

THE 42nd OLD TIME RANCH TOUR

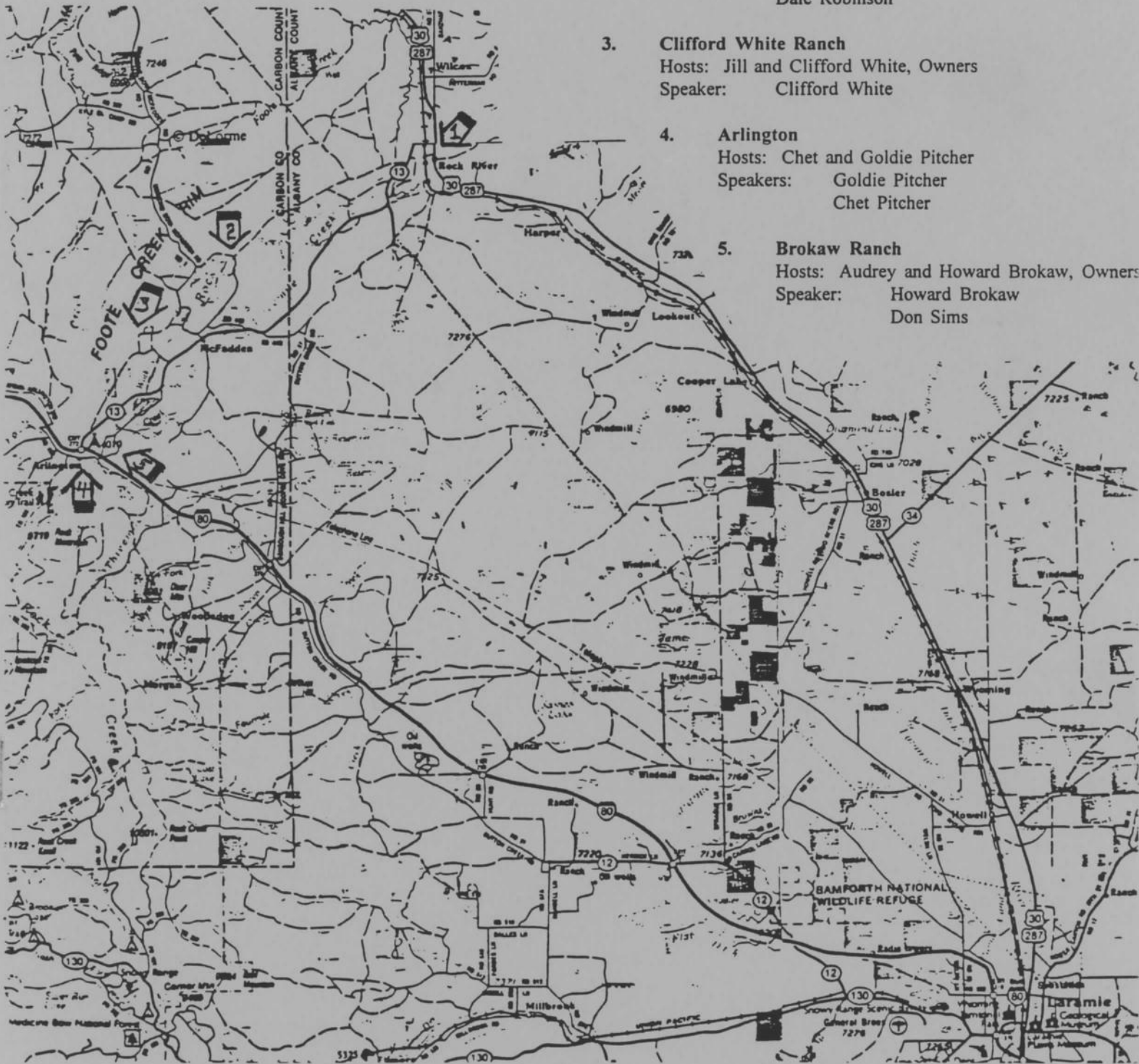
STOPS ON THE 42ND OLD TIME RANCH TOUR
Saturday, July 17, 1993

