



Prairie Press

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Chugwater's Monthly Publication



Bethlehem Night

United Methodist Church held a "Bethlehem Night" on December 22, 2013. The church's basement was turned back to the time Jesus was born., with a wool spinner, dreidel shop, potters wheel, astronomy room and Synagogue. The Inn served a meal of lentil soup with challah bread topped with honey. Reverend Keith and Joyce Hudiburgh danced in the streets while waiting for Mary and Joseph to arrive.



Carol Eckhardt
Spindle Wool Shop



Reverend Keith Hudiburgh
Dance Host



Jeff and Tricia Sagner
Playing Mary and Joseph



Dreidel Shop



Brian and Gerri Currier
Inn Keepers



Chugwater community
waiting for the Inn to serve dinner



Will Strahan

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Community Center Events

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Every Wednesday Scrapbooking

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Bliss shares the Gift of Music

Janet Bliss played the piano for the first time when she was just 3 years old. "Folks said I would hear a song on the radio and I would go and pick it out on the piano," she said. Bliss and the piano formed a strong friendship then that continues today. She gives the gift of her music to others too. Bliss has volunteered to play the piano for residents at many Cheyenne nursing homes for 30 years.

Bliss knows how music reaches the residents. "Seeing people who didn't know who they were or where they were, but they could sing every word of every old song I would play," she said. When she plays, she makes it look easy, an ability born of dedication and talent. She plays many songs by ear, equipped with the ability to play what she hears. She also took piano lessons and knows how to read music.

Bliss was born and raised on a farm 10 miles east of Chugwater. Her parents homesteaded there in 1915. She came from a musical family. Her mother played piano by ear, while two older sisters took piano lessons, and two brothers played horns. Her passion for music led her to her own lifelong love. When she was 15, she began to play with a small dance band in Chugwater. A handsome cowboy named Donnie Bliss also was in the band. "He was a fine saxophone player," she said. They married a day after she graduated from high school. When he returned from the Korean War, they moved from Chugwater to the D.R. Whitaker Ranch northwest of Cheyenne. He served as ranch foreman there for 25 years.

Bliss moved to Cheyenne after her husband died. She became a caregiver for senior citizens and started volunteering with her music skills in about 1982. She gets paid for some of musical jobs, like playing at the Highland Presbyterian Church, at the Governor's Residence and the Cheyenne Frontier Days Western Art Show and Sale. She is also a volunteer tour guide at the Governor's Residence.

"I do love to do this. When the people enjoy it, it's good for them, but it's doubly good for me," she said. "I thank God every morning for my musical ability."

By Becky Orr

Submitted by: Charlotte Deny

Wyoming State Historical Society

Contact: Tamsen Hert, 766-6245 or ynp@bresnan.net or Linda Fabian, 322-3014 or linda@wyshs.org Need financial assistance to help finalize your history project? The Wyoming State Historical Society is once again offering cash grants to people involved in research activities based on various aspects of the state's history. The grants, ranging from \$100.00 up to \$1500.00 are awarded based on applications submitted to the Society's Lola Homsher Endowment Fund Committee. The deadline is February 28, 2014 with applicants notified of the results in the spring.

Committee chair Tamsen Hert said this is an exciting opportunity for amateur and professional historians and could be the financial impetus to further research on a wide range of subjects. "Each year we receive applications from individuals involved in writing books, conducting oral histories or even restoration projects. The Society is pleased to be able to assist researchers advance their efforts with these funds," said Hert.

Grant monies are drawn from a fund established by the late Lola Homsher, a noted historian and state archivist. Hert said one of Homsher's most significant contributions to preserve Wyoming history came when she spearheaded establishing the Wyoming State Historical Society that has been used as an endowment to help fund Society programs.

The committee reviews all proposals and makes awards after the selection process has been completed, usually in spring. Preference is given to proposals that promise original research on topics related to Wyoming history. Wyoming residents are also given preference, but all applications are welcome. Proposals must include a statement of purpose, an explanation of the project, the value to Wyoming history and a description of how the public will benefit from the research.

Hert said it is rewarding to see the variety of research topics explored around the state. Last year's recipients used funds to enhance their research on topics ranging from a biography of Lester Hunt to exploring and documenting the Indian Pass Historical Expedition that took place along the Wind River Range. Hert reiterated that the Society welcomes applications that touch upon all aspects of Wyoming's history. All recipients must provide the Society with a final report about their project.

