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www.ConiferHistoricalSociety.org

CHSM

Conifer Historical Society and Museum

INSIDE:

Meyer Ranch House
Page 1

Letter to the Community
Page 2

Silent Auction Donors
Page 4

The Meyer Ranch House A Conifer Icon

by Phil Gerou, Gerou & Associates, Ltd.



photo by Elaine Hood

*** DID YOU KNOW ***

You can view **CHSM photos** online. Click on the photo to the right to see recent winter photos.

CHSM's mission 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 issue of CHSM can be found at:
www.ConiferHistoricalSociety.org

Whether you call it an icon, a landmark or a slice of local history, the Meyer Ranch House has, for over 120 years, been a symbol of pioneering confidence and frontier perseverance. It has also been a prime example of a Colorado Queen Anne vernacular architecture preserved down through the years. The house and its history are now a local treasure that arrives in 2012 not only for our enjoyment of its beauty and the instruction of our history but also with the obligation of its preservation.

Icon continued on page 3

A Letter to the Community

by Janet Shown, CHSM President

I got my first magazine heralding spring just after New Year's Day, complete with photos of songbirds on blossoming trees and messages urging me to "Get ready for spring!" It was with the wryest of amusement that I laid down the magazine with a sigh, knowing that the earliest I'll probably get to read it will be next fall, when the songbirds have flown and the bulbs that I never planted will get thrown out with the magazines from last winter.

But here at the Conifer Historical Society and Museum, we've been busy planning activities for the entire year – knowing that this precious winter planning time is critical to the success of our fundraising efforts, goal attainment and mission accomplishment in 2012. Among our primary goals are the following:

- **Continue providing educational and outreach opportunities** to engage people in the fascinating history of our local mountain communities;
- **Complete the feasibility study** for the Midway House Museum Project and determine, with the Norm Meyer family, if a living history museum is a viable use for the Meyer family home;
- **Increase participation** among local community members in CHSM activities, board and volunteer opportunities and membership program; and
- **Increase financial resources.**



To those ends, the Board of Directors is planning the following activities during 2012. We invite you to contact us to watch our website to learn more as the plans develop.

- **March:** Brown bag lunch/historical activity or presentation
- **May:** Member meeting
- **June:** Lecture/ historical activity or presentation
- **July:** Wine at the Ranch fund-raiser at the Norm Meyer home. Co-sponsored by the Conifer Area Chamber of Commerce
- **Aug:** Ice cream social; volunteer appreciation event
- **Sept:** Lecture/ historical activity or presentation
- **Midway House Museum Project:** Complete Historical Structure Assessment, economic and operations analyses for a museum at the Norm Meyer home.
- **Resource Development:** Increase membership, volunteer base, donations, grants and sponsorships.

We invite you to join us in making this a year to connect with the history of the Conifer and mountain area, and in advancing the goals and mission of the Conifer Historical Society and Museum!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janet Shown".

Board of Directors

President	Janet Shown
VP, Development	Suzi Morris
Secretary	Elaine Hood
Treasurer	Marsha Petry
Member at Large	Donna Beck
Member at Large	Kris Laubis
Member at Large	Vi Polk
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Development – Suzi Morris
Events – Suzi Morris, Janet Shown
Financials – Marsha Petry
Membership – Vi Polk
Volunteers – Laura Debus
Wine Event – Suzi Morris, Kris Laubis

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 banner was taken by Lana Turner. Editor: Elaine Hoodhood1959@yahoo.com

Originally built in 1889, the Meyer Ranch House is also known as The Midway House, being “midway” between Denver and various points west. Louis Francis Ramboz and his wife, Mary, arrived from St. Joseph, Missouri, and on May 25th, 1883, bought 480 acres from Daniel W. McIntyre, a property which included the McIntyre cabin. Between March and October of 1889 a local contractor/builder named Joseph Grauffel, crafted the home using lumber mostly milled on site.

In 1912, 330 acres of the ranch including the Midway House were sold to the Ralph W. Kirkpatrick family. Early in the Kirkpatrick family’s history with the Midway House the original front porch was replaced with a Classical Revival porch extending across the entire front of the house. During the 1940s when the house was being modernized with indoor plumbing, the kitchen pantry was converted to a bathroom.

