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.
LPM showed the same kind of cautious resurgence to activities during the second year of the pandemic as we climbed out of the many cancellations of 2020. We held 29 East Lawn events, including wedding ceremonies, and 37 wedding receptions were held in the Alice Hardie Stevens Center, 61 events— from memorials to fundraisers, graduations, luncheons, our Tea on Tuesdays, and Evening—all in keeping 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 am especially touched by this exhibit because we give names and value to these immigrants, these special helpers. Among them are many from Ascension of the Carriage House and renovation, as well as republication and new publishing of our books. Locals and visitors support— very hesitant to participate in group events, but families chose to power through in 2021 with important family events like weddings and memorials.

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 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 renovation 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 and expansion, the many levels of membership (Ivinsons 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 and the Wyoming Woman’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 be seen in the Museum now. We are grateful to those early docents and donors who helped the growth 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 the 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 Ivinsion Mansion as the perfect home for the Laramie Plains Museum Association’s collections.

The Laramie Woman’s Club is indeed happy to report a dream come true. The Laramie Woman’s 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 Woman’s Club never abandoned their idea for a museum, Mrs. Alice Stevens past president of the Laramie Woman’s 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 Woman’s Club check for $25,000 was one of the first donations of many. Many members of the Laramie Woman’s 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 this museum. This too was donated by H. N. Roach (his mother was a charter member of the Laramie Woman’s Club). There was a stipulation that $35,000 must be raised within 6 months of his death in order to keep the museum open and its contents. There were mumblings 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 corporate officers of the Laramie Woman’s Club met and a motion was made to donate $5,000.00 to the museum fund. This was to be presented at a special meeting in July. It was then that this donation was made while Mr. Roach was still living but this was not to be. Our meeting was on the day of his funeral. The Laramie Woman’s 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 murmuring that the money could not be raised in time. So again the Laramie Woman’s 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 about and enjoy 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 Woman’s Club. Mrs. Stevens and Mrs. F. A. Holiday (both past presidents of Laramie Woman’s Club) compiled articles that ran in the museum and the local newspapers. We want to thank them for all the work they have done. The Laramie Woman’s Club is extremely pleased with the community cooperation in behalf of the museum. It has been most gratifying to be able to help in this worldwide 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 not wearing a maid’s walking 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/maid’s bath room and the fancy Noodle & Douche multi-spigoted shower’s main bath, is a charming abode created for Mrs. Ivinsion’s personal servants and other 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 1900 census tells us that French immigrant, Carl Velleri, was the hostteller (horseman) for the Ivinsions, and that his daughter, Minnie, was employed as a maid for the Ivinsions. From Germany, Ragna Helseth, wife of Hans Helseth, was employed as a maid for the Ivinsion household, immigrated from Norway, and from the 1910 census appears to be just 20 years old. Mary Blunt, the Ivinsion’s 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 descendents.

I am especially touched by this exhibit because we give names and value to these immigrants, these special helpers who have done so much for this museum. The following is a report, simply entitled “Museum” and presented exactly (including the two spaces between sentences and the 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 Ivinsion Mansion as the perfect home for the Laramie Plains Museum Association’s collections.

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Laramie Plains Museum Celebrates 50 Years in the Ivinson Mansion

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 fundraising 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 restored so that it could hold the museum, housing in boxes of artifacts so that in 1973, the historic house could officially open the mansion to visitors. The incredible beauty of our history has remained, 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 cultural asset 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

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!

Laramie Plains Museum Association

ANNUAL MEETING
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2022 at 2:00 p.m.
Alice Hardie Stevens Event Center
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 July. 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.

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!

The tradition of our Holiday Open House

Ladies attend Teas on Tuesday

 Junior Docents give summer tours

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! ;)

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Membership Level</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life Benefactor</td>
<td>$1,000 + 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 $7 plaque in the Ivinson Mansion’s Hall of Donors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>$75 + $250 Jane Ivinson Circle*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>$150 + $250 Business Benefactor (additional promotion, including website link)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Family</td>
<td>$250 + $750 Edward Ivinson Circle*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Individual</td>
<td>$750 + $2,500 Business Benefactor (additional promotion, including website link)</td>
</tr>
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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 (must all cards accepted) + Account #: ___________ Exp. Date: ________

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

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.