



Spring 2009 Vol. 3, Issue 1

# CHSM

## Conifer Historical Society and Museum

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## Armchair Adventures



*photo provided by Norm Meyer*

*Fields Trading Post was located about where the old Safeway parking lot is now located.*

History is happening everyday around us. Living in Conifer makes it easy to see that. If you have only lived here 1 year, you can already say, "I remember what King's Valley looked like before the new King's Valley Marketplace was built." If you have lived here 5 years, you talk about "where the old Safeway was located." And if you have lived here 10 years, you know what it was like before highway 285 was widened. See, you're already an 'old timer' with memories of the history of Conifer.

And that is the mission of the Conifer Historical Society and Museum (CHSM). We endeavor

to capture the history of the local area. Our immediate focus is conducting oral histories.

What is Oral History? It is the stories your parents and grandparents told you and you now wish you had recorded. We sit down with a video camera and interview people, asking them questions. What are your earliest memories of Conifer? Where did you buy groceries when there was no supermarket here yet? How long did it take to drive to Denver before the highway was improved? We have the technology to record these memories for future generations and believe strongly that the stories of the

*Armchair Adventures continued on page 3*

### \* DID YOU KNOW \*

The Blakeslee cabin on the Meyer Ranch was featured on the History Channel's Mega Movers show.

This issue of CHSM can be found at:  
[www.coniferhistorymuseum.org](http://www.coniferhistorymuseum.org)

# Suzi Says

## Letter to the community

by Suzi Morris, CHSM President



We love our mission!

The mission of the Conifer Historical Society and Museum is to share the region’s legacy by collecting, preserving and exhibiting historical and cultural materials and providing public access to services, collections, exhibits and a research library.

This year we will continue collecting, preserving and exhibiting – and offer even more to the Conifer community!

On May 17 we will partner with the Mountain Area Land Trust (MALT) for our third annual Armchair Adventure titled “A Celebration of Conifer’s Roots.” Hank Alderfer conducted extensive research for this presentation. Hank grew up on Alderfer Ranch, now preserved as Open Space in Evergreen. This entertaining and informative program will feature historic maps, photos, stories and music.

In 2006, I attended my first MALT Armchair Adventure when Hank presented a fascinating program on Evergreen history. I can’t wait to see his program on our Conifer area! We plan to

record our third annual Armchair Adventure DVD. (See page four to purchase DVDs from our 2007 and 2008 programs.)

The Armchair Adventure on May 17 will begin at 3:00 PM at the beautiful Twisted Pines Pavilion at Meadow Creek Bed and Breakfast. Immediately following the program, a reception will be held for those who have purchased an additional ticket for the opportunity to meet with Hank and Tom while enjoying wine and cheese.

Please contact the Mountain Area Land Trust at 303.679.0950 for tickets to the May 17 Armchair Adventure and Reception.

Join us on June 27 for the Intermountain Human Society (IMHS) “Dog Walk.” Yes, it’s historical! The Conifer Historical Society and Museum was asked to partner with IMHS for a very good reason! This year the Dog

Walk will be held on the beautiful mountain property of Meyer Ranch. This is a rare opportunity to hike the trails and examine the structures on this 1800s ranch. The Conifer Historical Society will provide signs and markers that identify buildings and describe historical highlights.

Come with or without a dog! Please contact the Intermountain Humane Society at 303.838.2668 for tickets and additional information.

We have more events planned this year! Mark your calendars for another great Old-timers’ Picnic on July 19. In the fall we will have our first Antique Show. Stay tuned!

Your continued support means so much. Don’t forget to join or renew your membership by sending \$25.00 to CHSM, PO Box 295, Conifer, CO 80433.

Thank you!

*Suzi Morris*

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CHSM is published quarterly for the Conifer Community, past, present, and future. It is intended to be an online publication with limited hardcopy distribution. Story ideas and contributions are encouraged. The photo of Norm Meyer’s yellow house on the front page was taken by Lana Turner. Editor: Elaine Hood hood1959@yahoo.com

**Armchair Adventures** *continued from page 1*

lumber mills, rough roads and wild animals will become increasingly valuable with time.

In addition to oral histories captured in one-on-one interviews, CHSM has held two Armchair Adventure evenings, partnering with the Mountain Area Land Trust (MALT). These delightful evenings featured longtime local residents relating their memories of Conifer.

The 2007 Armchair Adventure starred Bob Kuehster, Betty Fields Long, Jack Antweiler, Lucille Tanner and Norm Meyer. If you are a recent citizen of the area, it is possible you don't recognize these names. But if you pay attention to local landmarks and lore, you will see that these names are integral to our history.

Have you driven up Kuehster Road, located at the east end of Pleasant Park Road? Do you know where the Long Brother's Garage is located at King's Valley? Have you ever taken a hike through Meyer Ranch Park? You certainly have driven by Jack Antweiler's family homestead along Blue Creek Road, off highway 73. Sadly, Jack passed



*photo provided by Jack Antweiler*

*Jack Antweiler reminisced about living in the Conifer and Evergreen area on the 2007 Armchair Adventure DVD, available for purchase.*



*photo provided by Yvonne Ludwig.*

*Yvonne Cooper Ludwig, left, with her two Kansas cousins. Yvonne was an only child, raised in her grandparents' log cabin, located off Pleasant Park Road.*

away in July 2008. The good news is that Jack's memories of growing up on the family homestead have been preserved for posterity along with memories of the others on a DVD created by CHSM.

