



## Unraveling the Mystery of the Wardrobe Trunk

By Rosamond Stanton



Rosamond Stanton and the trunk.

Every object that comes into the Yellowstone Gateway Museum is considered a treasure. Admittedly some are more interesting than others, often depending on the stories that come with them. Occasionally something spectacular arrives on our doorstep, such as the wardrobe trunk, which is only slowly giving up its story. The donor discovered it, locked, sitting by itself at a recycling center, took it home to pry the lock open and found it full of clothes and the personal belongings of a life: but whose? Daunted by what his curiosity had led him into, he brought it to the museum.

When opened, the trunk sits on end like a book, with four drawers on the right side and clothes hangers suspended on a short rack on the left side. These trunks were designed for long-distance sea travel when one simply opened it in one's cabin on board a ship, obviating the need to unpack. Often the outside would be covered with stickers from exotic destinations as colorful bragging points wherever the world traveler had visited, not unlike the ones we see today on R.V.s. There certainly would have been a personal label, sometimes painted in white on the top, so this well-traveled luggage would not go astray. Our trunk, however, has none of these identifiers. There is a small label on the right side exterior that tells us who made it: "Hartmann gibraltarized, cushion top wardrobe trunks," ("gibraltarized" meaning as strong and tough as the Rock of Gibraltar.) It is not particularly battered with use, perhaps it had been acquired for a single voyage: but where and by whom?

While inventorying the trunk's contents the first hints to our questions reveal themselves. The top drawer contained a trove of letters, cards, and photographs. At

last we had a way into the mystery, but the more we learned, the more questions popped up. Reading through the correspondence one letter at a time, each tossing up a tidbit of information to the growing accumulation of facts, a story emerged of a marriage buoyed up by an enduring love through the trying times of the Great Depression and serious illness. By (continued on page 10)



Henry and Nellie Iverson, 1927.

# An Exceptional Ten Years

By Paul Shea, director

It has been an exceptional ten years at the museum. Yes, I began working in December 2009. There have been a lot of changes since that time: building upgrades, new exhibits, staff turnover, and a great many volunteers who have come and gone, bringing their much needed help.

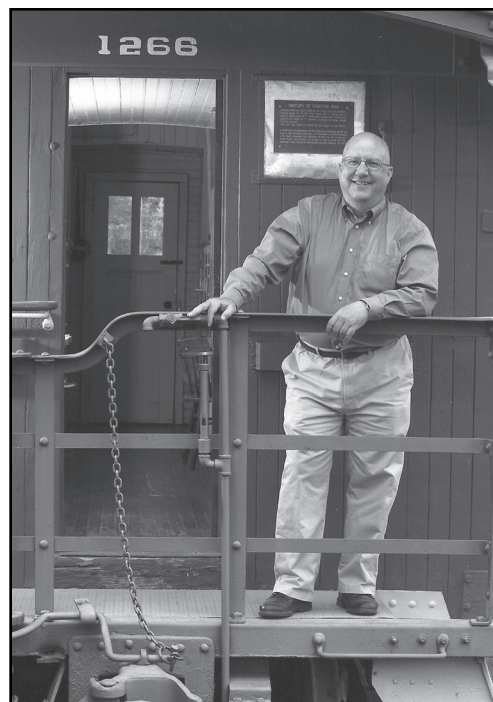
It is time for me to step down. I won't be going away permanently, but it is time for me to retire. I have been working since I was fifteen years old, which was fifty-two years ago! I think it is time to get up when I want to, and just go off and play.

I have worked in the museum and history business now for twenty-seven years. The Yellowstone Gateway Museum was my second museum to make over. It

has been a challenge and a lot of fun to work with the wonderful staff, volunteers, and boards. Seeing a museum change and become an exceptional part of our community is an experience that will be with me forever.

After some time off, I look forward to returning to the museum in order to conduct research for my own writing. My colleagues asked that I write more and share my knowledge of this area with a wider audience. I have been putting it off. Now, I think it is time to sit down and put to paper the knowledge I have gained while working in the region for the past forty-one years.

