks. This system provided the "push" to propel trains up 48 percent grades while ordinary rail systems can only manage four to six percent grades. Maximum speed for the system is about 25 miles per hour; otherwise the cog might jump out of the "rack rail."

Other rail systems discussed were the Leadville, Colorado and Southern railroad as well as the Cripple Creek and Victor narrow gauge system. Wiatrowski noted that Colorado has a very comprehensive rail museum located in Golden.



Palmer Lake Historical Society  
PO Box 662  
66 Lower Glenway  
Palmer Lake, CO  
80133-0662

Stamp



Address Label

*“History Should Be More Than a Memory.” (rmd)*

Visit Us At: <http://www.PalmerDivideHistory.org>

## “The Glen Park Companies and Their Chautauqua's” – PLHS Occasional Paper #3

By: Dan Edwards

This detailed and well-illustrated history of the five companies established to develop Glen Park and organize the Chautauqua Assemblies proved a best seller in Glen Park, where 60 people bought copies! H.B. Chamberlin and R.H. Gilmore were key figures in forming the Glen Park Association and bringing the Chautauqua to Glen Park in 1887. Later, the Glen Park Company, the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua Company, and the Glen Park Improvement Company carried on the work of selling property, erecting public buildings and cottages, renting private cottages, and arranging for speakers and entertainers at the summer Chautauqua programs. After the last Chautauqua in 1910, the Glen Park Cottage Owners Association took over the Auditorium in 1923 and held

programs and religious services there until 1937.

**Forrest M. Priestley, “Mr. Chautauqua,”** came to Denver from Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1889. For three summers, he was property manager for the Glen Park companies, selling lots and arranged living accommodations for those who wanted to camp in tents. He became the leader of two Glen Park companies in the 1890s and driving force behind the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua until his death in 1903.

While the companies were never a financial success, they organized excellent programs featuring Denver University chancellors (like Henry A. Buchtel), professors, and members of the clergy. Company officials also were instrumental in getting the town

and D&RG Railroad to build the “Glen Park Reservoir” in 1904-05. The paper concludes with biographical sketches of 24 officers of the Glen Park companies—including Granville Malcom, Jacob Murphey, Frank McDonough, Florence Stote, and Harry Kepner.

