“Recollections of a Pioneer Woman”

“Recollections of a Pioneer Woman” is a fascinating chapter of the 1945 book, The Tread of Pioneers, by Charles Leckenby. It features stories shared by Steamboat Springs’ founding mother, Mrs. James H. (Margaret) Crawford. Though we can only begin to imagine the trials and tribulations the young Crawford family experienced traveling into the frontier west, up and over the mighty Rocky Mountains, before the days of roads and any modern conveniences, Margaret’s memories shed light on the harsh realities:

“On the first day of May, 1873, we left our home near Sedalia, MO, to come to Colorado. There were seven large wagons and two hacks, four families and several young men. We arrived in Denver on the 4th of June (five weeks later). On the way across we saw thousands of buffalo and herds of antelope. We killed and ate lots of meat.”

“We crossed high streams, the teams getting into quicksand and going under water with wagons attached to them so they couldn’t swim. Such was the case when we crossed Sand Creek…we soon discovered we had camped over a rattlesnake den.”

“We were told that we could never get over the range with the loaded wagon, for there had only been a light express wagon over it to Hot Sulphur Springs. We had started and as many of you know, Mr. Crawford never went backward. So we showed them instead of being shown. We reached Hot Sulphur Springs and camped until we built our cabin.”

“We covered the cabin with bark until Mr. Crawford could find a good tree to rive some boards to cover it. During the summer for about a month it rained almost every afternoon. The bark had cracked open and we hadn’t a dry place to keep anything. Our children (ages seven, four and one) had the scarlet fever in this house. We put a wagon sheet over the bed to keep them dry.”

Journeys West: Pioneer Tales from the Wagon Trail

“Journeys West” Exhibit Opening – You’re Invited!

In 1873, the Crawford family loaded up their wagons in Sedalia, Missouri and headed to Colorado in search of a new life in the area that would eventually become Steamboat Springs. But how did they and other pioneer families do it? What were their routes? What did they eat? How did they survive sickness, inclement weather, wild animals, treacherous mountain passes with no roads and the grueling long hours? Drawing on diaries, personal memoirs, photographs and actual objects from Routt County’s first pioneer families, the Tread of Pioneers Museum’s newest exhibit, “Journeys West: Pioneer Tales from the Wagon Trail” explores what life was really like for these brave frontier adventurers.

As valued museum members, you’re invited to this feature exhibit opening reception and our Annual Meeting for museum members on Wednesday, June 15 from 5:00-7:00pm. The event will include wine and hors d’oeuvres as well as prize giveaways. Please join us!
The Squire/Hogue Family Exhibit

“As the younger generation takes over and many of us (has beens—the top hands of yesterday) fade out of the picture, let us hope and pray that this vast domain the pioneers loved so dear will be the heritage of our children and grandchildren to enjoy on down through the ages.” Reuben Squire

The Foundations of Steamboat exhibit honors families who have made a significant contribution to Northwest Colorado. With roots in Routt County since 1884, the Squire/Hogue family has successfully run a 100-year-old ranch and an iconic historic downtown building. The exhibit is told through the words of Margaret Squire Hogue, a light-hearted and hard-working rancher and mother. Highlighted are treasured family keepsakes and a 10th Mountain Division soldier’s love letters sent from the front lines of World War II.

Albert Squire, Margaret’s grandfather, came to Routt County in 1884 to homestead. Albert’s sons, Frank and Reuben Squire, worked for one of the county’s biggest cattlemen in history—James L. Norvell. Norvell deeded some ranch land to Frank Squire in 1917, and Squire successfully ran a sheep, cattle and hay operation until Margaret and Charles Hogue took over. Today, Margaret’s sons, Mike and Frank Hogue, continue the family ranch operation six miles west of Steamboat Springs. The original 130-year-old ranch house is still occupied by the family and received a Routt County Register of Historic Properties listing in 1995.

We invite you to come and learn more about this dedicated and hardworking Foundations family. The exhibit will be on display at the museum until March 2017.

Two Friends Meet

We opened the “Two Friends Meet” art exhibit on Friday, May 6 as part of the First Friday Art Walk events downtown. These limited edition fine art prints created by Gary Hawk, a renowned Western and wildlife watercolor artist, capture the mood, quality and simplistic lifestyle that is uniquely our local heritage. The prints were bequeathed to the Tread of Pioneers Museum by the Vernon Summer estate and feature Vernon Summer, the classic cowboy, working on his ranch in Sidney, just south of Steamboat Springs.

