A Bewitching View of Laramie High School in 1952 from those whoooooo know

Friday, Oct. 25
7:00pm
Sunday, Oct. 27
3:00pm
Friday, November 1
7:00pm
Sunday, November 3
3:00pm

Children 12 & Under $5.00
Advance Tickets
at these locations:
Carriage House Gifts & Office behind the Ivinson Mansion
First Interstate Bank
211 Ivinson
Eppson Center for Seniors
1560 N. 3rd

Written and Directed by Carole Homer
Musical Direction by Susan Shumway

In this year of the Wyoming Woman we remember that in 1908, Mayor Markbreit of Cincinnati, Ohio declared that women are physically unfit to operate an automobile.
The Alice Hardie Stevens Event Center transforms into all kinds of design and welcoming environments on a regular basis. Its spectacular interior and exceptional lighting provide an extraordinary setting for events.

In 1985, the Women’s Hospital of New York City opened its doors. It was the first women’s hospital in the world founded by women for women.

In 1865, Jane Wood Iverson, arrived on the first train into Laramie City, Dakota Territory. Mrs. Iverson and her husband, Edward, ultimately were highly influential to the thriving growth of the town of Laramie, Wyoming.

In 1869, the men of Wyoming toasted women of the Territory, saying, “Lovely ladies, once our superiors, now our equal,” as they granted women the right to vote, hold political office and property on equal terms with men—the first actions of such equality in the world.

In 1870, Esther Hobart Morris became Justice of the Peace in South Pass City. The first woman to ever hold judicial office.

In 1876, three more firsts in the world came from the new Territory of Wyoming: Louisa Gardner Swan became the first woman in the world to cast her own vote in an election that embraced full voting and ownership rights with men. Martha Symmes-Booth Atkinson, also of Laramie, was the first woman bailiff appointed in a court of law; and six Wyoming women were allowed on a jury for the very first time. Those ladies with a eye for justice were from Laramie, Wyoming: Eliza Stewart Boyd (the first woman to be a justice of the peace in Wyoming), Jane Wood Iverson, also of Laramie, was the first woman to be appointed as Justice of the Peace in South Pass City.

In 1871, Mary Godt Bellamy, of Albany County, in the fledgling state of Wyoming, became the first woman elected to the Wyoming state legislature.

In 1893, Victoria Claflin Woodhull became the first woman presidential candidate. In 1894, Caroline Lockhart settled in Cody and became one of Wyoming’s nationally recognized women’s leaders. She edited the Wyoming Free Press, an outlet for popular western novels and movies, owner of impressive land in the western states, she is known for the Cody Stampede. Caroline represents the vibrant spirit of the West!

In 1911, Mary Godt Bellamy, of Albany County, in the fledgling state of Wyoming, became the first woman elected to the Wyoming state legislature.

In 1920, Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the International Suffrage Alliance, organized the first National League of Women Voters. Ms. Catt had visited Laramie earlier in the same year that she could join with other suffragists to stand at the site of the first jury that had allowed women.

In 1924, Nellie Taylor Ross assumed the role of Governor of Wyoming—the first woman in that position in the world.

In 1931, the first woman pitcher in the history of professional baseball, 17-year old Jackie Mitchell, was signed by a Tennessee team. The very next day, she also became the first and only woman pitcher to strike out Babe Ruth.

In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Nellie Taylor Ross the first woman to be named director of the U.S. Mint.

The list can go on and on, thanks to women who choose to make a difference in their corner of the world. As Jane Iverson said when the collected on her early days in Laramie City: “One of my former ambitions had been to have a field of study in labor and workers’ help was needed and unlimited good could be done. I realized that I now had reached that place.”

Karen Bard, a relatively new member of Laramie Woman’s Club, has tackled a wonderful project in support of these significant women who stepped up because of Wyoming’s stance on suffrage. Bard led the charge to produce a spectacular Historic Women of Wyoming Calendar that is immediately available via the Carriage House Gift Shop and Laramie Woman’s Club members around the state. Cost is $15 per calendar and, as always, LPM members receive 20% off their purchases.

