



Historic Ivinson Mansion
Laramie Plains Museum
Newsletter

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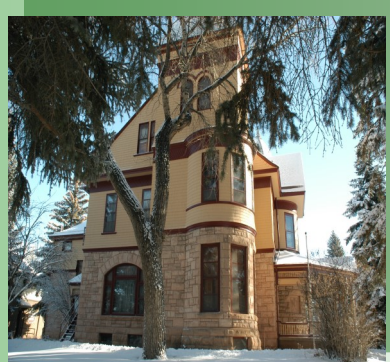
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The wonderfully historic Ivinson Mansion and its stunning grounds and outbuildings are able to herald Albany County history because of many factors, not the least of which are the volunteers above, gathered here in 1972. **Jane Love** (seated 2nd from right in the photo) and her coupon clippers, counters, gatherers, and sorters were a major reason the historic Queen Anne, so important to Laramie's history, was able to be saved. The coupon drive united our Laramie community in the effort to *Save the Mansion* as moms, dads, students, and organizations gave their coupon savings to assist both the Mansion and the Ivinson Hospital funding drives.

Other factors critical to salvaging the Mansion from the wrecking ball were **Alice Hardie Stevens** and **Laramie Woman's Club**. Alice Hardie Stevens had the dream and the writing skills—for newspaper articles and grant requests promoting the project and the history—and Laramie Woman's Club, who had been saving artifacts of history since the Club's formation in 1898, joined in many aspects of the massive effort. Read about the Woman's Club's work to help with the very first museum building in the article on the reverse side of the membership form in the center of the newsletter. That museum, started in members' garages, City Hall and courthouse closets and then into the Neal Roach home, is the basis for the rich collection of the Laramie Plains Museum.

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Historic Ivinson Mansion

Laramie Plains Museum

MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER

JOIN US IN CELEBRATION OF 50 YEARS PRESERVING AND SHOWCASING HISTORY ON THE IVINSON MANSION PROPERTY

Begin or renew your support for this very special beacon of Laramie, Albany County, and Wyoming history. Everything you need for membership is inside these pages. Even better than a solicitation letter, our newsletter gives you a visual on all that your membership supports and encourages. Members are the reasons we are here and can continue to succeed. We invite you to be part of this very special group telling and preserving our community's story. As a member, please also vote for the candidates who are wanting to fill our open Board positions. The ballots are on the last interior page of the newsletter.



1972



2022

February 2022 Issue



ANNUAL REFLECTIONS on the previous year.

From Mary Mountain, LPM Executive Director

LPM showed the same kind of cautious resurgence to activities during the second year of the pandemic as the national trends. We had approximately 18,232 people on the grounds. In our peak years, we can easily have 25,000 to 30,000 people to the museum complex, here with tours and events. We were down with close contact events and tours—at 80% of our lower budget projection for tours—about 4374 folks touring the Mansion for guided tours or simple walk-throughs. School classroom tours were very limited—about 1/3 of student groups touring the Mansion instead of the usual almost—1000 students here for tours, as junior docent volunteers and academic research). We did take the “show on the road” to tell history in classrooms, but even then there were limited requests for that, and Mrs. Ivinson and her personal maid had to wear masks and shields so were quite differently presented than they usually are.

We showed great increase over 2020 numbers in rentals for events and weddings with almost 170% above our moderate projections as we climbed out of the many cancellations of 2020. We held 29 East Lawn events, including wedding ceremonies. 37 wedding receptions were held in the Alice Hardie Stevens Center, 61 events—from memorials to fundraisers, graduations, luncheons, our *Teas on Tuesdays* and *Evening*—all definitely with social distancing, sanitizer, masks, restrictions and numbers of attendees down in all areas. Many folks were still very hesitant to participate in group events, but families chose to power through in 2021 with important family events like weddings and memorials.

Our members and donors stepped up in much greater support in 2021, as I’m sure they guessed the impact on us—memberships and local grants responses were both up over 150% Donations *took the cake* with more than a 350% increase over normal projections—as regular donors and other friends gave to the vision of the Carriage House update and renovation, as well as republication and new publishing of our books. Locals and visitors supported the Museum through purchases at the Gift Shop so that we showed a \$4000 increase in sales. With the assistance of a 2nd year of the government PPP loan (payroll protection program) we were able to cover 2.5 months of payroll in each of the Covid years to retain our staff throughout the 2020 and 2021 impacts. We survived and actually thrived in many ways because of our members and donors thoughtfully realizing the Covid dilemmas and reaching out with extra in donations. 2021 was, actually, a very good year, considering.