Sponsors:

The Laramie Kiwanis Club

*The Albany County
Historical Society*

1. **Rock River Museum**
Host: Wallace "Buzz" Pittman
Speakers: Wallace "Buzz" Pittman
Eva Mae Emerson
Lottie Weinberger
2. **Diamond Ranch**
Hosts: Bill and Becky Dody, Owners
Speakers: Frank Bosler, Jr.
Dale Robinson
3. **Clifford White Ranch**
Hosts: Jill and Clifford White, Owners
Speaker: Clifford White
4. **Arlington**
Hosts: Chet and Goldie Pitcher
Speakers: Goldie Pitcher
Chet Pitcher
5. **Brokaw Ranch**
Hosts: Audrey and Howard Brokaw, Owners
Speaker: Howard Brokaw
Don Sims



THE FORTY-SECOND OLD TIME RANCH TOUR
Saturday, July 17, 1993

The Old Time Ranch Tours were conceived and promoted by Dr. Robert Burns. The series has continued annually since 1951, except for 1982. Portions of the historical accounts printed here are taken and updated from the writings and Wyoming's Pioneer Ranches by Robert Burns, Andrew Gillespie, and Willing Richardson; and from previous Old Time Ranch Tour booklets. Goldie Pitcher provided substantial parts of the accounts of Arlington and McFadden. Howard Brokaw provided the account of his ranch.

The 1993 Ranch Tour Co-chairmen: Maurice Wear and Henry Bauer

Committee Members: Bob Bacon Mike Boothe Gene Cadwell Fred Dudley Walter Edens
 Ken Faulkner Chuck Killian Ike McKay Bob Nelson

Ike McKay is the master of ceremonies.

An annotated map of the tour is on the front cover of this booklet. The projected log of the tour follows the narrative. The cover map is taken from grids 22, 23, and 32 of Wyoming Atlas & Gazetteer, copyright DeLorme Mapping, Freeport, Maine, 1992, and reproduced with permission.

Rest rooms are available for each stop at the trailer carrying the outhouses.

Safety is a primary concern. A local law officer and tour marshals will coordinate the caravan. Be careful making left turns. Please follow the directions of the traffic controllers. Please keep children and pets with you at all times. Neither the committee, individually or collectively, nor the sponsoring organizations accept any responsibility for accidents. A trailing car will inform the lead vehicle of any delays at highway intersections.

Your cooperation is appreciated at the parking sites. Parking is accomplished so that cars need not use reverse gear for entering or leaving a site. If you have difficulty walking, please inform the first parker at entry to each site so a close-in parking place may be found. Please allow the numbered cars to leave a site first so tour personnel may direct traffic.

Keep a safe distance between cars. Turn lights on while we are on paved highways. We will travel at the speed limit on paved highways and at 15 to 25 miles per hour on dirt roads. Drive carefully. Respect the other fellow. Enjoy the scenery and have a good trip.

WE ARE GUESTS OF THE MUSEUMS AND THE RANCHES. PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE ANY ITEMS, INCLUDING ARTIFACTS FOUND ON THE GROUND.

Many persons have helped organize and promote this year's tour. In particular, we thank the Coca-Cola and Pepsi Bottling companies for the refreshments at lunch. We greatly appreciate the publicity given to the tour by the Laramie Daily Boomerang, TCI Cablevision of Wyoming, and the Laramie radio stations KOWB, KCGY, KLDI, KRQU, KIMX and KUWR. We also thank the Wyoming Recreation Commission and Dick Strom's Rambouillet for lending the equipment for the rest room facilities. Finally, we thank the officer of the law who aided us along the route and the members of the Laramie Kiwanis Club who assisted.

The Tour thanks the following financial institutions. Their advertisements helped defray the costs of this booklet and the tour. Please thank the fine people at these Laramie businesses during your next visit.