Previous recipients, applications and rules can be obtained by visiting the Society's website at www.wyshs.org, and then by selecting "Homsher Endowment." If you do not have success to the web, please contact the Wyoming State Historical Society at 307-322-3014 or linda@wyshs.org to receive a copy of the application. Proposals are due February 28, 2014.



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Chugwater Church Services

Mary Queen
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Services at 11:00 A. M.

United
Methodist Church
Corner of 6th St & Clay Ave

Worship 9 A.M.

Chugwater Valley Church
120 3rd St.

Worship 11:00 A.M.
Sunday School
10 A.M.

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Edward O. Greff 1924 – 2013

Edward O. Greff was born on February 9, 1924 and went to be with his Heavenly Father on December 25, 2013 at the age of 89. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Maxine Kelly Greff, brother Nolan Greff and parents Edward N. Greff and Letty Greff. He is survived by his wife, Shirley Schuh Greff, son Tom Greff (Peggy), daughter Marilyn Greff Little (Boyd), and daughter Judith Greff Jenkins. Ed is also survived by seven grandchildren, Sorin Greff, Jory Greff, Jason Little, Jake Little, Lori Jenkins, Andrew Jenkins and Abigail Jenkins and two great-grandchildren, Seamus Jerrick and Elijah Little. Ed was born in Wheatland, Wyoming and raised in Chugwater, Wyoming. He joined the Navy in June 1943 and served until November 1945 in the Pacific theatre. He graduated from the University of Wyoming in 1950 with a BA in Accounting. Ed spent the majority of his professional life working for the Denver Housing Authority, San Antonio Housing Authority and many Authorities in the San Antonio area. He dedicated much of his life to providing housing to thousands of low-income families.

There will be a viewing at Mission Park Chapel on Cherry Ridge Drive on December 29, 2013 from 6pm – 8pm. Funeral services will be held December 30, 2013 at Ed's beloved Bethany Congregational Church on 500 Pilgrim Drive at 11am. Interment will be at Mission Park North Cemetery immediately following the services.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the charity of your choice or Bethany Congregational Church.

Chugwater Cemetery Memorial Wall



THE MEMORIAL WALL IS NOW COMPLETE!

Honor your loved one with a Memorial Plaque

Contact Kate Jackson at 307-422-3329 or any of the other Cemetery Board Members for additional information and forms. The 2013 cost for each plaque is \$350.

ServSafe Class

University of Wyoming Extension:: Contact Christine A. Pasley, University Extension Educator chrisp@uwyo.edu

ServSafe® will be offered at the Goshen County Fairgrounds, US Highway 26/85, Torrington, for food service professionals, Thursday and Friday, January 30-31, by the Wyoming Food Safety Coalition (WFSC). This two-day training provides testing and National Restaurant Association certification recognized in all 50 states. Participants must attend both days, 8-5 p.m. Registration deadline is January 20.

ServSafe® training is provided for food service managers, manager trainees, front line supervisors, restaurant owners and anyone desiring food service management certification on food safety.

WFSC professionals presenting the ServSafe® class include Bryan Grapes and Sherry Warner, Consumer Health Specialists with the Wyoming Department of Agriculture, and Christine Pasley, University Extension Educator, University of Wyoming Extension.

The WFSC offers food safety programs to people of Wyoming. WFSC members include University of Wyoming Extension, the Wyoming Beef Council, the Wyoming Department of Agriculture, the Wyoming Department of Health, the Wyoming Department of Education, the Wyoming Division on Aging, and the Wyoming Lodging and Restaurant Association.

There is reading to be done prior to the training so early registration is strongly encouraged. Those interested in becoming ServSafe® certified may register with their local county Extension office, Chrisp@uwyo.edu, 307-322-3667, or the Wyoming Department of Agriculture Consumer Health Specialist, 532-4208. The \$99 registration fee covers books, materials and testing with the National Restaurant Association.



Prairie Press is now online

go to

www.Chugwater.com

Chugwaters new website

You can also visit us on Facebook.

Chugwater's Lady Buffs



Chugwater's Lady Buffs played Wheatland's Lady Bolts, Lady Bolts won with a score of 18 to 4. Next game Monday Jan. 20th at Wheatland at 6 p.m.



Coach Jeff Sagner with Cindy Fortik, RyeAnn Geschwell, Nicole Sagner, Jollie Strahan and Sabryna Schaffer.



Nicole Sagner, Sabryna Schaffer and RyeAnn Geschwell discuss game strategy.