The 2008 Armchair Adventure entitled *Growing Up in Conifer* starred Yvonne Cooper Ludwig, Erv Knight, Frank Blakeslee and Norm Meyer's children Sharon, Cara and Norm, Junior. These current and former Conifer residents grew up here, all attending a one room school at one time or another and all having Phebe Granzella as a teacher. You don't know who Phebe was? Granzella Road, near Meyer Ranch Park, is named for her husband's family. Phebe was possibly the most famous teacher Conifer ever has had and now that you've heard her name, you will likely notice it more frequently.

While watching this DVD you will laugh as Yvonne recounts growing up in a log cabin off Pleasant Park Road and marveling at the flush toilets she first encountered at the brand new West Jefferson Elementary School. "We were all so proud to go to a new school in 1956," she remembers.

Erv Knight recalls when there were only 3 families living on Conifer Mountain.

Frank Blakeslee, who grew up in the log cabin located on Meyer Ranch, said there were so few families living in the area when he was a child that the entire school would only have 15 children and that included all the families from Shaffer's Crossing to the other side of Double Header.

Each of the Meyer children also related their memories of attending both the Conifer School on Barkley Road and the Pleasant Park School. Their dad Norm was a pilot for Continental Airlines and yet they also had a working cattle ranch. Their mom swore the cows always got out onto the highway whenever Norm was away for a few days. Norm Junior made a point explaining how rutted the road to Evergreen was and what a big deal it used to be to travel that far over that rough road.

You can preserve a bit of Conifer history yourself by buying one or both of the Armchair Adventure DVDs. Purchase information is available on the last page of this paper.

Better yet, make plans now to attend the 2009 Armchair Adventure Sunday May 17, 3-5 pm, at Meadow Creek Bed and Breakfast Inn, 13438 Berry Hill Lane at Douglass Ranch Drive ([www.meadowcreek-bb.com](http://www.meadowcreek-bb.com)). This year's stars will be Hank Alderfer and Tom Hayden. Hank will show pictures and maps of the original homesteads in the Conifer area, while Tom will entertain with poetry and songs. Tickets are \$10 per person for the presentation only and \$25 for a combined ticket that includes a reception following the presentation. Call now for reservations: 303.679.0950.

## Tell Us Your Family Stories

Oral history is a simple conversation about your life. If you grew up in Conifer, where did you buy your groceries and where did you go to school? If you moved here, how was Conifer different then compared to today? Someone who would move to Conifer this spring may think we have always had the excellent high school and wide variety of businesses we have today. The members of CHSM believe it is important to preserve the stories of what it was like to live in Conifer "before ...." We are recording the oral histories on digital movie camera, and will have all the interviews available for the public. Each family will also receive a personal copy.

**The mission of the Conifer Historical Society and Museum** is to share the region's legacy by collecting, preserving and exhibiting historical and cultural materials and providing public access to services, collections, exhibits and a research library.

# Notecards



## Notecards for Any Occasion

Give the gift of notecards honoring the Conifer community.

Beautiful notecards illustrating the rich historical buildings of Conifer are available for sale. Over 24 different cards can be purchased in 7 different boxed sets.

Each photo was taken by local photographer Lana Turner. Proceeds of sales go towards furthering the endeavors of CHSM.

Contact Laura Debus to buy cards: 303.697.0465

Cost and order information is also available on the "Museum Store" page at: [www.coniferhistorymuseum.org](http://www.coniferhistorymuseum.org).

## Conifer History DVDs

You can now purchase two professionally produced DVDs featuring Conifer area residents describing their mountain memories from 'the good old days.'

Both DVDs were filmed during the Armchair Adventure public presentations held in conjunction with the Mountain Area Land Trust.

The 2007 edition features the stories and photos of Bob Kuehster, Betty Fields Long, Jack Antweiler, Lucille Tanner and Norm Meyer talking about their family heritage in the Conifer area.

The 2008 edition features the stories and photos of Yvonne Ludwig, Erv Knight, Frank Blakeslee, and the Meyer children (Sharon, Cara and Norm, Jr.) recounting what it was like to grow up in Conifer years ago.



**\$20/DVD**

Contact Suzi Morris  
303.697.0871

## Red Stag Productions

### Video & DVD Services

Contact Bob Potrykus: 720.261.0860

[bob@rstag.com](mailto:bob@rstag.com)

[www.redstagproductions.com](http://www.redstagproductions.com)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 17	Armchair Adventure, Meadow Creek Inn B&B, 3 - 5 pm
June 27	IMHS Dog Walk at Meyer Ranch
July 19	Old Timers' Picnic, Pleasant Park School, 12 - 4 pm
Sept. 11 - 12	Antique Show, The Barn, Evergreen Memorial Park