On a personal note, I am going to begin to phase out of juggling so many duties as the LPM Executive Director. In late August, after our grand Golden Anniversary *Evening at the Ivinsons*, I will be handing those reins to another, but I am very confident that your/our beautiful Museum will continue on its positive path. We have a solid staff who know what our mission is and respect it and how far we have all come since the early days. We still honor and respect the Laramie Woman’s Club and Albany County Historical Society who so smartly joined to form the Museum Association in 1966, and with whom we walk in our work for history preservation. We have used the past 20 years to develop necessary and impressive income streams—the Mason Loft Condos, the upscale renovations for events and productions in the Alice Hardie Stevens Center, the charming Gift Shop which will soon be even more exciting with the Carriage House dream of restoration and expansion, the many levels of membership (Iverson Circles and more) and the increased, sustaining stewardship of our donors and friends. We are very fortunate to be able to look to the future and know that our beloved historic house museum complex is financially secure in its future. That was always my goal—to sustain this stunning site of history for present and future generations to learn from, appreciate, and enjoy. I feel that I can move on to my next chapter confidently. I have been asked to help elevate and celebrate our rich history of suffrage at the Wyoming Women’s History House downtown, and I am excited to help with that work. I’ll still be around, still offering my helping hands at LPM. Don’t worry, you’re not losing me; you’re gaining a volunteer—one of the most valuable components of the Laramie Plains Museum!

Joyce Wright was part of the Laramie Plains Museum’s early administration. Here she is working accessioning cards and greeting the public in what is now the Mansion’s Smoking Room exhibit. Note the ash tray and coffee cup completing her desk-scape; items of the era that would never would be seen in the Museum now. We are grateful to those early dreamers and doers who laid the groundwork for all the progress that has been made over these 50 years. We stand proudly on the shoulders of those who dreamed Laramie would one day have a beautiful museum to showcase its history and worked hard to make it happen.



The following is a report, simply entitled “Museum” and presented exactly (including the two spaces between sentences and no possessive apostrophe in Woman’s) as **Mrs. John W. (Marjorie) Hamilton, Laramie Woman’s Club President 1967-1969** typed it. I found it in our files and think it bears great witness to those early days before we were able to obtain the Iverson Mansion as the perfect home for the Laramie Plains Museum Association’s collections.

MUSEUM

The Laramie Womans Club is indeed happy to report a dream come true. The Laramie Womans Club has been a historically minded group since its beginning in 1898. It has maintained some historical articles wherever a hope could be found for them. In 1944 the museum was taken over by the Albany County Historical Society. In 1956 there was no longer a home for the museum and it was moved into storage.

The Laramie Womans Club never abandoned their idea for a museum. Mrs. Alice Stevens past president of the Laramie Womans Club and as president of the Albany County Historical Society helped influence members of the society to draw up a corporation called the Laramie Plains Museum, Inc., in order that they could collect dues and make plans for a permanent museum. The Laramie Womans Club check for \$25.00 was one of the first donations for this museum. Many members of the Laramie Womans Club became members of the Laramie Plains Museum, Inc. and made substantial donations to it. On May 18, 1967 a dream came true—a home for the museum. This was to be donated by H. N. Roach (his mother was a charter member of the Laramie Womans Club). There was a stipulation that \$35,000 must be raised within 6 months of his death in order to obtain his home and its contents. There were mumbblings in Laramie that this amount could not be raised. Mr. Roach was not at all well and the doctor gave him only a short time to live. In June the executive and corporation officers of the Laramie Womans Club met and a motion was drawn up to donate \$5,000.00 to the museum fund. This was to be presented at a special meeting in July. It was their wish that this donation be made while Mr. Roach was still living but this was not to be. Our meeting was on the day of his funeral. The Laramie Womans Club voted unanimously to donate \$5,000.00 to the Laramie Plains Museum, Inc. This really gave a boost to the museum fund and the money started coming in from civic organizations, clubs—small and large, school children and personal donations. In November with only two months to go there were murmurings that the money could not be raised in time. So again the Laramie Womans Club donated an additional \$1,000.00. In December, 1967 the goal of \$35,000.00 had been reached. Now, on Feb. 23, 1968 a total of \$47,694.00 had been donated to the museum. By April, 1968 historical articles can be moved into the H. N. Roach home.

The money that we were able to donate was money that had been raised in many ways by our club women over many, many years. There was always a dream of a permanent museum so that our children could learn first hand our local history. Now, this museum articles that have been displayed by the Laramie Woman’s Club and many more can be seen by local people as well as thousands of tourists.