Chugwaters Methodist Church Celebrates 125 years

Methodism-Chugwater and Iowa Flats, 1888-2013

Continued from December 2013 issue.

People on the flats and outside of Chugwater could attend three different churches. Aside from the Methodists, the Baptists in town built the First Baptist Church in 1919. The Catholic families in the area were able to buy a school building in the Little Bear community, which they moved into Chugwater in 1926. Mass was intermittently held in the small, wood-frame church, across the street from the Methodist basement church. In 2000, a new Catholic Church was built at the location of its earlier church.

In Bear Creek valley a Methodist congregation had formed in the late 1890s, and in 1897 constructed a small chapel. The close-knit community of ranch families along the valley and surrounding area maintained the church and nearby cemetery over the years, relying on ministers from Torrington and Chugwater for Sunday services. In 1899, the Bear Creek Church was listed on the Wyoming Mission Conference's roll of organized churches.

In 1961, the Iowa Center Methodist Church merged with the Chugwater Methodist Church, which meant more room was needed. Despite concerns about raising enough money for constructing a new church, Rev. Clarence Smith led the way in planning and helping raise the necessary funds. The McMillins', father Frank and son Dick, long-standing members in the Methodist Church, and carpenters by vocation, led the task to construct the present-day United Methodist Church, with help from many of the men in the congregation. While the men were busy carpentering, the women met weekly to refurbish the beautiful pews still in use today. The land for the new church was donated by loyal and compassionate Methodists, Tom and Rith Tarpley, dedicated members of the church. The opening service was on Easter Sunday, April 10, 1966. Another celebratory day occurred on April 15, 1973 when the mortgage was ceremoniously burned in the Sunday service.

A "founding father" for both the Iowa Flats Church and the Chugwater Church was Arthur Bastian. He had homesteaded around 1908-09 on the Iowa Flats. He quickly became not only a leader in both congregations but in the town as well. His energy, enthusiasm, and willingness to be involved in town, school, and church affairs was conspicuous and productive. He delighted in giving speeches, organizing programs, "boosting" the community, singing, quoting poems. It was Arthur Bastian who was instrumental in starting the annual Memorial Day Service at the Iowa Flats Church and Cemetery, which still continues.

Adding to the history of Methodism in the Chugwater Church are the recollections of several participants in the church. Elizabeth (Tarpley) Cooley, who is retired and lives in Denver, wrote about some of the ministers and events in the church during her early years. She was born in 1943, the year in which a fire seriously damaged the basement church. The Baptist Church generously opened their church so that the Methodist congregation would have a place to worship. Another minister in the late 1950s and early 60s was Rev. Charles Roberts, a largely heavy-set man who suffered from dropsy. His health grew worse, and his last sermons were delivered while sitting in a chair. He may have, according to Elizabeth, died while giving a sermon.

Another participant of long service is Teresa (Voight) Baker. She and her husband farm on the Iowa flats, and like Elizabeth, Teresa "grew up" in the church. Her grandparents, Albert and May Voight, and her parents Louis and Vi, attended the church, always bringing their children with them. In essence, three generations of Voights have attended and supported the Chugwater Methodist Church.

Teresa continues her membership, attendance and involvement in the Chugwater Church. She remembers the joy of singing with other choir members who had beautiful voices and loved to sing. She is also appreciative to Betty Ash, who played the piano, and Peggy Hellbaum at the organ, both giving years of devoted service to the church. For Teresa and Elizabeth (Tarpley) Cooley, the Methodist Church and "Methodism" have been and remain a part of daily living.

One important change for the Chugwater Church is the sharing of ministers with the Wheatland Methodist Church. Rev. George "Skip" Perry was the first to share the pulpit, and when he retired, Rev. Hudiburgh now carries on that charge. Over the years, the attendance at the Chugwater church has fluctuated, at times as low as twelve, and upwards of thirty. In the history of the Iowa Flats, the Chugwater, the Iowa Center, and somewhat for the Bear Creek Church, there have been 41 ministers since Rev. Fagan became the minister of the Iowa Flats Methodist Episcopal Church.

In writing the story of his fifty years as a Methodist minister, Rev. Fagan remembered that moment when he and his wife accepted his first church appointment, "We had prayed much, and when finally the appointment came, I was convinced that God's hand was in it, and from then on I never doubted my calling."

Public Notice

The Prairie Press is a monthly Publication.

The article and ad deadline is the 5th of the month

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