On December 10, 1869, the Wyoming territory passed the first unconditional law in the United States guaranteeing women their inherent right to vote at the local public office – more than six years prior to the U.S. ratification of the 19th amendment. On September 6, 1870, the first woman to vote in an election on equal terms with men, cast her ballot in Laramie, Wyoming. Twenty years after the 1869 law passed, Wyoming sought statehood and famously refused to enter the Union if women’s suffrage was not upheld. In 1889, Wyoming officially entered the Union as the 44th state and the first state to fully grant women these inherent rights.

As the nation prepares for the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th amendment in 2020, Wyoming will continue to celebrate its milestone anniversaries well before that. Here are some of the notable dates that will be celebrated:

** Dec 10, 2019 - 150th Anniversary of Governor Campbell signing the Women’s Suffrage Act into law, officially making Wyoming the first in the U.S. granting women their inherent right to vote, to serve on a jury or to hold public office without restriction [i.e. without property, ownership, monetary or marital requirements].

** Jan 27, 2020 - 100th anniversary of State of Wyoming ratifying the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

** July 10, 2020 - 130th anniversary of Statehood Day - Wyoming enters the Union as the 44th state and the only state to have Suffrage Act ratified into their state constitution.

** Aug 18, 2020 - 100th Anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, thus making women’s suffrage legal in all of the U.S.

Sept 6, 2020 - 150th Anniversary of the Women’s First Vote - In Laramie, WY, Louisa Swain became the first woman in the world to cast a ballot under newly democratically enacted suffrage laws. Laramie’s Wyoming House for Historic Women be a center point for celebration of this stunning achievement.

Historic Women of Wyoming Calendar for 2020

~WOMEN MAKE A DIFFERENCE~
Following the robust Evening we held in commemoration of Jane Ivinson’s Memorial Girls School, we thought it very appropriate to rerun this special memoir.

Reflections from a Girls’ School Girl
by Elizabeth Adair Davis

The rector of my church in San Antonio, J. Wilson Hunter, was consecrated Bishop of Wyoming and asked me to move to Laramie to be his secretary, an exciting adventure in my young life, but I refused. I have two more years of college, but if there is some job there that will provide room and board while attending the University of Wyoming, I’d love a new experience. I found that job and so I went as a monitor to an Episcopal girls’ school called Ivison Hall. I left 1948 I left my family and my home, a nice but unpretentious bungalow, to live for two years in a most impressive place.

Ivison Hall provided for daughters of rural Wyoming families and others, a school with unique characteristics: Religious training and cultural emphasis on manners and social graces with academic and physical education at the University High School.

The school was a three-storied Victorian mansion built in 1892 by Edward Ivison, a wealthy Englishman. After his wife’s death he deeded the stone and wood home and carriage house to the Episcopal Church for a school. Each room on the main floor was in a different wood. The drawing room-maple, the parlor-oak, the reception room-cypress. Here I was Miss Whitehead’s secretary for three hours each Saturday morning. The foyer had a beautiful winding staircase to the chapel, the principal’s suite, a room for Miss Bacon, helpful to Miss Whitehead, a vacant maid called Ivinson Hall. In 1948 I left my family and my home, a nice but unpretentious bungalow, to live for two years in a most impressive place.

Miss Whitehead in her suite; and my six-sided tower room with three windows and a radiator that clanked on at 6:00 a.m. after I had studied in bed with my coat on to keep warm two hours earlier; and attending services at St. Matthew’s Cathedral. I liked Saturday noon’s mutton stew, which the ranch girls hated; the salmon salad served with cornbread; and my favorite simple dessert—saltines, cream cheese and currant jelly.

