

Historic Ivinson Mansion  
Laramie Plains Museum Newsletter

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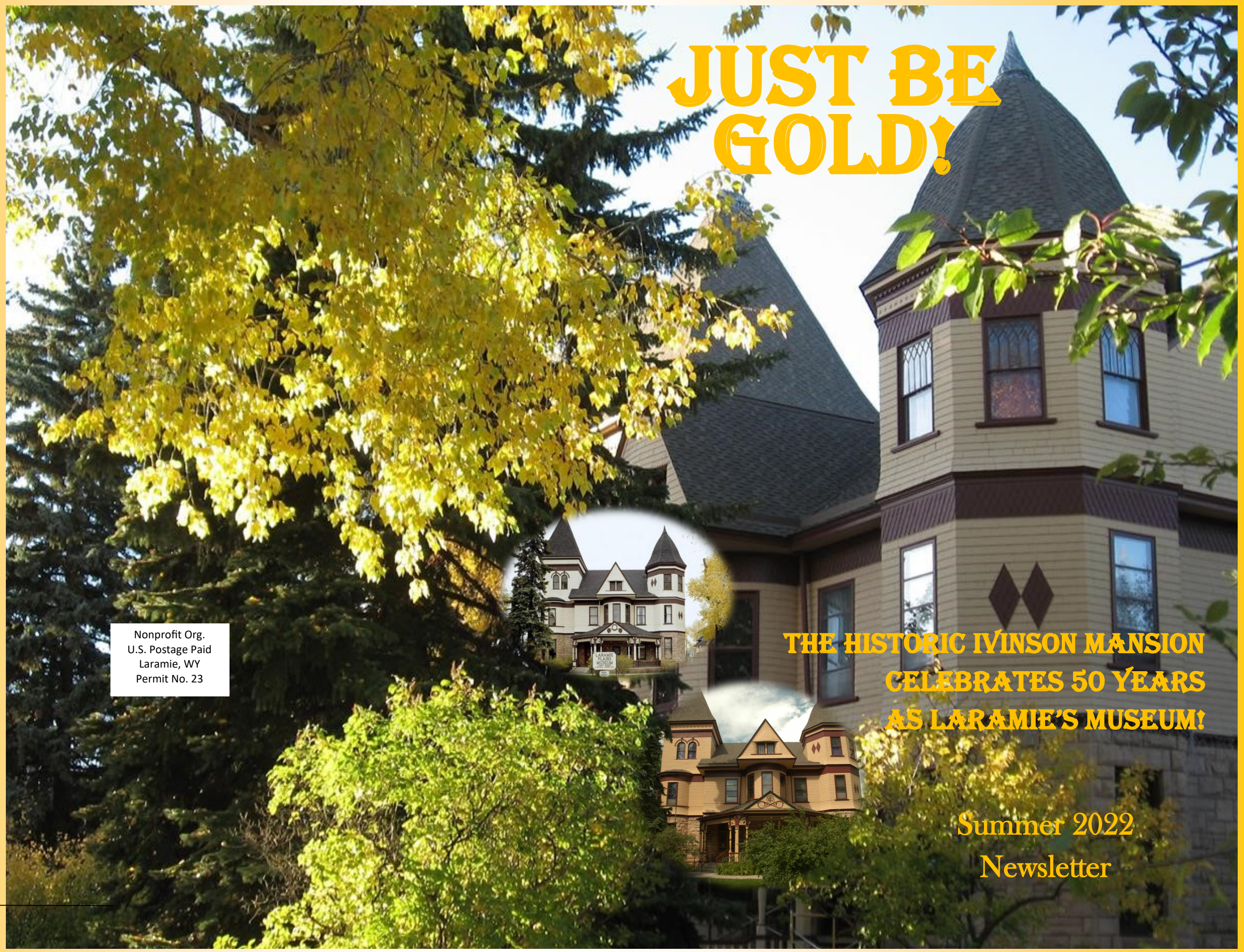
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# JUST BE GOLD!

**THE HISTORIC IVINSON MANSION  
CELEBRATES 50 YEARS  
AS LARAMIE'S MUSEUM!**

Summer 2022  
Newsletter



A few years back, when Covid worries and travel restrictions were not even considered, I was on a trip and wandered into a charming shop. A sign there said, *Just be Gold*, and I was intrigued. I bought the sign—for no reason at all—tucked it in my suitcase and set it aside once I got home. Many things have happened since that 2019 trip, altering my consideration and appreciation of how we deal with what we’re handed. There was a reason I bought that sign: As I reflect on these 50 years of dreams and accomplishments here at the Ivinson Mansion, I see the gold! We could have lumbered along through these years, stalling as we worried, fretted and met with struggles making something of this old mansion and its outbuildings needing too much work. Of course, that’s not what happened! Visionary volunteers and small, all-purpose staffs along the way took up the baton, time and again. Those who have made such a difference have been here exactly when they were needed to give their talents to uplift and transform this full square block of magnificence.