American National Bank
The Bank of Laramie
First Interstate Bank
Key Bank of Wyoming

Security First Savings and Loan
UNIWYO Federal Credit Union
Rocky Mountain Bank, F S. B.
Laramie Plains Federal Credit Union

The Old Time Ranch Tour Committee sadly notes the death of Fred G. Dudley, Jr. on May 17, 1993. Fred was born in Laramie, graduated from Laramie High School, and attended the University of Wyoming. He served in the U. S. Navy during World War II. Before and after that war he worked for the U. S. Post Office in Laramie and served as postmaster here from 1955 to 1970.

Fred was a member of both the Laramie Kiwanis Club and the Albany County Historical Society. He participated in the planning of the Old Time Ranch Tours for many years including this year's tour. Ranch Tour participants knew Fred as the knowledgeable master of ceremonies through last year. Fred also spoke on several tours including last year when he spoke of his work at Trails' End in the 1920's for Frank C. Miller, Jr.'s private zoo and wild west show. Fred's son, Robert, videotaped that tour. The tape will be treasured by family and friends.

Fred and his knowledge about the history of the Laramie area are missed by all of us associated with the Tour. Our sympathy is extended to his wife and family.

We plan to travel on highways at the speed limit so that the caravan will not become a traffic hazard. Please keep a reasonable distance between cars, but do not let the caravan get strung out for miles. In spite of the dust, please also keep the caravan together so that no one takes a wrong turn.

Stop 1. Rock River Museum.

Readers of the Laramie Daily Boomerang may remember a page of photographs and descriptions of the Rock River Museum in the May 28, 1993 issue. The Town of Rock River opened this museum dedicated to the history of the region. The history includes millions of years ago when dinosaurs roamed the land and the colorful Old West past when the pioneers first settled the area.

The old First National Bank building houses the museum. It has been restored by a committee of local volunteers and has been listed on the National Register of Historical Buildings since 1988. Goldie Pitcher wrote of the building for the Arlington Pipeline, and the article appeared in the Laramie Daily Boomerang on April 18, 1990. She reported,

"The location for the structure was platted in 1901 in Rock River's original town site. Built in 1919 as a tall, one-story, brick building, a brick parapet wall projects slightly above the roof line in front. Below a molded cornice line protrudes from the main wall surface, a dentil (small square projecting block in a cornice) is part of the entablature--the uppermost member of a classical order or columnar system of architecture. Under this, the inscription 'First National Bank.' Large concrete columns are set on either side of the entry, stuccoed pilasters step out from the main wall surface.

"Started at the height of an oil boom in Albany and Carbon counties, the building became the property of the town in 1936 and continued to be a focal point for community activities until the mid-1980's.

"Alva Dixon, Arlington-McFadden rancher, was president of the bank in 1919 and with Fred R. Richards bought the property from the school district. They sold it to the First National Bank, which they controlled. The building also housed the medical practice of one of the few women doctors in Wyoming during the early 1920's, Dr. Florence Patrick.

"The decrease in oil markets after WW I brought the boom to a close, and the First National Bank along with it, in 1923. The failing economy was not entirely to blame; its demise was aided by its vice president and cashier, Lewis C. Butler. Charged with embezzlement and misappropriation of several thousand dollars of the bank's funds, and convicted, Lewis bought himself a "room" at Leavenworth Prison, in Kansas. The building's history ended as a financial institution after the next bank, Citizen's State, also failed.

"Now Rock River's social and cultural center, even the post office occupied the previous bank lobby for about 20 years. Behind that area the postmaster had an apartment later used by two school teachers, and even later the apartment became a jail. After the post office moved, the front area was leased to Rock River Fire Zone for use as a fire garage.

"A large room behind the apartment was known as the Community or Council Room, a meeting place for various organizations, social center and polling place. Events in many lives, weddings, receptions, showers, dances, are attached to that room in memory.

"Rock River Branch Library was housed in a small room for about 15 years, where the late Mrs. James (Myrtle) Mallery served as librarian until 1970. That position was filled by her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Howard (Edith) Mallery. The library was moved to the new city building.

"Citizens of Rock River formed a Historical Society Committee to nominate the First National Bank building to the National Register in 1986. The initial draft was written by Rock River's postmaster Eva Mae Emerson and Town Clerk Joanne Lemler. Nomination was confirmed in 1988."

