

P. L. Historical Society & Vaile Museum News

Serving The Tri-Lakes 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: Richard Cooper
- Secretary: Bob Kirby
- Treasurer: Victor Vaile
- Museum Director: Rogers Davis
- Other Board Members:
Kim Braun, Dee Kirby,
Mary Meyer and Hans Post
- Mountain Lion: "Old Disappearance"

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The Kaiser Frazer Building

By: Dee Kirby

The Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts Building once served as the site of the Thomas A. Hanks Livery Stable and Transfer Service in 1898, a repair shop for the rail road, an Angora rabbit wool processing plant in 1957, and a warehouse. In 1969, Fred Walker purchased the building and turned his dream of a restoration business for Kaiser-Frazer products into the only full service Kaiser-Frazer agency in the country

Walker placed a brand new Kaiser-Frazer sign out front, hung an official company show room click inside, bought up parts from approximately 30 former dealers and hauled in abandoned Kaiser-Frazer products to Palmer Lake. A stickler for authenticity, he acquired upholstery fabric, paint and factory books that



the company had used plus banners that dealers once hung in their show rooms. Then, he hired a master mechanic, Jim Arnett. Together, they created a first class motorcar repair and restoration business.

Walker's passion for old cars began in California where he searched for parts to keep his 1955 Willis Bermuda hardtop sedan going. Walker

said that the Kaiser, far ahead of its time, captured his heart. It was constructed with recessed knobs, padded dashboard and pop out windshield. It was the first car to have to have turn signals, a tilt rear view mirror, the "neva-lock" bumper, tail lights that can be seen from the side and no running boards

Walker described riding in a Kaiser as "a living room experience. . .with unbelievable leg room." While Walker praised the Kaiser's aerodynamic styling, its beautiful lines, the white sidewall tires and gas mileage between 24 to 27 miles per gallon, he acknowledged a Kaiser quirk, "the car vapor locks."



Left: 1953 Kaiser

What's New at the Museum?



B25 Bomber & P47 Fighter

By: Sharon Jarnagin

The die-cast metal, model airplane exhibit had been such a hit with summer visitors that it was held over during the month of September.

The owner and collector is Palmer Lake's Howard Miller. Originally from North East Pennsylvania, he has been a Tri-Lakes resident since 1974 after he retired as an E-6 with the United States Air Force.

He began collecting airplane models in the 1950's and has built over 450 models. His collection was shown at the 50th Anniversary of the Air Force in San Antonio, Texas at Security Service Headquarters. He also built

model airplanes for Generals that represented the planes they flew.

Since 1969, Miller (R) took up woodcarving. His beautifully, detailed, carved birds were previously loaned for the museum display and are frequently in shows.

Among his other collections are HO gauge trains and die-cast metal automobiles and trucks. We hope to share these with you in the future. Thanks Howard!

Visit the PLHS website and see more photos and history on the WWII, B25 Doolittle raid and the history of die-cast models.



If you would like to share and display your hobbies at the museum, we'd be pleased to put them on display. Please call Sharon at 481-2488.

Currently, the museum is displaying a collection of ladies souvenir handkerchiefs as well as purses and gloves. Most items date from the 1940's.

A Message from the President & Recap of Past and Current Events/Projects



We have had a busy, but enjoyable summer and now are ready for Fall! The Father's Day ice cream social had the largest attendance ever - over 125! The Jessum Buds Bluegrass Band performed in the Gazebo and pie & ice cream was served in Town Hall. The end of July brought us another well-attended tour of Estemere and talks by Dr. Dan Edwards, a long-time summer visitor to the Glenn, about Dr. William Finley Thompson's life. He has written a

book, available at the Museum, with many new documented facts about the founder of Palmer Lake. In August, PLHS helped bring back the Chautauqua to Palmer Lake. We had very good attendance; the historical portrayals and other entertainment were both educational and enlightening. The best attended segment was the Church service which was historical as well as spiritual. It is planned for this to be an annual event. In September Sam DeFelice, former PLHS President, presented an interesting program on Italians in America, specifically Colorado; October brought back the Castle Rock Historic Band's Low-Brass Ensemble with many old tunes. Every-

one's toes were tapping!

The following is an update on our various projects: The Monument Historical Relief by Ronny Walker, which will hang in the new Monument Town Hall, is at the foundry. (we will include a picture in one of our future Newsletters); "Palmer Lake Narrative" undergoing revision. (we are including Dr. Edward's documented research). Various other projects continue to be on our agenda. The Historical Calendar will soon go to press. We hope to have them ready for distribution by the end of November. The Calendar is one of our biggest fund raisers and will support our efforts to expand the Museum and to

preserve the legacy left to us all for the generations to come. We need help to continue these projects. Would you like to volunteer a little of your time? Perhaps you would like to be a docent in the Museum, help with special projects or even join our board? Please call me (481-9245) and we will find an area where you would feel comfortable as a volunteer.