One of my memories was the many rehearsals for the 400th anniversary of the 1549 Book of Common Prayer pageant that Miss Whitehead wrote. I, with everyone in costume, was held in Virginia Cottage before a full house. The cottage also was the scene of several dances and get-togethers. Another memory was seeing the girls dressed for dinner each evening and at Teas on Sunday afternoons. One of my friends, a pianist, was given permission to play several times at tea in the drawing room. What pleasant afternoons!

When I met Kenneth, Miss Whitehead said, “It would be nice to have a young man walk with you and the girls to the movies,” and our first date consisted of skating, a movie, and coffee. He was pleased with me and fourteen of my girls. We did this often, and the girls and I enjoyed the walks. So did Ken. I have felt privileged to have spent two years at Ivison Hall with Miss Whitehead and the young ladies enriching my life. An additional plus was marrying a young man named Kenneth Davis, a Canterbury Club officer, who became an Episcopal priest.

I am pleased to realize that the Ivison Mansion, now a special museum that I have visited, will still be a place for my children and grandchildren to visit. They will love my six-sided tower room.
The 60th Anniversary of the TV show, Laramie, brought Jess Harper—Robert Fuller, Bobby Crawford, and Dennis Holmes—to Laramie for fishing, “Fandom” and fun. The television cowboys were our special guests at the Marry Me in Laramie event held in the Ivinson Mansion gardens and in the Alice Hardie Stevens Event Center on July 12th. Mike Gray, Design & Operations Manager for Albany County Tourism, was the coordinator of this special affair where 30+ couples renewed their wedding vows with a certificate signed by Fuller. Characters from Laramie’s colorful history were represented by the talented actors and singers of The Unexpected Company Senior Theatre troupe and Chuck Dennison was the travelin’ preacher who made sure we all behaved and understood all the to have and to hold parts. It was a fun time with Fuller’s agent and all of the fans who follow him to new places and events orchestrating everybody wanting to meet and greet the stars. Mike Gray pulled off another great promotional set of activities for Laramie and Albany County with Marry Me. His graphics and inspired ideas have brought some great kinds of focus to our neat little town! His next big coup is helping to coordinate and stage Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition models and photographers here in Laramie and up Brush Creek. Wyoming’s Suffrage Act Anniversary is a mighty fine lure. Pretty cool—huh?

Above, Kim Viner speaks about Wyoming’s significant Suffrage Act of 1869 to visiting national journalists earlier in 2019. His insight and information have been quoted extensively in articles throughout this 150th Anniversary year.

Left, Laramie’s favorite and longest in business florist, Janet Killian, was recognized at this year’s Evening for her generosity of spirit and unique design stylings for the Museum and so many organizations and individuals in our Laramie area. Janet has donated flowers for the Teas on Tuesdays for as long as anyone can remember and creates lavish bouquets for events and benefactors we want to thoughtfully treat or remember. She also was on our Board of Directors for six years, holding the position of President of the LPMA for much of that time. She knows this Museum well and has always been a grand benefactor. Janet loves cats and cats love her so we found a stained glass hanging reflecting a feline at the window as her gift from LPM. You can see it hanging in her Killian Florist shop window!

Right, Danny Walker, one of our ever-ready “Ivinson Mansion Press” photographers poses jauntily beside this flashy 1950 Studebaker Commander from the Girls’ School era. Bob and Mickey Routson brought this beauty to the grounds for the Evening.

Evening Recognition of Great Folks!

This historic museum property has a very special historian, keeping us, visitors, and Facebook on track with our facts and insight to history, authoring books and articles that share notable, historic information for all kinds of publics, and giving some of the best-of-the-best tours of our LPM collections as a Museum docent. There’s no denying that Kim Viner has graced our work here with his intellect and cordial interactions. Every museum should have a Kim. We recognized Viner’s incredible gifts to the Laramie Plains Museum and the Ivinson Mansion Complex as our 2019 Evening Honoree. Figuring Viner didn’t need “one more award hanging on his wall”, we gave an engraved clock to sit on his well-used desk. Small thanks for a very fine benefactor to this special place.
It is Laramie Plains Museum’s pleasure to partner with these fine folks for our signature summer event: Evening at the Ivinsons.’