I came to Yellowstone National Park in 1979 and worked as a



Paul Shea standing on the museum's caboose. Photo by Steve Horan

## RECAP: *Our Accomplishments over the Past Ten Years*

- **MAJOR BUILDING UPGRADES:** *a heating/air conditioning system, new roof and gutters, and rearranging space for better use.*
- **ALL NEW EXHIBITS** *with more storytelling about our locals and their lives in Park County.*
- **NEW CENTRALIZED RESEARCH CENTER** *has provided a wonderful space for researchers and staff to work and have access to all of the museum's archives.*
- **COLLECTIONS WORK** *done by Karen and her volunteers: cataloging, storing, and creating finding aids to make our vast collections of family, railroad, and county histories more available.*
- **OUTREACH PROGRAMS** *such as the speaker series, Living History Day, and curriculum offerings, bring in more students and adults to enjoy our history.*
- **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARK PHOTOGRAPHY** *in downtown Livingston showcases and makes our archival collections more available to the public through shows and photographic print sales.*

bus and snowcoach driver and tour guide. I thought I would work one summer and winter, then go back to Reno/Sparks, Nevada where I grew up and lived. But I stayed here. It has been a long and extremely satisfying time that I spent learning and interpreting the history of the region. My work with two museums, the Yellowstone Historic Center in West Yellowstone, and the museum in Livingston, has provided an outlet for sharing my knowledge with a large audience.

I intend to stay in Livingston since I can't imagine leaving Montana. Being able to live this close to Yellowstone National Park is truly special. I love the area, the people, and all of the friends I have made over the last four decades.

(continued on page 5)

# Volunteers and Staff

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Above, left: Frank Wombacher examines a photo in the Research Library. He has cataloged hundreds of photos from family albums, the KPRK collection, and is now working with Warren McGee images. Above, right: Sarah Greenberg conducting hands-on sheepwagon research for a new exhibit. Left: Artist Kris Walker has spent countless hours sketching and painting our Columbia mammoth on the top floor of the museum; stay tuned for new Ice Age Mammals exhibit.

## MUSEUM HOURS

**WINTER:** (10/1 - 5/20)  
10 AM - 5 PM, Thurs. - Sat.



**SUMMER:** (5/21 - 9/30)  
10 AM - 5 PM, 7 days/week



### RESEARCH CENTER:

8 AM - 5 PM, Tues.-Sat.  
Please call 406.222.4184  
for an appointment.

## Yellowstone Gateway Museum of Park County

118 W. Chinook St., Livingston, MT 59047 ~ 406-222-4184  
museum@parkcounty.org ~ www.yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org



Bruce Graham, a model volunteer.

*“History is made by those who write about it, not by the actual events, because everyone has a different perspective.”—Bruce Graham*

After serving thirteen years on the Friends of Yellowstone Gateway Museum board, Bruce Graham retired last spring. His contributions to the museum have been huge and through his continued volunteer work, are ongoing. Bruce began serving as treasurer in April 2006, transitioning to president in 2013, a post he held until his retirement. During his tenure, he successfully recruited

# History Hats-Off to Bruce!

By Karen Reinhart, curator

many board members and other volunteers.

Part of what makes Bruce a great volunteer is his varied life and work experience. Born and raised in Park County, he grew up working on a ranch. After high school he worked at a saw mill, attended college and graduated in 1969 with a B.A. in History. Bruce joined the National Guard for six years. He worked on a Blister Rust Crew in Yellowstone National Park, helped build the guard rail in Yankee Jim Canyon, read meters for Montana Power Co., and worked at Burkland Studs.

Bruce's railroad career began with Burlington Northern Railroad in October 1972. He worked as a clerk in the Freight House, Yard Office, and Material Departments. When the railroad left Livingston in 1986, he painted houses, sold carpet, and drove a school bus and a dump truck. Bruce was hired by the Livingston Rebuild Center in about 1989 and began working for Montana Rail Link (MRL) two years later as the Material Manager, a post he held for thirteen years.

