

NIWOT GAZETTE

Newsletter of the Niwot Historical Society

May 2012

LECTURE SERIES WRAP-UP

Our 2011-2012 lecture series, *“Niwot Now and Then”*, concluded on April 25, with another full house gathered to hear Ava Hamilton speak about her life as an Arapaho woman. In total, 400 people attended our four lectures, with thirty households becoming new members.

Meri Gibb and her program committee are already working on next year’s series, which will kick off on September 26th with Margaret Coel, author of *Chief Left Hand, Southern Arapaho*.

If you have program suggestions or wish to be on Meri’s committee, email us directly at info@niwothistoricalsociety.org or through our website at www.niwothistoricalsociety.org.

A big *“thank you”* to The Baklava Guy, My Mom’s Pies, Niwot Market, The Eye Opener and the Gunbarrel King Soopers for donating refreshments. Thanks also to Left Hand Grange for the use of their hall, Niwot Rotary for videotaping the events, Gail Ludwig for timely email reminders on the Niwot Weekly News website, and McKenna, Long & Aldridge for printing posters for each lecture.

I LOVE A PARADE

Be a kid again (bring the kids too, if you wish) and join us as we participate in Niwot’s Fourth of July parade this summer. Be a flag-waving pioneer and walk or ride in our vintage pickup truck down Second Avenue. Don’t know what to wear? Think “vintage” or check out these websites for Western garb that never goes out of style.

www.recollections.biz

www.wildwestmercantile.com

CHIEF LEFT HAND BOOK

Join us in reading Margaret Coel’s *Chief Left Hand, Southern Arapaho*, a biography of Chief Niwot. It is the Boulder Public Library’s 2012 selection for “One Book, One Boulder”, a county-wide *community conversation*. Since our NHS mission statement includes a commitment to preserve the history of Chief Niwot, we are participating in this project by ordering copies directly from the publisher for sale in Niwot. They are available locally for \$20 at the Niwot Market and Hitching Post, at our Old Firehouse Museum during First Friday Art Walks along Second Avenue, and at our booth at each Rock ‘n’ Rails concert throughout the summer.

Board member Meri Gibb will host an informal book discussion on Coel’s book at the Eye Opener Coffee Shop on Second Avenue, Wednesday, June 6th at 10am. No registration is necessary.

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WHAT IS THIS?

(answer on last page)

“MEMBERS ONLY” TOUR OF OLD TOWN

For several years, the NHS has offered walking tours for school groups and others. This spring and summer, two exclusive tours are scheduled for new and renewing members of the historical society and their friends.

There will be two opportunities to participate. The first tour is scheduled for Friday, June 8th at 5:00 pm, meeting at Whistlestop Park. The second will be Saturday, June 16 at 10am. Mark your calendars now.

It isn't necessary to pre-register, but if you'd like a reminder or a notice of a weather-related cancellation, call Anne at 303-665-6932.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

As the Niwot Historical Society gears up for an active summer and fall, we are in need of volunteers in the following areas.

1. Help staff special historical exhibits inside the Firehouse Museum on July 4th and/or Nostalgia Days on September 8.
2. Participate in the July 4th parade. We need walkers, riders and flag wavers to be part of our contingent. Kids are welcome and costumes are encouraged.
3. Help sell *Chief Left Hand* books at our booth at the Rock 'n' Rails concerts in Whistlestop Park. Any Thursday evening from June 21 to Sept. 7.
4. Sell *Chief Left Hand* books at our Firehouse Museum during First Friday Art Walks.
5. Be a Walking Tour volunteer. ***Training required.***
6. Represent NHS on the Left Handers Day planning committee. Event is scheduled for August 11 in Cottonwood Square.
7. Design and install seasonal displays for the display case in front of the Firehouse Museum.

If you can help, email us directly at info@niwothistoricalsociety.org

"AS A TOWN GROWS"
Niwot in the 1960s

Few old-timers are left to describe the good ol' days in Niwot, before all the large corporations, modern subdivisions and highway improvements came to the Left Hand Valley. This is the first in a series of articles for the Niwot Gazette, which will trace the rapid growth that began in the 1960s.

Old Town Niwot residents relied on septic systems for sanitation and backyard cisterns for drinking water when the 1960s began. They watered their lawns from Hinman Ditch laterals that ran through their neighborhoods. They drove on unpaved roads

which, at that early date, were still unnamed. But all of that was about to change.

The northbound lane of the Diagonal Highway was completed and new housing on the east edge of town had boosted Niwot's population from 300 people in 1962 to almost 400 in 1963.

By 1963, a large number of infrastructure projects were either in the planning stages or already underway, and would provide modern services for Niwot's pending population explosion. Additional phone lines were installed in the area, and a petition was seeking input on a proposed sanitation district.

Colorado Highway 52 was under construction from County Line Road near Erie to Highway 119 on the west. It would soon become a feeder route to the yet-to-be-announced new IBM facility with its estimated 3900 employees.

A Longmont *Times Call* article described Niwot this way in 1963:

"New homes are appearing along the routes in and out of town, rumors float around that a certain industry is eyeing land nearby, a new country club is going up, and subdivisions are planned. Three miles south of Niwot, a development called Gun Barrel Estates continues to grow."

In Old Town, several small town businesses were struggling to survive: Earl and Silvia Knaus grocery store, Ruben Goeringer's auction house, Lester Harrison's Half-Way House Café, Walt Atkinson's blacksmith shop, Francis Curtis's garage and confectionery, the Columbine Campers shop and Smitty's Trading Post.

"AS A TOWN GROWS"
(continued)

A gas line is installed in front of Francis Curtis's confectionery shop in 1961

Growth continued throughout the 1960s, and by the end of the decade a new post office, elementary school, and shopping center had been completed.

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about “donating” a private NHS tour? Then tell the lucky bidder to contact us for scheduling.

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NIWOT HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD

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**WALKING TOURS
FOR GENERAL PUBLIC**

Tours for the general public, school groups or service and social groups of 5 or more people can be booked online at www.niwothistoricalsociety.org
Or here’s a novel idea – the next time you’re asked to donate an item for a fund-raising auction, how

WHAT IS THIS?

answer

Apple peeler from NHS artifact collection. It differs only slightly from today’s version of the same tool.
Donated by Doyle Hornbaker.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Niwot Historical Society exists to preserve, collect and protect the history of Niwot, the surrounding area and Chief Niwot, through the preservation of artifacts, documents, photos and other documentary sources relating to their history.
It encourages the conservation of these resources through publications, programs and other related activities, and brings people together who are interested in the history of Niwot.

Website:
www.niwothistoricalsociety.org