**JUST BE GOLD!**

## HISTORIC IVINSON MANSION

By John Nutter with assistance from Mary Mountain

Mary Mountain

The Historic Ivinson Mansion is one of the primary landmarks of our city. Today it stands in grand stature in the full city block between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets and Ivinson and University Avenues. Built in 1892, it has served multiple purposes. Today, it celebrates 50 years as the elegant home of the Laramie Plains Museum. The life of this magnificent structure can be told in four distinct phases. The mansion first served as the family home of Jane and Edward Ivinson and their adopted daughter Margaret Ellen (Maggie). This first phase lasted from 1892 to 1921. The second phase of the Ivinson mansion’s existence covers the years 1921 to 1957 when it served as Ivinson Hall, the home the Wyoming Episcopal Diocese’s Jane Ivinson School for Girls. The third phase, lasting from 1957 to 1972 was the time of the mansion’s neglect and deterioration. The fourth and current phase started with the purchase of the mansion in 1972 by the Laramie Plains Museum Association as a home for its museum.

### THE IVINSON FAMILY RESIDENCE

The elegant mansion was built in 1892-93 for Edward and Jane Ivinson, one of Laramie’s most notable pioneer couples, as a classic Queen Anne style residence. The lavish house was built twenty-four years after their 1868 arrival on an early passenger train into Laramie City. Mr. and Mrs. Ivinson were one of the early couples who invested both entrepreneurial ventures and cultural development in their new community, two critical elements necessary for a town to succeed. The *Laramie Republican* reported, “Few persons have more closely associated their lives with the intimate life of the community than have she and her husband. They came when Laramie was so new that there was not a wooden building here, and, with the exception of brief intervals, they have made their abiding place here. It can be truthfully said that they brought their whole lives into the midst of the living here, and long ago became part and parcel of the great throbbing heart of the City.” The Ivinsons were extraordinary English folks who invested themselves and their fortune to assist with that growth of Laramie. The Ivinsons were proud naturalized citizens prior to their arrival in Laramie. The Ivinsons’ mansion is a special remnant of the history of Laramie, Wyoming, and the expansion of the West. It is a vivid reminder of the stalwart spirit and grand vision of the pioneering families and individuals who settled this area of Wyoming. It was a culmination of their arduous work and savvy vision for the adolescent town, and it was their residence until Jane’s passing in 1915. Edward and his family continued to occupy the house until 1921.

The mansion was constructed on Lot No. 178 in the original UPRR plat for Laramie City, Wyoming Territory. The full square block of land had been purchased by Edward Ivinson from the Union Pacific Railroad for \$400 in 1870. The Ivinsons planted 200 trees on the property in June 1871 and allowed the lot to be used as a city park for the new families establishing themselves in Laramie. The only restriction was that the area should be kept clean so that everyone could enjoy it. This lot was to become the site of the Ivinson mansion. The claim title was not completed until 1877.

W. E. Ware, an architect who designed many buildings in Laramie before moving to Salt Lake City, designed the Ivinson mansion. Frank Cook was the contractor who built the home. The house, of native stone and wood, cost close to \$25,000 to build and with necessary furnishings, improvements on the grounds, and the addition of a barn (carriage house), the estate would ultimately cost \$40,000, an incredible sum in that last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

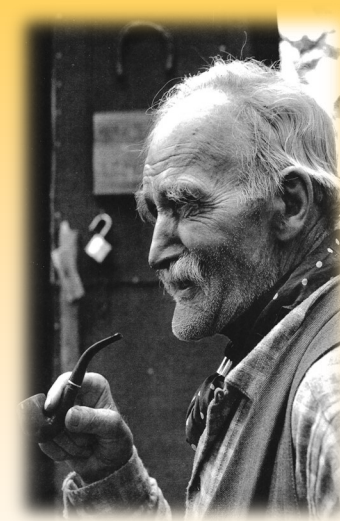
The Ivinsons’ mansion was the talk of the town when ground was broken in May 1892. The newspaper of the day, the *Daily Boomerang*, described it as a “palatial structure” which would “be for a long time a monument of (the Ivinsons’) wealth, good taste, and enterprise. Nothing, therefore, would be of more interest than a description of this magnificent structure, which within and without, will be one of the architectural and art attractions of Laramie.” Ivinson incurred the wrath of the editor of the *Laramie Sentinel* by contacting Brigham Young and obtaining the services of the expert stonemasons who had just completed work on the Latter-Day Saints Temple in Salt Lake City. The basement and first floors have a stone exterior while the two floors above have a wood and shingle exterior. The sandstone blocks on the mansion and the Carriage House came from a quarry north of Laramie, as did much of the sandstone used throughout Laramie and on the UW campus.