He retired from MRL in 2005 after a thirty-year railroad career.

Bruce also worked as an extra in the movie *Amazing Grace and Chuck* (1987) and with the location department in *A River Run's Through It* (1992).

Bruce began his museum volunteer work after he retired from the railroad. He remembers that “the biggest project at the museum was moving all of the items out of the museum so the heating duct work and insulation could be installed. The second biggest project was moving the Library from upstairs into the [basement] Research Library.” Bruce enjoys organizing the library so people can find materials and learn more area history. He’s an important resource for me and other researchers.

Bruce’s future plans are to keep doing what he enjoys and live another twenty years. We thank you, Bruce, for all that you have done and continue to do for the museum!



## Two Board Members Retire

Sabine MacInnes (left) joined the board in March 2017, soon after her move to Livingston. Sabine enjoyed learning about local history and also served as an education volunteer. She

retired early this year from the board but keeps busy as a Registered Nurse at Livingston Healthcare. Sandrine Olds (right) retired from the board in spring 2019 after

holding the office of secretary for three years. Sandrine served many meals to Living History Day participants, including a special roast-pig plate for our 40th

anniversary. She keeps busy with her two children and her work as a real estate agent. We thank them both, wishing them all the best in their future endeavors!




(continued from page 2)  
Funding our projects has always been a challenge. Our county budget has shrunk, but the Friends Board and our generous members and donors have helped maintain and expand the museum. Both boards decided that the museum must continue to move forward and expand wherever possible, perhaps with a new facility.

This goal will be reflected in the person hired to replace me. A new job description was written to focus more on capacity building through greater member and public development programs, and fundraising. My background is more in the technical area of museums. Now that we have brought the Yellowstone Gateway Museum up to a new level of professionalism it is not the time to merely maintain the status quo. It will be an ongoing process to develop and build an even larger and more exciting museum for Park County.

The museum will need all of our partners to go forward with excitement and the determination to make the museum even better. I can't leave without expressing a great deal of respect and a huge thank you to all of the people who contributed since the beginning of the Park County Museum Association in 1964.

Please, all of you, stay involved with this wonderful museum and continue to give your support through time and money. Keep it going and reach new heights. I know you can do it!

 **You're invited!**  
**Friends of YGM**  
**Annual Meeting**  
**Wed., April 1, 6:30 PM**  
See calendar, pg. 11 for more info.

## CONNECT WITH YOUR MUSEUM!

**Social media:** Like us on Facebook, follow us on Instagram.

**Email:** Send your email address to kreinhart@parkcounty.org, and we'll keep you up-to-date re: upcoming exhibit openings, events, programs.

**YouTube:** Find and subscribe to enjoy oral history interviews, programs, and tour videos.

## Scott Johnson Joins Friends Board

By Karen Reinhart, curator

Scott Johnson was born and raised in San Antonio, Texas. Satisfying his affinity for the mountains, he and his daughter moved to Montana last summer. He enjoys Park County's laid-back lifestyle and its people, culture, history, and food. Scott said, "I love documenting the great outdoors through my camera lens, and am also an advocate for the preservation and conservation of our public lands." He has worked in the Commercial/Industrial HVAC -Energy Efficiency business since 1990.

Scott strongly values preserving and documenting past and present history, and has a strong conviction to give back to the community. He has already photographed and videotaped several oral history interviews and speaker series programs for the museum. (Visit our YouTube channel.) Scott plans to use his skills to help us accomplish our goals and provide a better learning environment for future generations.

Referencing board projects, Scott commented, "We have many aspirations to improve the museum and it's clearly a function of money. The museum is for the People. We need a plan to modernize the facility with proper ADA compliances so that anyone who comes through that door has accessibility to view all of our exhibits. So, an elevator is very important from an infrastructure standpoint. I would also like to see more of a budget in the A/V department as I would like our exhibits to come to life with interactive components."