The ranch passed through several hands after Kirkpatrick’s death in the early 1940s. In 1950, the ranch was purchased by Norman F. and Ethel E. Meyer and renamed the Broken Bar M Ranch. The Meyers expanded the ranch through an additional 140 acres of the Lubin property purchased from Martin Blakeslee in 1959.

In the early 1950s, the Meyers made substantial renovations and additions to the Midway House. Windows were added on the north, east and west, including the bow window on the west facade.



photo by Gerou & Associates

Decorative window shutters were added to the home. Brick fireplaces were added in the living room and dining room and a stone fireplace in the den. Each of the fireplaces was built by Norm and Ethel. The brick for the fireplaces was recovered from Nevadaville in Gilpin County. In 1880, Nevadaville had a population of over 1,000. By 1950 when the brick was salvaged, the population had dropped to 6.

The 1950s renovations were substantial. Flooring and walls finishes, cabinetry and countertops, lighting and plumbing fixtures, all modernized the rustic

interior while much of the exterior was preserved. Very little of the original woodwork and wall finishes from 1889 remain and are seen mainly in the home’s entry foyer and front staircase.

A study is currently underway to determine what might be required to eventually turn the Meyer House into a public museum. Gerou & Associates, Ltd. of Evergreen has been retained by the Conifer Historical Society and Museum, with financial assistance

from the Colorado State Historical Fund, to prepare a detailed Historic Structure Assessment. Issues such as Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility, structural integrity, electrical wiring safety and building code compliance are all being addressed.

We are all indebted to Norm and Ethel Meyer and the entire Meyer family for their foresight, generosity and pioneering spirit in making this all possible.

The author, Phil Gerou, is a principal and co-founder of Gerou & Associates.



photo by Gerou & Associates

CHSM Needs You

by Laura Debus

We are in need of volunteers!

As our goals and commitments increase, CHSM is planning fabulous events for the upcoming year. We will be continuing our summer lecture series, co-hosting the Wine at the Meyer Ranch with the Chamber of Commerce this July and of course, efforts towards realizing a museum.

I have met many of our members and all of you have talents to share such as creativity, decorating, and friendliness to greet guests at our events. We also need help with handing out pertinent information to the community, shopping and light bookkeeping to name a few. We welcome your ideas! In addition to learning more about the history of Conifer, you will also have fun meeting and working with other volunteers and members who enjoy what CHSM has to offer and the

pride we have in our organization.

If you are interested in volunteering please contact me, Laura Debus, at 303-697-0465, or dldebus@earthlink.net. Help the Conifer Historical Society and Museum achieve its goals.

We can do it...with your help!



photo by Janet Shown

Pat Webers volunteered to make baskets for the CN&N Silent Auction.

THANK YOU

CHSM would like to thank everyone who generously donated items to the November 5 **Conifer Newcomers and Neighbors** Silent Auction held at the Conifer High School. (Bold words are linked to websites.)