We cannot thank Mrs. Stevens and Kay Greenaway enough for all the work they have done to promote the museum. They are indeed wonderful members of the Laramie Womans Club. Mrs. Stevens and Mrs. F. A. Holliday (both past presidents of Laramie Womans Club) compiled the history of the Laramie Womans Club part in the museum and the scrap book. We want to thank them for all the work they have done. The Laramie Womans Club is extremely please with the community cooperation in behalf of the museum. It has been most gratifying to be able to help in this worthwhile Community Improvement Project.



By Mary Mountain, LPM Executive Director

One of my very favorite exhibits we have in the Museum now is the **Maid’s Room**. During the *12 Days of Christmas* Holiday Open House in December, the curatorial department worked their magic presenting a *maid a milking* in accordance with the song. Nestled at the back of the 2nd floor of the Mansion, near the service backstairs and tidily between the guest/maids’ bathroom and the fanciful Noodle & Douche multi-spigoted shower’s main bath, is a charming abode created for Mrs. Iverson’s personal maids and other specific domestic workers for the Mansion. Often there were as many as seven employed domestics coming to the house each day for jobs as cooks, clothing washers, house cleaners, gardeners, butlers, and personal assistants.

The 1906 census tells us that **French immigrant, Carl Vellier, was the hostetler (horseman)** for the Iverson family, and that **Frank Melchior, gardener for the Iversons, immigrated from Germany. Ragna Dreslrold, a domestic for the Iverson household, immigrated from Norway,** and from the 1910 census appears to be just 20 years old. **Mary Blunt, the Iversons’ housekeeper, immigrated from England. Edna Stone, from Colorado, was a mere 18 when she was a domestic servant,** according to the 1920 Census and her story told to our curator, Konnie Cronk by her descendants.

I am especially touched by this exhibit because we give names and value to these immigrants, these special helpers coming to this new land and the wildness of the West.. Folks who are often lost to our stories of settlement and who are rarely named or photographed are showcased here. I am delighted that our curatorial wizards have chosen to highlight their stories. Come view this important exhibit!

VOLUNTEERS EXTRAORDINARE

We are sincerely grateful for the fine service we receive from the Board of Directors of the Laramie Plains Museum Association

Christel Walrath, President

Debi Ockers, Vice President

Brie Blasi, Secretary

Greg Bauman

Cheri Bellamy

Bernie Horst

Karen Lange

RJ Lara

Lorraine Van Zee

John Nutter leaving as Director/Secretary
Cheri Bellamy leaving as Director/Vice President

The January 31, 1974 *Boomerang* newspaper announced the Laramie Plains Museum Board and staff, including, left to right, Jack Corbett, Elizabeth Hoffman, Vallie Dunn, Joyce Wright, Ed McGraw, Zoe Carr, Charles Parker, Mildred Roberts, William P. Rice Jr., and Oliver Knight.



As we offer the ballots of our two new excellent candidates to the Board, we also say good-bye to the special insight and advice of those stepping down. It has been a pleasure to have John Nutter again for another term (one of many over these years) and the knowledge that he will still be with us as recording secretary. Although Brie is more than capable and willing to take our meeting minutes, John wanted to offer that service so he could stay in touch with *his* museum. Cheri Bellamy also leaves us to actually have some retirement and travel time with her husband, Bill, and their kids and grandkids. She has served us well and we will still get to have Cheri in our museum realm as a docent for tours. Docents are very special angels for telling our history story, so we are happy to have her stay with us in that service.

CANDIDATES FOR 2022

LARAMIE PLAINS MUSEUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

LPM

TANNER EVANS

"I'm originally from Riverton, Wyoming, so earned my Associate's Degree from Central Wyoming College. I decided after that, I had had enough of Riverton life, so I came on down the road to finish up college at the University of Wyoming. I've always been a big fan of reading and writing, as well as history, so it seemed to me the best way to combine those pursuits was to get a degree in English Literature. I also decided for my job prospects a minor in business was a good idea, too. Fresh out of college in 2016, I gained employment with First Interstate Bank in Laramie and I've been here ever since. My current role is as a commercial lender for the bank. I really enjoy my job, and love that it's allowed me to stay in Laramie, which I now consider my home town. Jake Felton was my connection to this opportunity with the LPMA Board. He enjoyed his terms on the Museum Board and recommended it as my next step to good outreach within the Laramie community. I have been working with Mary Mountain in a couple of other ways so I am eager to be a contributing member of this significant museum family."