Scott Johnson waiting for a good photograph.

Scott feels that the museum is a magical place. He appreciates that it is "filled with not just pieces of history but the stories that go along with those pieces." Scott's goal is to develop a fundraising program that will help all people "get an immersed experience of history and leave with the total satisfaction of learning something new."

# 1917: A Future Celebrity in Livingston

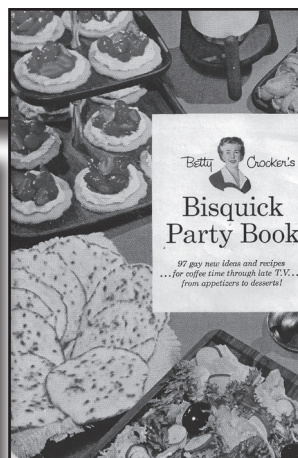
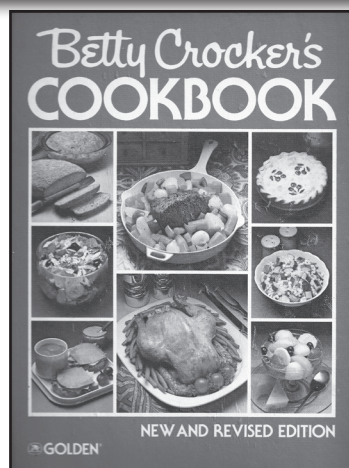
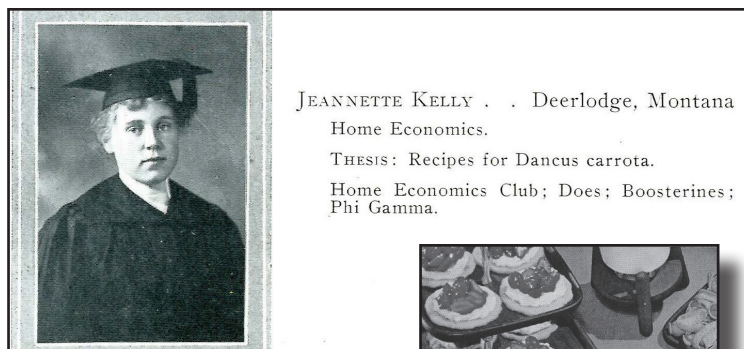
By Bruce Graham

Not many people know that one of the famed “Betty Crockers” lived and worked in Livingston in 1917. This was four years before the famous, friendly face was created for the General Mills Company. Though she wasn’t a real person, a 1945 *Fortune* magazine claimed that Betty Crocker was the second most recognized person in the country (behind Eleanor Roosevelt).

I discovered this story of a local Betty Crocker while reading an August 1955 article in the *Park County News*. Faith and Owen Jones, owners of the Ninth Street Grocery, were eating out in Bozeman when they discovered that the woman they were sitting next to was one of the famous Betty Crockers. They asked for her autograph, which she signed “With best wishes, Betty Crocker, Ghost Janette Kelly.” She asked them about people she had known in Livingston and how the brownie mix was selling in their store.

Janette Kelly was from Deer Lodge and attended Montana State College in Bozeman, graduating with a degree in Home Economics in 1917. Kelly started teaching at Park High School in September 1917. Even though she probably would have signed a nine-month contract at Park High School, Kelly taught for only three months.

Looking through the *Arrow*, Park High’s yearbook, the only reference to Kelly was that she started the Hoover Club; members’ goals were



Top: Janette Kelly's 1917 MSC yearbook entry. Above, left: A 1969 Betty Crocker cookbook. Above, right: Kelly was likely involved with this 1957 Bisquick Party Book, a booklet published by General Mills the year before she retired.

to work for the Red Cross and to study food conservation. Twenty-seven females were members and Miss Kelly was the faculty director. Park High Economics Department were Domestic Art “sewing,” Domestic Science “cooking,” and Home Science III “Normal training for Rural School teachers.”