The house was completed in late 1893, and the family moved in. They employed a staff of six to eight servants, many of the maids being girls who had arrived in the United States, mostly from Norway, to join their brothers or sweethearts. This gave them a chance to become adjusted to a new and different environment, and most went on to marry and stay in the region. When the mansion was first built, the heat was radiant air, warmed by coal, which caused soot to settle on furnishings in the house. Mrs. Ivinson’s “white glove” checks of this disturbing effect caused the Ivinsons to install steam radiator heat later. Both types of heating fixtures can still be seen in the mansion’s rooms.

The house had hot air heat, electric lights, running water, and a sewage system, as well as the most elegant appointments of any house in town. Mrs. Ivinson designed the interior of the house. Family history tells that she traveled with her granddaughter Frances to the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1892 and again in 1893 to select furnishings, hardware, and fixtures, including doorknobs, light fixtures, the bathroom appointments, and stained-glass windows. The mansion had the latest in modern accoutrements. She even picked out an amazing \$394.00 “needle and douche” shower that “reached” every part of the body at once for the main bathroom on the second floor. The Queen Anne Victorian home was a prominent showpiece on Thornburgh Street (later renamed Ivinson Avenue) in the growing and prospering Laramie City. Wyoming had just become a State in 1890, and Ivinson and his supporters had high hopes that he would become the next governor. The stately home could serve him well for business and entertaining. Edward Ivinson lost the gubernatorial race, but he did indeed use the mansion for grand affairs. Mr. and Mrs. Ivinson were known for their lavish gatherings on their property, in the hospitable home, and at other sites around the town. From its completion in 1893 until Mr. Ivinson moved out in 1921, it served as their principal residence. In 1921 Edward formally deeded the property to the Cathedral Chapter of the Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming.

# The Range Rider

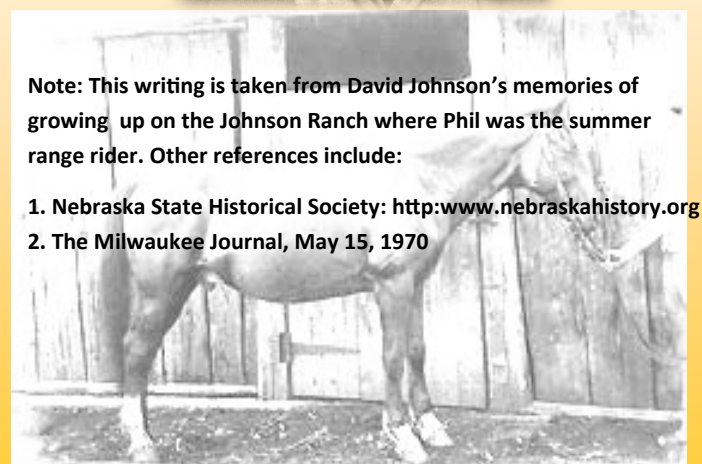
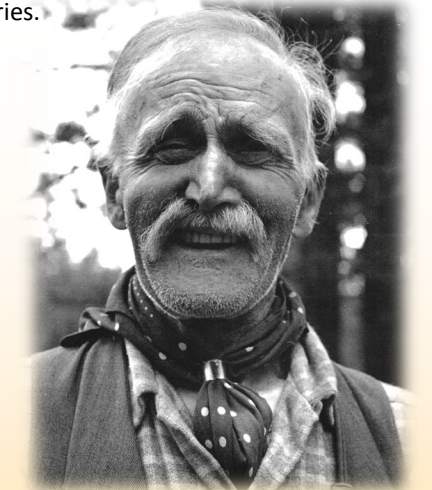
By David Johnson