SCOTT MORTON

Scott Morton is a Wyoming native who has retired from an extremely varied career as a ranch hand, building contractor, mechanic, professional engineer, mechanical engineering senior design instructor, and inventor; being a named inventor on ten patents covering an equally wide range of fields. He had also experimented with novel, small wind power systems, rebuilt an off-grid power system, and worked on the restoration of a Victorian home; a place he called "The Temple of Our Lady of Perpetual Construction." Since retiring he has devoted his skills to "shopping" in his personal workshop, tinkering, restoring and displaying antique cars, building automated control systems, and writing creative instead of technical works. Because he loves preserving and renovating, Scott will be a wonderful and very insightful addition to our Board of Directors.

Use the ballots below to vote for candidates. Don't hesitate to write in a candidate if you know of a good person who might be interested. It always helps us to know of others who might be a smart fit for the Museum.

Family and Benefactor memberships use both ballots.

Return these hardcopies ballots to the museum in time for the count at the Annual Meeting, February 20, 2022

OR let us know your votes by email, if you don't mind us simply entering them from a secure email.

Send to lpmdirector@laramiemuseum.org and place the word "Votes" in the subject line. This can save you time, a stamp or a drive over here if that electronic method feels comfortable to you.

2022 Ballot Laramie Plains Museum Board of Directors	
_____	Tanner Evans
_____	Scott Morton
_____	write-in option

2022 Ballot Laramie Plains Museum Board of Directors	
_____	Tanner Evans
_____	Scott Morton
_____	write-in option

Laramie Plains Museum Celebrates 50 Years in the Ivinson Mansion



Parts of this year's celebration are guest authors, reminiscing or originally writing about different events and times that brought us to eventually house Albany County history, so uniquely, in the Ivinson Mansion and Carriage House. You'll read about the **Laramie Woman's Club** involvement with *coming to the rescue* for the Roach House to hold the first Museum collection on the reverse side of the membership form in the center of this newsletter, and below, **Fred Ockers**, former executive director of the Albany County Tourism Board, reminisces about the days when our now-beautiful mansion was yearning for some tender, loving care. Fred and wife, Debi, have been very important to that care and these 50 years of preservation.

FLASHLIGHT TOURS! By Fred Ockers

It was 1971 and one of the lesser-known grassroots efforts to save the once-opulent Ivinson Mansion involved "Flashlight Tours" on the property. Early docents, including Fred and Debi Ockers, would provide tour participants tidbits regarding the Ivinson family, ostensibly two of Laramie's first community benefactors, and all that they were involved with in Laramie's early history. While the basement was unsafe, the majority of the tours were conducted on the first floor with limited access to the top two floors. No electrical power, and with only limited light coming in through windows that had not been boarded up, necessitated the use of flashlights. Stained glass windows had been pirated, most of the lighting fixtures gone, the floors, banister and staircase were in disrepair and most of the interior furnishings had been removed or stolen. Some prior cleaning and tidying up was done to insure docent and visitor safety. The mansion's 1892 construction and unique late-Victorian features were detailed during the tours, noting that it was regarded as the most significant residence in Laramie at its completion. Edward and Jane Ivinson's path to Laramie and their many contributions were part of the informal script used by the docents. As memory serves us, we believe that members of two local organizations, the Laramie Woman's Club and the Albany County Historical Society, as well as Mr. Danny Nelson, provided the historical information for us to use during the tours.

These efforts to inform the community about the importance of saving the Ivinson Mansion along with Mrs. Alice Hardie Stevens and her fund-raising campaign resulted in over \$100,000 in contributions and grants. In 1972, the Laramie Plains Museum Association was able to purchase the Ivinson Mansion and will celebrate its **50th Anniversary** as Laramie's impressive historic house museum this year. The home was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, and volunteers and staff cleaned and basically repaired so that it could hold the museum, hauling in boxes of artifacts so that in 1973, the historic house could officially open the mansion to tours. There the incredible beacon of our history has remained over the past 50 years, restored to its original opulence and functionality. Docents still give tours to visitors, but without the need of flashlights.

Through our involvement over time we have found that one of Executive Director Mary Mountain's greatest attributes is her ability to keep many of those who were a part of the resurrection of this Laramie landmark actively involved in making sure that the Ivinson Mansion remains a regional must-see and community asset into the future. We continue to be volunteers and members of the LPMA with Debi serving on the Board for 8 years.



"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

-Eleanor Roosevelt

LARAMIE PLAINS MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL MEETING

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.

Alice Hardie Stevens Event Center

The Annual Meeting is open to all Museum Association members and the general public. It is our report on the business of the Museum, our vote for new directors to the LPMA Board, and our recognition of those who have given in extraordinary ways to the welfare of the Laramie Plains Museum.

We hope to see you here!

