

NIWOT GAZETTE

Newsletter of the Niwot Historical Society

Fall 2009

BIGGER IS BETTER

Thanks to the generosity of Cotton Burden, owner of the Niwot Emporium Building, the Niwot Historical Society mounted its largest exhibit to date for the 4th of July celebration last month. Viewers enjoyed glimpses of by-gone days including a section on the Niwot Tribune, the formative years of Niwot Youth Sports, photos and artifacts from Niwot's railroad history, and patriotic memorabilia from both World Wars.

Thanks to members Laura Skaggs, Donna Sinor, Janice Stutts, Bonnie Nelson, Betty Singleton and Anne Dyni for their hard work; to Jim Martinsen and Mike Holubec for manning the front table; and to Jim, Laura and Janice for conducting three walking tours for more than 35 interested visitors.



Donna Sinor and Janice Stutts put finishing touches on the youth sports exhibit.

NHS SHARES THE SPOTLIGHT ON NOSTALGIA DAY

Those attending Niwot's Nostalgia Day on September 12 will find more than one celebration going on in Old Town. Left Hand Grange is re-opening its doors after a summer of restoration and repair. With the chain link fence removed after almost three months, the historical society will be able to re-open its museum doors as well. Our little patch of ground is minus some landscaping, but the bushes which were removed for foundation repair are already sprouting new growth. The flower beds and park bench are still there, so stop by and take a look.

We plan to set up a small museum exhibit on the 12th since there will be many visitors in town that day. If you'd like to help set up and/or host visitors, contact Anne Dyni at 303-665-6932. We'll set up around 9:00 am, and shifts will be from 10:00 – 12:00, 12:00 – 1:00, and 1:00 – 2:00.



Our firehouse/museum was inaccessible for the entire summer while grange repairs were completed.

WHAT IS THIS OBJECT?

This artifact was donated to the NHS by Jason Midyette in 2007 and is one of many historical items in our collection. Artifacts such as this can be displayed in exhibits and can provide research material for scholars researching local history.

What is it? Answer on page three.



Artifact #2007.02.03 in the Niwot Historical Society archives.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE JUAN APODACA FAMILY

Some early 1900s photographs in the NHS collection reveal a railway section house just south of Niwot Road. It was located halfway between Longmont and Boulder along the Colorado Central railroad tracks. In 1920, a newly-hired section foreman, Juan Apodaca, moved to Niwot with his family from Trinidad, Colorado.

While Juan and his wife took up residence in the section house, several of his children and grandchildren lived nearby in Niwot.

In 2007, four of Juan's grandchildren joined the Niwot Historical Society where they represent an important part of Niwot's railroading history.



Today, Juan Apodaca's grandchildren Delia Montoya Hammons, John Montoya, Vidilia Montoya Rael (shown here) and Millie Montoya Rendon still visit their family's graves in the Niwot Cemetery.

BOARD VACANCY

The historical society board lost one of his valued members this month. Mike Holubec has resigned for personal reasons. Mike served as an at-large board member for many years, and as a longtime resident of Niwot, his perspective and experience have been highly valued. He will be missed.

In addition, our treasurer, Jim Martinsen has asked to be relieved of his official duties due to ill health. Jim, too, has been a valuable member of the board for many years, always there to help with our many projects.

Therefore, we are looking for an NHS member to complete Mike's term which expires at the annual meeting in March. We also need someone to oversee the society's books until the March elections. Please contact Anne Dyni at 303-665-6932 for more information.

NIWOT'S COMMUNITY GARDEN

In 1998, the Niwot Home and Garden Club dissolved its membership. Organized 60 years earlier by local women interested in fellowship and gardening, their crowning achievement was the Niwot Community Garden.

It's hard to imagine their total transformation of the dry empty lot at the corner of Second Avenue and Murray Street. Because the unsightly field was the first thing that passengers saw as they stepped off the train at the Niwot Depot, club members were determined to beautify this entrance to Niwot. So in 1946, they launched a project which would take years to complete.

Husbands were enlisted to help level the lot and to dig a shallow well. A hand pump was installed and planting began. For years the garden attracted visitors with its lush grass, shade trees and flowering bushes. The crowning touch was added when the dilapidated town bandstand at the edge of the lot was refurbished and moved to the center of the garden where it became a picnic shelter.

The garden flourished until the 1970s when the railroad sold the land. The garden was scraped and a beer warehouse was built on the site.



The Colorado & Southern Railway, owners of the lot, had no interest in improving its right-of-way. So in order to bring life to the dusty lot, digging of a shallow well was a critical first step.

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 also 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;

Answer to "What is it?"

A spike puller used to remove spikes from railroad ties. This heavy steel tool is five feet long with a crowbar wedge on one end and a claw foot on the other.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2009-2010

President: Anne Dyni

2391 High Lonesome Tr., Lafayette 80026
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Vice-president: Laura Skaggs

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Secretary: Betty Singleton

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Treasurer: Jim Martinsen

2007 Uplands Circle, Estes Park 80517
303-349-7040

Members-at-Large: Donna Sinor, Mike Holubec