Philetus Rathburn was born in New York in 1882. He never knew his parents. His home was an orphanage near the Brooklyn Bridge that was operated by the Children’s Aid Society. In 1889, Phil was placed on an orphan train and sent west. The following year, he was adopted in the small Central Nebraska town of Nelson by John Bickford, a local farmer. Phil wasn’t cut out for the farm life. In the late 1890’s, he left the farm and headed further west, seeking “fame and fortune” in

the wide-open spaces of Wyoming. Phil was a cowboy at heart. He ultimately settled in Southeastern Wyoming to work as a hired hand and range rider for the ranchers in the Big Laramie River Valley. He never married, never drove a car and never lived in a “traditional” home, always residing in a cabin or a bunkhouse. His worldly assets included a horse, a saddle, a pipe and the clothes on his back. Most ranches had permits to run their cattle on the Medicine Bow National Forest during the summer months. The ranchers had cattle drives that terminated at the entry gates to the forest on June 16th, the date the U.S. Forest Service had decreed to let the grazing begin. At an elevation of 9,000 feet, the weather was cool, the trees provided plenty of shade and the grass was lush, an ideal place for livestock. As a range rider, it was Phil’s responsibility to ensure the cattle were evenly distributed throughout the approximately 50 square mile section of the forest abutting the Colorado border. Phil’s summer home was a rustic log cabin near Fox Park, a small logging settlement. There was a corral near the cabin where Phil’s horse, who was also his closest friend and confidant, resided. Since there was no electricity or running water, he prepared his meals on an old cook stove fired with wood from the many lodgepole pines nearby. Beans were a popular menu item as evidenced by the growing heap of cans adjacent to the outhouse. With a bandana around his neck, an old vest over his tattered shirt, chaps protecting his well-worn jeans and a sweat-soaked hat that had been faded by the high-altitude sun, Phil was a colorful character. He smoked a pipe and his cabin smelled of a mélange of wood and tobacco smoke along with the distinctive aroma of a cowboy who bathed infrequently. His language was earthy, the product of too many years around cows and horses and little time with people of “refinement”. It’s fortunate the cows didn’t understand what he was saying to them, for they might have taken offense. When the weather turned cold, the cows left the forest of their own accord. While they co-mingled during the summer, they all knew where home was and there was no need to sort them out. Each herd ended up at the right

ranch, ready to spend the winter in 2 “the lowlands” at an elevation of 7,400 feet. Phil and his horse headed to the lowlands too. His winter home was a two-room log bunkhouse on the Erickson Ranch where he provided labor and looked after Mrs. Erickson, an elderly widow whose son, Martin, lived on a nearby ranch. Unlike the mountain cabin, the bunkhouse had electricity to power a bare light bulb in each room. A big wood burning cook stove provided heat. Water came from a pitcher pump in the front room. An outhouse completed the amenities. Phil spent his last summer in the mountains confined to the cabin due to his declining health. The ranchers took turns looking in on him, making sure he had enough food and tending to his horse. The cows were left to fend for themselves. We visited Phil one afternoon and found him in bed. As always, he was chewing tobacco and, as we chatted, he would occasionally expectorate in the direction of a spittoon placed against the wall across from his bed. Sometimes he hit it and sometimes he didn’t. The wall and the floor near the spittoon were stained richly brown. After countless hours and miles in the saddle, Phil died in 1975 at the age of 93. From a New York orphanage to the open spaces of the West, his life was a colorful slice of Americana. An appropriate inscription on his headstone might have been the title of a May 1970 article about him from the Milwaukee Journal: “He’s the Last Real Cowboy: No Wristwatch or Fancy Shirt.” Rest in peace Phil, you are not forgotten for you enriched us all and you live on in our memories.



**Note: This writing is taken from David Johnson’s memories of growing up on the Johnson Ranch where Phil was the summer range rider. Other references include:**

1. Nebraska State Historical Society: <http://www.nebraskahistory.org>
2. The Milwaukee Journal, May 15, 1970

# JUST BE GOLD! *What Does the Museum Have Going This Summer?*

**There are weddings every weekend on the beautiful East Lawn**

**Receptions in the Stunning Alice Hardie Stevens Event Center.**

**The Museum is OPEN Full time hours—  
10:00 to 4:00 and Sunday afternoons 1-4:00**

**Junior Docents are back to give inspiring guided tours to our visitors.**

**Two *Tea on Tuesdays* have been held; one more happens July 19 and is SOLD OUT!**

**Art Fest on the Iverson Lawn is Statehood day, July 10th, 10:00 to 3:00—Artists, Authors, Friends!**

**Evening at the Iversons’—LPM’s signature event is Saturday, August 20, 2022.**

**Wyoming Women’s History House downtown has been open since March. Summer Hours: 10:00 to 4:00**

**Historic characters are part of the special events held there. *Sip and Savor History* nights will also involve these wonderful historic re-enactors from The Unexpected Company (TUC). Sponsors of learning events at the Women’s History House are Wyoming Women’s Council, TUC and local donors.**