MUSEUM EVENTS IN 2022



February 20 Annual Museum Association Meeting
LPMA Members & Directors review the past year and look forward to even greater success in 2022. Election of new Board Directors.

March 1 Regular Tours of the Museum Begin Again Wyoming Women's History House downtown REOPENS for year-round programming.

April 8 Cheers for Volunteers!
An evening to appreciate and reconnect with the volunteers who help make our museum the outstanding place of history it is—even during Covid complications.

May 24 1st Tea on Tuesday
These special affairs are held one Tuesday a month in May, June and July. Harkening back to days of dressing for afternoon Tea, our volunteers make these beautiful events happen in support of the Museum's curatorial work. Call the Museum office if you would like to attend and are not on our list of regular patrons.

Mid-June Full-time Summer Touring Hours Begin as student docents volunteer at the museum

June 21 2nd Tea on Tuesday

July 10 Art Fest on the Ivinson Lawn
Artists, vendors and authors are on the Museum grounds the last Sunday of Jubilee Days celebrations. \$3 walk-thru tours of the Museum are also offered.

July 19 3rd Tea on Tuesday

August 20 Evening at the Ivinsons'
End-of-summer celebration on the Museum lawn raises awareness and funding for this special slice of history. This year we celebrate the Museum's Golden Anniversary in the Ivinson Mansion. Look for invitations in early July.

December 10-11 Holiday Open House
This beautiful Christmas tradition is our gift to the community. Complimentary tours of the decorated, historic Ivinson Mansion, complete with treats, music & holiday sales are part of the event.

Ladies attend Teas on Tuesday



Junior Docents give summer tours



The tradition of our Holiday Open House

Evening at the Ivinsons' is a highlight of our summer



50th ANNIVERSARY EVENING AT THE IVINSONS'

Mark your calendar to SAVE THE DATE of Saturday, August 20, 2022 for this year's fun celebration on the Ivinsons' lawn. It's the best garden party and our signature event each year, with great people, music, food and auctions in excellent support for this very special place. Call the Museum office, 307-742-4448, if you're not on our list of past attendees or you would like to be a Sponsor table. Let's make this Golden Anniversary our best Evening yet!

Historic Ivinson Mansion hosting the Laramie Plains Museum



Name _____
Address _____

Phone: _____
E-mail _____

Please make sure we have your correct name and address when you return this entire sheet.

2022 INVITATION TO MEMBERSHIP

ALL memberships are significant in support of the preservation and maintenance of this special historic place. Members receive admission to the Museum, 20% discount on purchases at the Carriage House Gift Shop, voting privileges, newsletters and notice of special events. Names of Benefactors and Businesses/Organizations at \$1,000 or above (and already-established Life Members) are permanently displayed in the Ivinson Mansion's *Hall of Donors*. Yearly Business Memberships are posted at obvious points around the Museum and noted in the newsletter. All Membership contributions receive acknowledgement, tax-deduction receipts and this year's member card. Benefactors and Life Members are not expected to fill out any kind of membership form. You're already here for Life! :)

- _____ \$ 1,000 + Life Benefactor
- _____ \$ 1,000 Business Benefactor (additional promotion, including website link)
- _____ \$ 250 Business Member (listed prominently for public view on Business poster)
- _____ \$ 500 Edward Ivinson Circle*
- _____ \$ 250 Jane Ivinson Circle*
- _____ \$ 150 Family
- _____ \$ 75 Individual
- _____ \$ 100 Senior Family
- _____ \$ 75 Senior Individual

* Edward and Jane Ivinson were instrumental to the development of Laramie as a thriving town. We have two membership categories reflecting their benevolence with cultural and economic development. LPM Members who contribute at these levels will be acknowledged on the *EI* plaque in the Ivinson Mansion's Hall of Donors.

_____ Please accept this additional support to help the Museum's restoration of the Carriage House

_____ Yes, I would like to make a gift to the future of the museum via the LPM Endowment Fund

\$ _____ TOTAL ENCLOSED

You are also able to renew or begin your membership on the Internet with *Paypal*. Just go to our website: www.laramiemuseum.org
If you run into a snag with this option, please call Mary or Amy at 307-742-4448

PAYMENT OPTIONS:

- Check (made out to Laramie Plains Museum)
- Credit Card (most all cards accepted): Account #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

The Laramie Plains Museum is a 501(c)3 non-profit association. Your membership and endowment support are tax-deductible to the fullest extent provided for by law. A receipt will be sent for *any* monetary contribution.

Laramie Plains Museum — 603 Ivinson Ave. — Laramie, WY — 82070 — 307-742-4448