Evening Sponsors
Albany County Tourism (ACTB/LAVC)
Guthrie Family Foundation
ANB Bank
Judy and Dennis Knight
First Interstate Bank
Germaine St. John
Debi Ockers
Newell Enterprises Wine & Spirits
Dennis Cook & Associates
Western States Bank

Donors and Guests
Left: Ron Olsen and Bob Mountain took the dress-up theme to heart: Ron looking dashing as a gentleman rancher from Albany County and Bob wearing his Dad’s WWII uniform, circa 1945. We have some delightful photos of Ivinson Hall girls at special affairs with their soldiers and cowboys.

Above: Bob & Sylvia Hansen fabulously represented the flashy 1920’s! The Girls’ School opened in the Ivinson Mansion during that decade.

Above: RJ and Samantha Lara are back in Laramie and looking dashing at this year’s Evening Garden Party. RJ, one of our favorite employees as he attended UW in Museum Studies, finished his Masters work back east at Winterthur so the popular couple are back for Samantha’s Masters in Social Work at UW.

Above, Ray Hall stands by his great collection of rustic bits of wooden carts, wagons, coolers, trunks—you name it; Ray and wife, Chris, create some stunning heritage pieces for Art Fest and Evening at the Ivinsons.

We love ANB Bank and the smiling faces (and free snow cones!!) they bring to the Ivinson Mansion grounds each Art Fest! Here we have Lisa Secrist and her daughter, Alysh, joining Libby Schafer to bring snow cones and sparkle to the center of things at Art Fest Sunday, the last day of all of the Jubilee Days festivities. We love the Laramie Plains Museum’s Art Fest because it is an artsy, comfortable day in contrast to all of the hustle and bustle and “crazeee” of Jubilee Week.

We are very fortunate to have Kirby Hornbeck with his eye for the beauty found in our neck of the woods and throughout Wyoming. His photos on canvas, framed under glass and on metal, capture outstanding views for your home, office and gifting. Hornbeck will be back with another selection at our Holiday Open House, December 14, 15. We’re also always fortunate to have Beth Ruhl with her exciting Dempster Glass creations at the Art Fest and the Christmas showcase. Come see Beth and Kirby and other inspiring artists. The Holiday Open House is always the 2nd weekend in December: Saturday—3:00 to 6:00 and Sunday—1:00 to 4:00.

Above: Left: The Bar sat under the trees this year with our talented Evening tenders: Doug, John, Rhetha, Kathy and Mike. Thanks, you faithful volunteers!!!!!!!!! Cheers!

This stunning quilt, on raffle to raise funds for Laramie Family Promise, a group helping families and individuals in our area needing an extra hand, was one of the showpieces found in the Alice Hardie Stevens Event Center during the Art Fest. Drawing for the quilt is Oct. 19, 2019.

Above: The Bar sat under the trees this year with our talented Donors and Guests special affairs with their soldiers and cowboys.

Left: The Laramie Woman’s Club always has bright, shining representatives on our grounds during the Art Fest as they troll for new members and tell of the Club’s ongoing work in our Laramie community.

Evening at the Ivinsons
Guthrie Family Foundation
ANB Bank
Judy and Dennis Knight
First Interstate Bank
Germaine St. John
Debi Ockers
Newell Enterprises Wine & Spirits
Dennis Cook & Associates
Western States Bank

Above: Left: Judy & Dennis Knight look good for the Jubilee Week.

Donor Gardeners:
LPMM Garden Angels, Sharon Leder and Annie Nelson, are all smiles as they make sure things look great for the Marry Me and Art Fest weekend! Our volunteer gardeners not only work their regular Tuesday mornings, but some come back at the end of each week to make sure the grounds are looking good for the special events and weddings.