**The long awaited compilation of the history articles written by Judy Knight, Kim Viner, Konnie Cronk and others is on the Museum shelves. The official book launch will happen July 1st, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Women’s History House.**

**There will be 50th Anniversary Commemorative Iverson Mansion book & Lap throw out in time for the August *Evening*.**



In its interior, the mansion reflects the Queen Anne style with a multi-story living space, rooms which open into each other (rather than being separated by hallways), intricate wood trim, fireplaces lined with glazed tiles, a prominent wooden staircase, and ornate metal doorknobs and hardware. The three-story mansion has 11,726 square feet of livable space. The basement has 3,070 square feet; the first floor has 3,306; the second floor has 3,063; and the third floor has 2,289 square feet. The Iversons lived mainly on the first and second floors totaling 6,369 square feet. By comparison, most new three-bedroom homes in Laramie have about 2,000 square feet of living space. The first and second floors are comprised of seventeen rooms, including the foyers and bathrooms. This count does not include closets and pantries. If one counts the basement and third floor, without closets, the room count is thirty. Including large closets and the pantry, the total room count is thirty-three. There are three porches on the first floor and there is a balcony outside the Guest Bathroom on the second floor.

The Iverson mansion lawn and gardens are some of the most beautiful in Laramie. It is a step back in time to walk the grounds of the Museum. The Laramie Garden Club devotes hundreds of volunteer hours each year to ensure that the full square block around the Queen Anne mansion is lush and true to the flora history of the area. The flower gardens, lilacs, aspens and grand evergreens, accented by commemorative benches make the perfect setting for outdoor weddings which occur from May through October on the Museum’s East Lawn.

## II. JANE IVINSON MEMORIAL CATHEDRAL SCHOOL FOR GIRLS (Fondly referred to as Iverson Hall)

Initially, and in accordance with his wife’s wishes, Iverson proposed to donate his home as a facility for aged and indigent ladies. When doctors recommended the stairs would be difficult for the ladies, the Episcopal Church voiced that could use it well as a boarding board school for girls. On April 20, 1921, the front-page story in the *Laramie Boomerang* gave complete details of Mr. Iverson’s bequest to honor his wife Jane’s request and her vision to ever improve what Laramie had to offer. Iverson indicated that he was prepared to vacate the house as soon as the church desired. With the impending dissolution of his brief second marriage in 1921, Edward donated the grand Iverson mansion to the Episcopal Missionary District. It was remodeled to be suitable for a boarding school. Some of the renovation and refurbishing was undoubtedly required due to Mrs. Augusta Haley Iverson having taken several of the furnishings, the carpets, and many of the light fixtures in the mansion with her when she and Edward were divorced. More than \$20,000 was necessary to refurnish and refurbish the stately home.

The Wyoming Episcopal Church’s official newspaper, *The Wyoming Churchman*, announced in its April 1921 edition that, “What will be known as ‘Iverson Hall’ stands almost in the center of the most beautiful square in Laramie. There are many and beautiful shade trees, and fruit trees, while the yearly profusion of roses and other flowers, have been the delight of the passer-by, and will ensure the happiest surroundings for generations of Wyoming girls.” The *Laramie Republican* of August 10, 1921, observed, “This is a wonderful opportunity for the ranch girls and others living in remote regions, where it is impossible to procure high school or junior high school instruction. Tuition of \$450 per year will be charged. This pays for room and board, books, house laundry, and extra teaching to be given.”

The house had a parlor, reading rooms, dining rooms, a library, a chapel, an office, principal’s apartment (in the Iversons’ suite), hospital room, and a dormitory. The girls attended the University of Wyoming Secondary Training School (affectionately known as “Prep” by students and staff) for academics, and received religious, moral, deportment, music, dance, physical and social education (and constant supervision) at Iverson Hall. The statuesque residence turned out to be perfect for those girls living outside of town on ranches and in smaller locales in the Rocky Mountain region to have a place to attend school.