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|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| 3 Margaritas | CN&N - Mah Jongg Group | Hahns Haven B&B | National Western Stock Show |
| A Latte More Than Coffee | CN&N - Scrapbooking Group | Hair, Etc. | Neil Corman |
| Aloha Marketplace | CN&N - Ski Groups | Haley's Closet | Nina Sampsel |
| AMC Theaters | CN&N - Touring Lunch Bunch | Healthy Pet Supply | Norm Meyer Family |
| Arthur Murray Studios | CN&N - Wine Tasting Groups | Heritage Square Music Hall | O'Reilly's Auto Parts |
| Arvada Center | Colorado Music Festival | Historic Taos Inn | On The Rocks Nutrition |
| Aspen Park Ace Hardware | Colorado Symphony | Historical Strater Hotel | Pam Hostetler |
| Aspen Park Chiropractic | Comfort Dental of Conifer | Icelandic Boards | Pedano's Oil and Vinegar |
| Aspen Peak Cellars | Comfortable Home | Independent Propane Company | Peggy Corpeny |
| Aspen Toffee | Conifer Community Park at Beaver Ranch | Isle Casino / Calypso's Buffet | PHAMALY |
| Aunt Sue's Garden | Conifer Massage | Journey Church / Angry Llama Diner | Pikes Peak Cog Railway |
| Backstage Theater | Conifer Village Liquors | JJ Madwell's | Pine Country Feed |
| Bandimere Speedway | Cornerstone Auto Glass | Joanne Schwartz | Preserve the Yellow Barn |
| Barbara Heywood | Crafty Critters | Jody Rigby | Regina Sabaliauskas |
| Stephen Grundy | Creative Ideas | Journey Church / Angry Llama Diner | REMARKable Pens |
| Bear Paw Creations | Curves with Altitude | June Cappa | Rita Dye |
| Bear's Inn Bed & Breakfast | David Nelson | Jus Cookin's Restaurant | Rocky & Brent's Horticultural Supply |
| Beauty Choices | Debbie's Denim Bags | Kenosha Auctions | Rocky Mountain Wax Works |
| Bergen Park Paint at Conifer | Denver Aquarium | Kristen Simons | Shadow Mountain Group |
| Beth Erlund | Denver Broncos | Kristine Orr | Shawnee Mt. Gallery |
| Big O Tire, Conifer | Denver Museum of Nature & Science | Kroenke Sports | Sheryl Harper |
| Big R | Denver Zoo | Kyle Ann Exline | Show of Hands |
| Black Diamond Salsa | Doc Martin's Restaurant | Lambert Family | Slice of Moon Art Studio |
| Black Knight Games | Donna Povich | Latitude Sports | Snap Fitness |
| Bobby | Dr. Kenneth Lahr / West Ranch Dental | Lew & Teresa Moran / Lew 'n' Me | Spinsters Sisters |
| Botanical Art | DW's 285 Diner / Cancun Mexican Grille | LifePlanNow.org | Stage Door Theater |
| Brian T. Keller | Earth Gems | Lightspeed Consulting | Staples |
| Burbach's Rocky Mt. Excavating | Ellen Naylor | Little Britches Boutique | Star Creek Inspirational Art |
| Busters Natural Pet Supply | Eva Hornung | LL Gems | Sundance Gardens & Landscaping |
| C. Rei Jewelry | Evergreen Candleworks | Luna's Mandela | Susan Lapidus |
| Canvas & Cocktails | Evergreen Pet Cemetery | Maggie's Muck | Suzi Hyer |
| Carlen's Stoneware Pottery & Gifts | Express St. James | Marji Eakin-Petty | Swallow Hill Music |
| Carol Fennell | Fairplay Flume, Park County Republican | Maureen Hogue | Taspen's Organics & Holistic Wellness Center |
| Carol Simmons Designs | Faithfully K9 Dog Training | Michael Mladjan | The Wildlife Experience |
| Carolyn Dieter | Fine Art of Travel | Michelle Manquen | Three Quarter Circles Ranch |
| Chautauqua National Historic Landmark | Forest Floor Studio | MKI Country | Timberline Gallery |
| Cheyenne Frontier Days | Garden Art Rocks | Molly Brown House Museum | US Olympic Committee |
| Children's Museum | Gary and Brenda Smith / Mountain Feathers | Montessori School of Evergreen | WabiSabiWares / Judith Daley |
| CHSM Board | George Hummel | Mount Vernon Country Club | Walk-e-Woo |
| Cliff House Lodge Hot Tub Cottages | Georgetown Loop Railroad | Mountain Books | Wendy's Colorado |
| CN&N - Biking Group | Ginny & Denny Floyd | Mountain Girl House Cleaning | Wheat Ridge Recreation Center |
| CN&N - Book Talk Group | Glass West Enterprises | Mountain Resource Center Thrift Store | White Fence Farm |
| CN&N - Bridge Group | Glenn Stoll | Mountain Valley Cleaners | Wild 'Erbs Specialty Foods |
| CN&N - Business Group | Golden History Museums | Murdoch's | Wings over the Rockies |
| CN&N - Gardening Group | Golden Stix | Mutual of Omaha Bank | YMCA of the Rockies |
| CN&N - Hiking Group | Gourmet Farms of Colorado | Nails@Conifer | |
| CN&N - Hiking with Dogs Group | Great Harvest Bread | Natalou Creations | |