

Niwot Historical Society

President's Letter

2013 - 2014 Annual Report

February 26, 2014

The following members of the Board of Directors were elected at the Niwot Historical Society (NHS) February 2013 Annual Meeting; the Board voted on the following leadership positions:

President:	Laura Skaggs
Vice President:	Meri Gibb
Secretary:	Connie Herbst
Treasurer:	Darwyn Herbst
Archives & Newsletter:	Anne Dyni
Membership Chair:	Donlyn Arbuthnot
Members-at-Large:	Mary Claire Collins, Rob Gordon, Katherine Koehler

The past year brought successful educational programs, comprehensive archiving of artifacts and photographs, a fresh exhibit to the Old Firehouse Museum, increased membership numbers, and a balanced budget for the Niwot Historical Society. The "Niwot ~ Now & Then" Lecture Series remains our lead programmatic offering. With warmest thanks to the tireless all-volunteer NHS Board and to each NHS member, details of the year's successes follow.

After last February Annual Meeting, the 2012-2013 lecture calendar rounded out with Diane Brotemarkle on "Forts, Furs & Trade on the South Platte, 1830s-1850s" and Anne Dyni speaking on "Pioneer Voices of the St. Vrain Valley." That season ended with a new bonus event, "Family History Day," where genealogists from the Boulder Genealogy Society and Iron Gate Publishing shared techniques on how to research and preserve your own family history.

The current 2013-2014 "Niwot ~ Now & Then" lecture season opened with entertaining relief from the September 2013 floods with George Ray Russell performing "Cowboy Poetry & Song" and explaining the origins of the genre. The second lecture of this season "Farming in the Left Hand Valley: Homestead to CSA" featured a team approach by Boulder County's Rich Koopmann and Ollin Farms' Mark Guttridge. Program Chair Meri Gibb reports on the two lectures remaining on the 2013-2014 lecture calendar: tonight Tom Theobold presents "Abuzz! Beekeepers & Honeybees in Boulder County" and Donlyn Arbuthnot will close the season on April 30th with "Patrons of Husbandry or What is a Grange?" Special thanks to Meri and her Program Committee for managing the engaging line-up of events.

NHS membership now totals a record-breaking 166 individuals (111 households). Membership Chair Donlyn Arbuthnot tracks the member renewals and updates member rosters for the society. Treasurer Darwyn Herbst tallies member dues income and reports that our annual income continues to cover our expenses; his full report is available for more details. Offering programmatic member benefits, in the form of free lectures and programs, the NHS Board feels the model remains sound; the Lecture Series continues to enlarge the NHS membership base.

The following are some of the other activities NHS conducted during the past year:

- The full NHS Board met three times to conduct Historical Society business and effectively conducted ongoing business electronically and through various special committee meetings. Secretary Connie Herbst recorded and archived the minutes of each full Board meeting.
- Four issues of the Niwot Gazette Newsletter and several topical updates were distributed by mail and/or email and posted on our website. Katherine Koehler is newly handling the newsletter, following Anne Dyni's years as the reliable editor.
- The entire NHS photo collection of 696 photographs has now been digitized, captioned and put onto CDs. These images include family photos, student body pictures from 1902 through the 1950s, railroad and agricultural scenes, early

businesses, homes and churches, the 1993 county street project, and commercial construction along 2nd Ave. Copies of photos are available for sale.

- Anne Dyni further reports that all donated artifacts and documents from 2005 through 2013 have now been accessioned, labeled and cataloged. This data, which includes more than 180 items, has been digitally entered onto storage disks according to standard museum protocol.
- Archival artifact entries for 2013 totaled 43 items, including blueprints and survey charts from the Second Avenue LID street project of 1993, and replatted blueprints from the development of Cottonwood Park Square, Countryside condominiums and Centrebridge Subdivision, dated 1985.
- Over last summer, NHS participated in the NCA's Fourth of July parade and solicited the Rock N' Rails crowd via the Tip Jar program at the invitation of Niwot Prairie Productions and the NCAA.
- During the NBA's Left Handers Week, NHS hosted a "pop-up museum" in the Emporium Building, displaying photo murals from its collection. Landlord Cotton Burden graciously provided the space for the week-long exhibit. Mary Claire Collins and Laura Skaggs welcomed many out-of-town visitors, in addition to local visitors. NHS also authored trivia questions for the Left Handers Day emcee and for the Left Handers deck of playing cards featuring Niwot history.
- A Clean-up Day for the Old Firehouse Museum was held in November, with Board members on hand to spruce up the structure before installing the new exhibit content.
- Anne Dyni and Darwyn Herbst collaborated to make the Old Firehouse Museum more user-friendly. Grids were added to the walls to better display pictures and artifacts. NHS member Ed McGill helped in framing and suggesting display methods, while member Gail Ludwig designed posters. Donlyn Arbuthnot created a museum notebook where family genealogy records of Niwot families (part of a past project by the NHS) can be viewed and visitors may add their own histories.
- NHS member Linda Kleuber of Niwot Interiors was competitively chosen to decorate a room at the Colorado Governor's Mansion with a Niwot theme for the Holiday season. Anne Dyni selected appropriate photos from the collection for display, and Laura Skaggs provided western-themed and historic items for the display representing Niwot to the state.
- Kathy Koehler inventoried and oversaw sales of Vintage Brass Tags at the lecture series. The tags were donated to the NHS for fundraising purposes and remain available for purchase.
- The Old Firehouse Museum was festively garlanded and open to the public during the NBA's Enchanted Evening and the annual Niwot Winter Parade. Vintage Brass Tags were on sale; complimentary hot cider was served. Visitors enjoyed the newly revamped museum exhibit.
- The NHS website, www.niwothistoricalsociety.org was updated periodically by volunteer Joe Betts. Check the website periodically for new information. Note that Paypal remains available as a vehicle for joining or paying annual renewal dues online at the NHS website.
- NHS advertised the "Niwot ~ Now & Then" lecture series quarterly in the Left Hand Valley Courier. Promotional flyers and posters were routinely delivered by Meri Gibb and her Program Committee for posting in local businesses. Several regional media outlets post NHS lectures on their calendars.
- The Left Hand Grange continues to provide secure storage for NHS artifacts; in appreciation, the NHS Board volunteers at all Grange Book Sales and makes an honorary donation to the Grange.
- We thank our generous members for keeping us going! Please thank your Board, as I do, for their cheerful hard work. Please consider volunteering for NHS! --Laura Skaggs, NHS President
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