## III. THE DARK PERIOD

The Iversons’ home property was not financially endowed, however. Given to the Episcopal Diocese for use as a school for girls, as the 37-year era of the boarding school came to a close in 1957, the Diocese found it increasingly difficult to care for the high-maintenance property. Transportation to and from Laramie became reliable and interest in a school for girls dropped. For a time, the Episcopal church maintained the house as a temporary residence for visiting dignitaries and conferences. Later it was used as a boarding house, but that was dropped in the mid-1960s. University professors and other boarders helped sporadically as renters, but deterioration continued, and church administrators sought ways to keep their heads above water with the failing property. From that time until 1972, the house was empty. Vandals destroyed some of the handsome plate glass and stained-glass windows, damaged fixtures, and stole assorted items of value from the house. However, the Episcopal church also sold many fixtures to interested individuals. Leaded and stained-glass windows, light fixtures, and furnishings from the mansion were sold and given away, and the buildings took other hits from aging, weather, and lack of care. Transients ducked in to spend the night on its floors, and teens and adventurous 1960s University of Wyoming students found its many rooms and shadows to be the perfect place for late-night escapades. It became known as ‘the haunted, old Iverson Mansion’ in conversation. There are several stories circulating about ghosts in the Iverson mansion. They are all made up. The Iverson mansion is a happy, creaky old mansion with no ghostly residents. By the end of the 1960s, Diocese officials announced that they were interested in selling the property and began negotiating with businesses and speculators to sell the full square block for the creation of modern apartment buildings and parking spaces. It seemed that the beautiful and historic house was doomed to be demolished.

## IV. THE LARAMIE PLAINS MUSEUM

When the Episcopal Diocese announced that the Iverson mansion was threatened, Alice Hardie Stevens, a founder and President of the Laramie Plains Museum Association, led the community in a drive to save the historic property. Her goal was to provide a more spacious home for the museum while saving the Iverson mansion. Alice Stevens was a free-lance writer for the *Laramie Boomerang* newspaper, and a member of the Museum Association board of directors. She had a vision and a cause: she saw the historic Iverson property as the perfect home for Laramie’s museum and rallied the town through a series of newspaper articles and speaking engagements to save the landmark property from sale and destruction. Her tireless efforts and those of other passionate citizens who joined her crusade, were rewarded when the Museum Association was able to purchase the property in 1972 for \$120,000, thanks to an eleventh-hour federal grant for \$50,000 for “history preservation” from the National Park Service. Mrs. Stevens, Jane Love, and other significant museum members and supporters in the Laramie community, succeeded in raising over \$100,000 in contributions and grants through a nationwide appeal to save the mansion from demolition. Locally, funds were raised through a grocery store coupon collection project, sales of a Centennial cookbook, and other efforts. In 1972, the Laramie Plains Museum Association purchased the Iverson mansion, grounds, and outbuildings, using the monies raised in the fund drives and through the sale of the Neil Roach house previously bequeathed to the Association. The Iverson home and grounds were placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, and they were cleaned, marginally repaired, and gradually renovated so that it could hold the museum and its many accumulated artifacts.

In the fall of 1972, volunteers began moving artifacts into the mansion and in early 1973 the Museum was officially opened as Alice Hardie Steven was honored for her efforts. The reception hall named for her still heralds her outstanding achievement. The Laramie Plains Museum remains in the Iverson Mansion and on the distinctly distinguished property. It is now know more as a complex because of myriad expansions and impressive restored buildings adding to its preservation efforts and functions as a museum and community gathering place. Thanks to ongoing vision, fund raising, planning, and renovations coupled with donations of money, time, and expertise from museum members and residents of the Laramie community for nearly 50 years, the Iversons’ extraordinary home is the perfect setting for Laramie’s history.

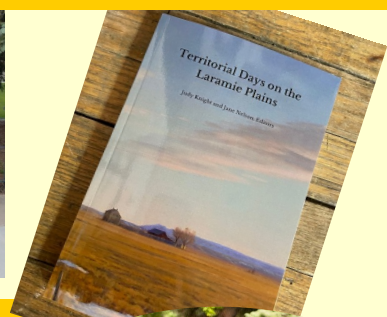


**Above:** Women’s History re-enactors: Germaine St. John: Nellie Tayloe Ross Tracy Blakeman: Esther Hobart Morris Bernie Horst: Eliza Stewart Boyd Valorie Clymer-Smit: Martha Boies Lorraine Fan Zee: Louisa Swain (Billie K Gross also portrays Louisa) Matt Blakeman: Judge John Howe



**JULY 10, 2022  
10:00 to 3:00**

**JULY 1, 2022  
Book Launch at Wyoming Women’s History House downtown**



**Left:** Smiles from old friends, Kathy Kearns and Denice Wheeler reconnecting at May’s Tea. **Right:** Stunning weddings and receptions continue at these very popular mansion and museum facilities.