I am not sure of where Kelly lived from 1918 to 1921; she may have worked as a state home economist. She started working for the Washburn-Crosby Company that later became the General Mills Company in 1921, the same year the company held a contest that received 30,000 entries and many

letters requesting cooking and baking advice. The men in the marketing department didn’t feel comfortable giving advice to women so they created Betty

Crocker to represent the company, a name that is still used today on products offered in local grocery stores. Betty Crocker started answering consumers’ letters (with a standardized signature), then hosted a radio program, a TV show, and now has a web site. Her picture, which first appeared in 1936, was an artist’s rendition of what the company thought Betty should look like. Her image

has changed over the years; the latest Betty was created in 1996.

Kelly was one of the first college-educated home economists hired to work in the Home Services Department at General Mills. She created new recipes using the company’s products and wrote the first bread-baking book for Gold Medal flour. Kelly helped create and run test kitchens, supervised fifty women as well as the publication of Betty Crocker’s Picture Cookbook. She retired in 1958 because of ill health and died shortly after. Kelly is buried in the Deer Lodge, MT Cemetery.

# Projects, Projects, Projects!

By Karen Reinhart, curator

## CLOVIS CHILD EXHIBIT

We are working on a grant proposal to fund the beginning phase of an exhibit about the Clovis Child and the 12,600-year-old Anzick Site in northern Park County. It is the oldest known burial site in North America. A genetic analysis was done before the child's remains were repatriated and reburied in 2014; it showed that likely all Native Peoples in the Americas were descendants of his family. We want to include a strong First Nations voice and multiple perspectives. Dr. Shane Doyle and Diane Chalfant are on our team.

## Saluting Veterans

The Community Closet funded our Vietnam War Veterans' Exhibit, opening this November. The grant funds the interviewing (and videotaping) of Vietnam War and Korean War veterans and the printing of biographies. Veterans, their families, and the community will be invited to a gala opening event where veterans will be honored and invited to speak. Would you or someone you know like to help prepare food for this event?

## ENTICING NEW EXHIBITS

A new Ice Age Mammals exhibit adds depth to our natural history interpretation. Paul Shea is curating this final exhibit before he retires. Lerick Allen assisted him and Kris Walker painted a beautiful mural. An outdoor agriculture exhibit highlights farm equipment, local ranching and farming stories, and outstanding photographs. Sarah Greenberg has helped with this and new sheepwagon interpretation. A new art exhibit will be displayed in the Expedition Room.

## Greener & Brighter!

We applied for a NorthWestern Energy E+ Renewable Program grant for a solar panel system. Another grant proposal funds a lighting upgrad to LED fixtures and bulbs, including exhibit areas, offices, the Research Library, and archives. Both projects greatly reduce our carbon footprint, increasing our sustainability!

## Restore the Caboose!

Rotting exterior wood is threatening our on-the-lawn 1899 Northern Pacific Railroad caboose. We're writing a grant proposal to fund its restoration so that people can enjoy this artifact for many years to come!

## Warren McGee Legacy

We're seeking grant funds to inventory, protect, and catalog about 60 boxes, 70 rolls of maps and plans, and numerous objects and audio tapes of the Warren McGee Railroad and MT Research Collection. We received these items from his estate in 2018. Archivist Ellen Zazzarino will create an online finding aid, which helps researchers discover this collection.

## Moving Opportunities

Two new walking tours begin this summer. Ten actors in period dress give first-person talks in historic downtown Livingston on Saturday evenings on June 13, July 11, and August 15. Participants are given a map to begin their self-guided tour and the fun begins! Spearheaded by Nancy Jurvakainen. Volunteer Jack Luther offers a Ghosts and Ghost Signs tour, revealing evidence of past advertising (sometimes many layers) on downtown buildings, which tell the stories of individuals and businesses. Jack includes ghost stories, too! The Westside Historic District Tour and the Bars and Brothels Tours continue.