Above: Ron and Bob Mountain, always the bright, shining representatives, did a great job at this year’s Evening at the Ivinsons.

Left: Ray Hall stands by his great collection of rustic bits of wooden carts, wagons, coolers, trunks—you name it; Ray and wife, Chris, create some stunning heritage pieces for Art Fest and Evening at the Ivinsons.

Above: DJ and Samantha Lara are back in Laramie and looking dashing at this year’s Evening Garden Party. DJ, one of our favorite employees as he attended UW in Museum Studies, finished his Masters work back east at Winterthur so the popular couple are back for Samantha’s Masters in Social Work at UW.
The City of Laramie and LPM recognized the significant contributions of Stephen & Eva Downey to the Laramie community. June Etta & other Downeys were noted as well.

On July 28 and 29, The City of Laramie and the Laramie Plains Museum celebrated the many contributions of Stephen and Eva Downey. Downey descendants gathered at LPM facilities to share family insight and artifacts, after presenting a plaque to be posted at Albany County Courthouse in recognition of Downey contributions to Laramie and Wyoming. Many Downey family descendants came for the event from all across the nation.

Above: Peter Boutin, center, a Downey descendant, always had an interested crowd around him, hoping to learn and share more about the family.

Above: Museum enthusiasts, Anne Levig and Susan McGraw enjoyed the festivities.

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Left: Eva Downey’s hand painted dishes. This photograph was taken by her (Eva’s) brother William (Billy) Owen, the surveyor. Photo was scanned from Alice Downey Nelson’s scrapbook about the Downey family ancestry. The scrapbook will be donated to the American Heritage Center; the donor and Downey descendant, Valasini gave LPM permission to scan for our records and research.

Above: Up for the festivities from Colorado were descendants, Tom and Amy Russell. Amy is also a direct descendant of Martha Symons Bois, the first woman bailiff in the world from Albany County, Wyoming.

It was another exceptional Evening at the Ivinsons, August 17, 2019! A touch of ominous clouds and a bit of a sprinkle threatened but moved on and our Ivinson Mansion and the attendees made us all feel the special event at hand as we celebrated the four decades that Jane Ivinson Memorial Girls School graced this historic property. The flower gardens were colorful delights, thanks to the special work and touches of Laramie Garden Club, the appetizers and formal dinner were tasty and plentiful from Hilton Garden Inn, and the decor and setting was top notch, because of a wonderful Evening Committee of volunteers led by Joyce Powell, Debi Ockers, and Mary Mountain. Hosted by the LMPA Board of Directors and held on the grand expanse of the Ivinson Mansion’s East Lawn, this signature event is always held on that third weekend in August so that Laramie Plains Museum and history enthusiasts can gather in awareness and support while the mild weather and the summer foliage can showcase the outstanding Ivinson Mansion property. Mark your calendar for this time next year—the popular event at the end of a Laramie summer, full of great food, libations, music, auctions and friends rallying in celebration and pride in our history. This year we saw flappers and a UW president and his charming wife from the 1920’s, school principals, ladies in day dresses and ball gowns the girls might have worn to special affairs in the 1940’s, military garb from the war and post war years, and 1950’s poodle skirts and saddle shoes from the era that Ivinson Hall was wrapping up its time as a school for girls from local ranches and outlying areas. Note the fun costumes and photos from the Evening, then read actual reflections from Girls’ School girl, Elizabeth Adair Davis at the back of this issue.

Mary Mountain interviewed Vera Reid, posing as Miss Wurtz, the Ivinson Hall principal who successfully fought off a robber who had her at gun point when she was in her mansion bed!

Longtime, outstanding benefactor, Don Adams, was in from Salt Lake City with a beautiful lady on each side: his wife, Val and daughter Jayne.

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