**JUST BE GOLD!**

# TEA ON TUESDAY!

WE'RE BACK ON TRACK WITH THESE SPECIAL



**LEFT:** Marilyn Sinclair and LPM Curator, Konnie Cronk help our guest find their tables. **RIGHT:** Executive Assistant, Amy Allen is the wizard behind the reservation system so that our guests can gather with friends. We've continued to learn how best to make use of the new, expanded space in the Alice Hardie Ste-

vens Center and our attending ladies have been patient with us. The Teas have always been fully created, served and cleaned up by volunteers for the benefit of



**WEDDINGS, WEDDINGS, WEDDINGS!**  
The Ivinson Mansion property and its enhanced facilities make it the perfect place for such special events. We had **27** weddings from May through September and we're not done yet!

**ABOVE:** Executive Director, Mary

**Mountain** was one of those learning the ropes from the *Tea Ladies* when she and **Stevi Patterson** were new as volunteers in 1998. She remembers helping to carry dishes up and down from the 2nd floor of the Alice Hardie Stevens for each Tea. The kitchen then had no extra room to store the vintage cups, saucers and teapots.

**LEFT:** This photo captures our early Tea Room always packed to its brim. Service of Tea goodies was from the north wall of the room, with attendees standing in line with their plates. (With the Alice Hardie Stevens Center transformation, we now can accommodate double the amount of guests so much of the delectable foods are served to the tables on tiers. You can see **Alice Freeman** playing harp in the back near the large glass block window that was there prior to the historic 1910 back bar that now sits on that wall.

**BELOW:** **Alice Silver, Judy Knight and Dan Nelson** pose on the old stage with the artifacts to be used for a Tea program.

**LEFT:** The ladies pictured were the core creators of what we now know as *Tea on Tuesdays*. **Esther Kelley, Elinor Mullens, Sally Young, Win Bessey, Carolyn Nelson and Margaret Dickman** worked together to develop these charming events in an effort to raise funds to help with the curatorial work and needs of the young museum. The idea for special Teas came as the group was preserving the old Girls School scrapbooks. They saw the tea afternoons held in the Ivinson Mansion drawing room on Tuesdays for the girls to learn Tea and serving etiquette. These lovely women taught all of us that same style and grace (and great food) as they set the high standards for our elegant sweets, savories, and very successful Tea tradition.



# Garden Angels

JUST BE GOLD



*It's hard to realize that our wonderful friend, Carolyn Nelson, passed from this earth in May. As a nonprofit museum, trying desperately to make it in the Laramie community in the early years, Carolyn was a great gift to so many areas of consequence for this outstanding historic house property. Not only did she take on the straggly, wayward landscape to create lovingly-tended gardens, she personally made something of the curation of hundreds of artifacts in the Laramie Plains Museum collection. We have become a legitimately, well-curated museum because of Carolyn's early work. She was hands-on with restorations and had a loving, quiet way of looking for solutions to "getting the next thing done." Carolyn was one of the doers who helped fulfill the dream begun more than 50 years ago when the Ivinson Mansion was saved from destruction. Her work with Tea on Tuesdays is also a special story of strawberry tarts and genteel coordination for which we are forever grateful. Carolyn's got to be smiling, knowing that memorials in her name continue to gift "her" gardens and her legacy. Rest well, beautiful Carolyn.*



Laramie Garden Club members grace the Ivinson property each year, following in those early garden angel footsteps of Greta Neubauer and Carolyn Nelson, transforming the grounds into some of the most beautiful in Laramie—perfect for the weddings held on these gracious grounds. Pictured above are some of the angels: Dorothy Moore, Carol Hoff, Julia Fox, Annie Nelson, Carol Moore, Amy Fluet, and Sharon Leder. Other current LPM gardeners are Barb Rouse, Eliza Fay, Jenny Myers, and Steve Hoff. Thank you, everyone, for your loving work!

## Ivinson Memories

Kathy Keenan, Laramie, WY

My college boyfriend and I would frequently walk by the Ivinson mansion. We soon realized that it was deserted (some would even say "haunted!") We'd walk about the property and discovered, on the front porch, a broken wicker chair and a wooden stump. Here we'd sit for hours, holding hands, and dreaming as young lovers do.