## LIBRARY NEWS

Sarah Greenberg is leading the charge to standardize cataloging of library and archival materials with the goal of joining OCLC, a worldwide, online library. This will greatly increase our library's visibility!

## Like to help?

If you are interested in learning more or would like to help support them, please contact Karen Reinhart, 406.222.4184, or kreinhart@parkcounty.org. We could use your help. Thank you!

## RECENT COLLECTIONS DONORS

**1st Interstate Bank:** maps, artwork, etc.  
**Martha Adkins:** Yellowstone Trail sign;  
Otho Mack family photo album, history  
**Joanne Berghold:** Framed bullfighter photo\*  
**Wayne Bowman:** Bowman history  
**Kay Brown:** Clarence Mize items  
**Robert Butts:** Freeman Butts artwork  
**Becky Cossey:** Yearbooks  
**Paul Dix:** Photos, book\*  
**BJ Earle:** Evirett stereoview card collecton  
**Don Ellis Estate:** Montana publications  
**Steve Fox:** Framed colored pencil drawing\*  
**Lindie Gibson:** Baumanometer, monitor  
**Diane Gleason:** Calamity Jane DVD  
**Lyla Mann Greear:** Gilbert, Hodges, and Tunnell  
families' papers, photos

**Jim Hunt:** A. W. Miles papers, bottles  
**Russell Jordan:** BN Livingston Shop seniority list  
**Park Co. District Court:** Door lock  
**Beverly Madsen:** projector, slides, photos, posters  
**Montana Department of Revenue:** Park Co. ledgers  
**Shirley Petersen:** 1894 marriage certificate  
**Bonnie Pinkerton:** Chadborn, MT memoir  
**Jackson Redmon:** Book\*  
**Karen Reinhart:** Poetry booklet, cookbook  
**Dave Ricks:** Bozeman Trail cassette tapes  
**Hallie Rugheimer:** Framed photos\*  
**Robert Skillman:** Book by George Bruffey  
**Mary Smith:** photo, Uhl family history  
**Donna Woodford:** Elk antler-framed  
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\*created or written by donor

## MEMORIALS

For Ronald W. Brown  
By Suzanne Brown

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For Marian Gannon  
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For Anne Alton Kronenberg  
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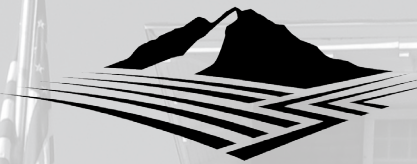
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honor of friends, family  
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Please visit <http://yellowstonegatewaymuseum.org/support/become-a-member/or>  
see the next page for our mailing address. Thank you!



2020  
MEMBERSHIP  
as of  
February 20, 2020



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to keep  
Park County  
history alive!

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(continued from page 5)  
listing every name reference that appeared more than twice, and with the aid of ancestry.com, it was possible to build a family tree.

Our wardrobe trunk belonged to Nellie Louise (Haeska) Iverson. She was born in Marengo, Iowa in 1894, the sixth of seven children of Frederick and Grace (Mann) Haeska. The family moved to Comfrey, Minnesota where they farmed, and most of her siblings remained in that area. Nellie, at thirty-one years old, went west to Great Falls, Montana, where she worked as a maid.

Henry Ronning Iverson was born in 1889 in Seattle, Washington, the first of two children of Julius and Johanna (Grothem) Iverson, both of Norway. The young family moved to Great Falls where he grew up. He married his first wife, Mary Jeannette Nelson, sometime before 1922 when their first child, Miles Henry Iverson, was born. Two years later, Robert Howard Iverson entered the world as his mother Jeannette left. The two small children went to live with Hank's sister and brother-in-law, Jennie and Rudolph Nelstead of Miles City.

Nellie met widower Henry Iverson in Great Falls and she married him in 1927. Shortly after they were married, Nellie and Henry, known to everyone as "Hank," moved to Livingston where he worked as an electrician. In 1928, their daughter Nellie Louise was born.