Vernon Summer was born in the town of Sidney in 1917. Summer’s grandfather came to the Yampa Valley in 1889 seeking land through the Homestead Act. Summer wanted to follow in his grandfather’s and father’s footsteps, and at age 17, he decided to spend the rest of his life ranching, farming, and caring for the land—which he did until his death at age 95.

According to friends, Summer was one of the “last true cowboys” who was dedicated to ranching and the local community. After meeting and befriending Summer, Hawk selected Summer as a model because according to Hawk, “Vernon was the quintessential cowboy. It was his character, you could just tell. It was everything, the way he stood, the way he talked, his walk, he was a true cowboy. He was one of the greatest ranchers of his time and he looked the part too.” We hope you will stop by the museum soon to see the true spirit of our Western heritage preserved through this timeless art.
Volunteer Spotlights

Cheri Daschle
I am a 4th generation native. My Great Grandpa John Brunner homesteaded in South Routt County around 1905. In 1916, my dad's mom, Mary Officer Brunner, was the first teacher at the newly constructed Mesa Schoolhouse. Now I help the museum with programs at the Mesa School! Two of my favorite things are Routt County history and working with kids. Being a volunteer at the Tread of Pioneers Museum provides the opportunity to be involved with both. I love learning more about my hometown and our county, being involved with the transcription of local stories, and working at the front desk. Anytime there is an occasion to help host a student tour or make a presentation in a classroom, it's delightful!

Tiffany Wither Leeson
I am a 4th generation Steamboat local, married with two teenage daughters, a yoga therapist, and librarian. I love to garden, hike, and play with my family. I have served on the museum board for six years. My passion for the museum stems from knowing my own history and wanting to share it with others. With knowing multiple generations, there is a sense of longevity that needs to be preserved. That takes money, so my passion is really in fundraising. I love the Festival of Trees because it is also a ‘friend’ raiser. The Festival is special because it enables the museum to raise money, bring generations together for an annual event, and promote storytelling, which is really the best way to preserve our history.

Mike Cook
I was raised in Steamboat Springs, and after graduating from high school in 1970, I spent the next 30 years with the Air Force, involved in air base facility maintenance and engineering at locations all around the world. Upon retirement in 2003, I moved back to Steamboat into my father, Gene Cook’s home in Strawberry Park. To keep busy, I’ve become involved in a number of local organizations, including serving five years on the Tread of Pioneers board, the last three years as Treasurer. I enjoy local history and our efforts to capture some of it before it vanishes with the passing on of so many of our older residents. I enjoy helping in the museum and have worked on a number of our facility projects.

*Museum Receives History Colorado Tools for Students*

Tread of Pioneers Museum staff received training from Denver’s History Colorado Center to implement two new Colorado history programs in Routt County elementary school classrooms (K-5). These two programs, “Western Work” and “Moving Day,” are extensive hands-on learning kits that include large floor maps, artifacts, historical photographs and fact sheets, and interactive learning activities. The kits were provided to the museum free of charge by the History Colorado Center through generous corporate support.

- **Western Work: Colorado Industries of the Past** - Through objects, photographs and role-playing activities, students become “entrepreneurs” in some of Colorado’s most important industries. The program meets economic, history and geography state standards and explores natural, capital and human resources in state history.

- **Moving Day: Colorado’s Migration Story** - Students explore the movement of people across Colorado from prehistory to 1870 and these cultural groups: Puebloans, Mountain Men, Miners, Utes, Plans Indians and Hispanics.

*If you would like to join the museum’s volunteer team, contact Tamra at 879-2214 or storemgr@springsips.com*
Looking Back

Ribbon cutting opening the museum's new Olympian Tribute Display at the Ski Area

The character of Rosamond Underwood, of the best-selling book, *Nothing Daunted*, performed to a packed audience in March

Holy Name Preschoolers dressed as pioneers at the museum

A Strawberry Park second grader uses an antique typewriter during the museum's "Diary of Lulie Crawford" program

Jay Fetcher sports his dad's ski patrol jacket at the exhibit opening reception of "Celebrating 75 Years Ski Patrol in Steamboat Springs"

Barbara Walker helps kids buy and sell in the museum's new General Store and Pioneer Economics program