Our favorite scenario was pretending to be Mrs. and Mrs. Ivinson. Instead of a broken chair and a stump, we'd be sitting on an elegant porch swing, dressed in our finest attire. My evening dress was of pink satered-silk with an off the shoulder neckline and trimmed in lace an tiny pink roses. I had a matching fan with ostrich feather to catch the evening breezes. My beau, as Mr. Ivinson, was in a ruffled linen shirt and fancy, cobalt brocade vest (to match his eyes, I liked to think.) The vest had a pocket for his father's gold watch. Matching herringbone trousers and jacket and a beaver fur top hat completed his attire. We imagined being served chilled drinks and tiny finger sandwiches from a silver tray by our faithful butler, Filmore. Never having enough nerve to enter the mansion, we'd speculate about the floor plan. If we were to live there, we would need large living and dining rooms to accommodate our friends and families when visiting. Were there enough bedrooms and bathrooms as well? Was there really a ballroom on the third floor? Our kitchen staff would have a large updated kitchen and quarters for them to stay.

Ah—the dreams of young lovers, they often seriously fade with the reality of days, but sometimes they come true. It is assured that we all need to sit on porches with loved ones and dream. I would never imagined that more-than -50 years later, I'd be a Life Member of the extraordinary museum set in "our" mansion and participate in events each year celebrating history and community. Here's to the Golden Anniversary of this wonderful museum of dreams.

# 2022 "Evening" Just be Gold!



**EVENING AT THE IVINSONS 2022 is our 50th Anniversary Celebration on Saturday, August 20, on the Ivinson Mansion grounds.**

**No-host cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, music, raffle and auction viewing begin at 5:00 p.m. 6:30 p. m. dinner in the Alice Hardie Stevens Event Center. Silent Auction results and a brief Live Auction begin as dessert and coffee are served.**

**There is no specific era costume dress this year. Come as glam as you would for a Golden Anniversary Party!**

**Cost is \$150 per person; \$275 per couple; \$1500 per Sponsor Table for 8.**

**We'll have a 50-50 Raffle in honor of the 50th Anniversary: \$25 each or \$100 for 5 tickets. Other raffle items remain at lower cost buy-in. Our meal celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Museum being in the Ivinson Mansion, is Wyoming beef or a Vegetarian option provided by THE HILTON GARDEN INN.**

**Invitations will be sent in early July for your phone or email RSVP to the Laramie Plains Museum office—742-4448. All credit and debit cards are accepted with your reservations. We can also offer invoices following the event for all Evening purchases. For the service and comfort of our guests, only 200 seats are available in the Event Center, so reply as soon as possible after you receive your invitation. If you're not on our invitation list, please call the office so we can get you included.**

## Ivinson Memories

Douglas MacDonald, Grizzly Flats, CA

One day in the fall of 1966, age 18, on my way from Safeway back to UW, I entered the abandoned Ivinson Mansion through the unlocked front door. Everywhere I stepped there was a thick layer of broken glass and remnants of broken furnishings. The image that remains most vivid over the years is the elaborate surround-shower in the master bathroom. The only two stained glass windows then remaining undamaged, high above in the main stairwell, helped me appreciate how beautiful the place must have been at one time. When I left through the front door, I notice that its detailed filigreed brass door knob set was intact and in perfect condition, including matching interior and exterior backing plates. Only the keyed tumbler was missing. Using my pocket knife as a screwdriver, I removed the entire set, screws and all, and put everything in the Safeway bag along with my groceries.

In California, in 1977, I installed the hardware set on the door of my circa-1919 Dutch Colonial home in Woodland. I later sold the house to a friend, which included the Ivinson hardware. I visited Laramie around 2000 and took my first nostalgic tour of the restored mansion. Back in California, I told the owner of the Dutch Colonial that whenever he sold the house, I wanted to be able to remove the hardware. This came to pass in 2006. I wrote a letter the museum sometime after, explaining my 1966 deed, and promising to redeem myself on my next trip to Laramie.

I handed over these items today, 16 July 2011, to your gracious and genuinely appreciative staff. Thanks for keeping history alive!

*Mary's Note: I was truly touched that Mr. MacDonald so cautiously contacted me, asking if I wanted this original piece of history he had absconded with so long ago. A piece of our history that Mr. and Mrs. Ivinson touched again and again! Of course I did! I will always be grateful for friends of the Ivinson Mansion, like Doug, who give items that help us elevate the history we showcase here. The beautiful brass hardware that Doug returned is mounted on a tabletop stand near the front door from where he removed it, and is touchable by every visitor who comes to the Mansion. It is an excellent slice of our history. Thanks, Doug!*