In 1931, Miles Iverson, now about nine years old, came to Livingston to live with his father, Hank, and stepmother Nellie. Robert, however, remained with his aunt, eventually graduating from Forsyth High School. Miles

grew up in Livingston, graduating from Park High School in 1942.

Hank had served in the U.S. Navy in the Great War making



Miles Iverson, Nellie's stepson, 1942. He worked for the *Livingston Enterprise* and used newspaper clippings to compile several thematic histories, including *Schools in Park Co.* and *Hunters Hot Springs*.

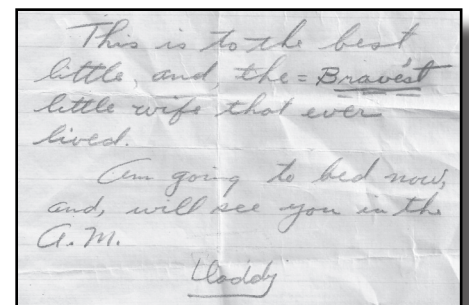
him eligible for V.A. medical services when he became very ill in 1930, possibly from the effects of a stomach wound received in the war. For the next two years he spent months at a time at the Fort Harrison V.A. hospital near Helena, Montana. Unfortunately for him, but happily for us, husband and wife exchanged letters almost daily during his long absences. It is these letters that give us a window into their lives. Nellie also corresponded with her sisters and brothers in Minnesota whom she visited at least once during this time. Her sisters' letters are fully of family gossip which helps us with our "who's who."

Through the years Nellie kept herself busy with membership in various groups including the Christian Science Church. After

several moves they settled at 412 South F Street where Miles, who never married, lived the rest of his life. Nellie died in 1964 at sixty-nine years old, and Hank joined her in 1970.

Questions remain: where did the big wardrobe trunk come from? How did Nellie, who doesn't seem to have traveled further afield than Minnesota, get it? She seems to have used it for storage. Nellie mentioned it once in a letter to Hank, telling him she had found a VFW lapel pin in her trunk that he had asked her to send him in Helena. And all the photographs! Almost none of them are labeled: no names, no dates. And of course, where in the world was it before it landed at the recycling center?

We would love to hear from anyone who could help us with some of these mysteries, no matter how insignificant they seem.



Above, top: How many years did Nellie keep this bright red, gold foil-bordered Valentines candy box?

Above: "This is to the best, little, and the Bravest little wife that ever lived." Hank referred to himself as "Daddy" in his note to Nellie.

# PEOPLE & PLACE

A SPEAKER SERIES

**Wed., April 1, 7PM, Park Photo\***  
(6:30 PM Friends Annual Meeting precedes program)

*Livingston and Park County: The Early Years*

Agriculture, the Northern Pacific Railroad, and the tourism gateway to Yellowstone National Park influenced Park County's early development.

**Paul Shea, presenter**



**Wed., April 15, 7PM, Park Photo\***

*The Day That Finally Came*

Stories of the Little Shell Tribe, helping people understand who the people are, and how large a part they have played in the history of North America.

**Chris LaTray, presenter**



**Wed., April 29, 7PM, Park Photo\***

*The History of Mountain Sky & West Creek Ranches*

Native American history, key homesteader families, the dude ranch years and the Ox Yoke ranch, and the ranches today, owned by the Blank Family.

**Sarah Grigg, presenter**



**Wed., May 13, 7PM, Park Photo\***

*A Brief History of Cooke City*

Cooke City waited for more than 60 years for the railroad until tourism took hold. Hartman explores the stories of this mountain berg's full-time residents.

**Kelly Hartman, presenter**



\*All programs are free and are held at Park Photo, 115 S. Main St., Livingston, Montana. Refreshments served; donations appreciated. Please call 406.222.4184 for more info.

**STAY TUNED:** June 6 Living History Day & a full schedule of summer Walking Tours!

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*Can you identify any of these women and their infants?  
Edith Lott operated the Lott Hospital on the corner of  
S. Yellowstone and Callender Streets from 1928-1955.*