Please join us on November 20th when Charles Halaska will present "The Historical impact of the Cumbres and Toltec Railroad" and again on January 15th for our annual Pot Luck Dinner.

Phyllis V. Bonser

Chatauqua 2008

By: Mary Meyer

The Chatauqua Committee put on a wonderful educational and entertaining public event on August 3rd.

The day began with a western, themed church service given by Rev. John Snyder and music performed by the "High Prairie Band". The offering was given to Tri-Lakes Cares to buy school supplies.

The performers for the day included Don Moon aka Teddy Roosevelt, Master of Ceremonies, John Stansfield aka Enos Mills, founder of Rocky Mountain National Park, Steve Cassat aka Cowboy Steve Trick Roper, 1st Colorado Volunteers Civil War Band, Chuck Pyle aka Zen Cowboy, Richard Marold

aka Winfield Stratton, prospector turned millionaire, Project Lighthouse Native American Dancers and Greg Anderson, square dance caller.

Jim Sawatzki led an interesting historical tour through the Glen to the original Chatauqua Auditorium site and Master Gardner, Diana Picchietti, led a nature walk along Monument Creek.

The performances were excellent and an enjoyable day was had by all.

The prize for the "magical moment of the day" went to Chuck Pyle. While performing a song about Colorado, the sky opened up and poured down rain, cooling off the hot August afternoon. When the song ended, the

sun came out and the rest of the day was beautiful.

Jess Smith generously donated Historic Pinecrest for the day's event, and Nikki McDonald provided lunch and dinner for the guests.

A special thank you goes out to the committee members who worked long and hard to put on this free event, Phyllis Bonser, Bonnie Allen, Tracy Grotzinger, Jim Sawatzki, Mary Meyer, Nancy Jurka, Hans Post, Jess Smith, Richard Cooper, Greg Cook, Jean Harris and Tim Eckert.

Top Right: Dan Moon as Teddy Roosevelt

Right: John Stansfield as Enos Mills



The July 2008 Estemere Event

By Dee Kirby:

On July 26th, the grand ole' mansion of Estemere in Palmer Lake showcased its Victorian heritage to the public. Owned by Kim and Roger Ward, Estemere was built in 1887 by Dr. William Finely Thompson, who founded Palmer Lake.

Helen Follmer remembered that when her daughter and son-in-law – Don and Joan Leonard – bought Estemere in 1964, "the house was in very sad shape. It was very dilapidated."

Follmer said that when the tornado and flood struck Palmer Lake on June 16, 1965 the whole family shoveled gravel out of the house. To clean up the mess, Don

Leonard rented a commercial scrubber to scrub the mud off the floors while Joan cleaned the gooey mud stuck in all the creases in the woodwork. The Leonard's dining room table, owned by the Wards, shows the depth of the mud from the flood.

When the Wards purchased Estemere in 1998, restoration projects such as rewiring the building, re-roofing the observatory with zinc, totally restoring the tower and rebuilding the entire rock work and wall that fronts the home were among the first priorities. New additions by the Wards include a three car garage and expansion to the carriage house, a new,

larger kitchen and a conservatory that boasts a stained glass ceiling designed by Kim.

As the Wards compile memories of their own at Estemere, treasured stories – some as far away as Ireland – continue to delight them. Their plan is to preserve the collection of Estemere's past and memories in the sitting room, now designated as the history room.

Dan Edwards, presently from Washington D.C., has researched the life of Dr. William Finely Thompson and discussed his new findings on Thompson. Many heretofore unknown revelations came to light.



At Estemere

L-R: Richard Cooper, Phyllis Bonser, Sharon Jarnagin, Roger Ward, Mary Meyer, and Cheryl Rogers, volunteers and PLHS supporters all



The MG car club at Estemere

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Stamp



Address Label

Serving The Tri-Lakes Area Since 1956

Visit Us At: <http://www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us/plhs/>

The Ben Lomond Barn

By: Jim Sawatzki

The Tri-Lakes community lost another historic landmark this past 4th of July. The ever present, big 'ole red Ben Lomond Barn, on the northwest side of Palmer Lake, was taken down due to it's recent leaning and decrepit condition.

This 1909 barn was built by Thomas A. Hanks, an early mayor and businessman of the village. Hanks had operated a livery and transfer station at this site for many years before building his large livery across from the Denver &

Rio Grande Depot in town. At the Ben Lomond Ranch, he could graze his horses and store more hay in the original barn that stood here since 1871. The first barn was built by the prosperous and influential Bennet brothers, who established the first homestead claim on the Palmer Divide in 1869. Hiram P. Bennet was postmaster of Denver at this time. This first barn also had a grist mill for grinding grain to flour for local consumption.

For many years the

Broadmoor Hotel's stable horses and polo ponies were wintered here to run free and graze into the

open lands of Douglas County. A private riding stable currently shares this site.



For some, the first sight of Palmer Lake was this old red barn when traveling south on Spruce Mountain Rd. This meant that finally, you were home.