The old bank safe now contains a collection of phosphorescent rocks and minerals under ultraviolet lights. Another room houses a collection of actual dinosaur bones excavated from the area as well as casts and replicas of famous dinosaur skeletons.

An old safe, believed to be from a train robbed at Wilcox on June 2, 1899, is on display in the museum. The train robbers were never identified. However, popular belief is that Butch Cassidy and/or members of his Wild Bunch robbed the train. The safe had been in an Adam's Express Car and was blown up with dynamite from a nearby railroad construction site. Over \$30,000 in cash and bonds were stolen. The Wild Bunch consisted of George Parker (Butch Cassidy), Harry Longbaugh (Sundance Kid), Harvey Logan (Kid Curry), Lonny Logan, and Elza Lay. Other people at the time believed that Flat Nose George Currie and a pair of outlaws known as the Roberts brothers robbed the train.

Household antiques and old photos give a picture of life in the Old West. Items on display include bottles, ice skates, electrical insulators, a cigarette machine, a trunk and a washing machine.

Horse back riding, the Union Pacific Railroad, and automobiles have been important parts of the history of Rock River. The railroad pushed westward in 1868. From Laramie the railroad went to Rock Creek, eleven miles north of the current location of Rock River; to Wilcox, six miles northwest of Rock Creek; to Como, six miles west of Wilcox; and then to Medicine Bow. (The Old Time Ranch Tour visited Medicine Bow in 1991.) Because of the bad winter weather, the railroad abandoned the towns of Rock Creek and Wilcox on April 1, 1900, and Rock River replaced Rock Creek on the Union Pacific line.

US 30 was the main east-west highway until I-80 was opened in fall of 1970. The population decline which began in the 1960's as younger people sought jobs elsewhere continued. Tourist passed by the town and the hotel closed.

Clive Jones in A Profile of Rock River, Wyoming: Resources, Needs, and Potential written in 1976 said:

"The history of the Rock River area points to a loss of economic function over time. In the early decades of the century, cattle and oil were shipped at the Rock River depot. Later, in the 1950's, timber was cut in the forests of the mountains west of town. This timber was made into lumber at the Rock River sawmill and was transported to market by railway and truck. Within the last two decades, however, the oil field has continued to pump less and become more automated, the sawmill has been removed from its site as cutting operations farther and farther away from town became excessively expensive, and the train depot has been removed.... Additionally, trends in the ranching and farming sectors provided fewer customers for Rock River businesses and little demand for seasonal labor."

Transportation items in the museum include a wagon wheel, tack, and photographs of the snow tunnel over the railroad tracks in Rock River. The snow tunnel has been torn down.

The museum's dinosaur collection and ongoing work to clean and cast bones found in the area is under the direction of Professor Robert Bakker of the University of Colorado. The bones are excavated at a nearby, undisclosed site. Here Dr Bakker and his associates make plaster casts. When the entire dinosaur is cast, it will be assembled for display in the museum.

Stop 2. Diamond Ranch.

The Diamond Ranch adjoins the Heart Ranch on the upstream side of Rock Creek. (The 39th Old Time Ranch Tour visited the Heart Ranch in 1990.) The Diamond Ranch has also been known as the Diamond Home Ranch and the 7L Ranch. W D. Currier, one of the earliest sheepmen in Albany County, settled on the ranch in the late 1870's.

Bud Gillespie and Bob Burns reported on ranches in the area in the Laramie Republican-Boomerang, March 18, 1953, and in their book. Their reports relied on the recollections of Alvy Dixon, a homesteader in the Rock Creek Valley who also had worked for Currier.

Currier was a bachelor who was born in Boston. He was a great sport and gambler, and knew every card game that had been played. He arrived in Laramie with \$200 in his pocket and decided to give sheep raising a try. He went out to a big ranch near Laramie for three days to see how it operated. Then he took up a homestead and paid a sheep man \$75 to tell him where to build a shed on the land. During the first winter the shed drifted under and was never used. After that, he relied primarily on his own ingenuity. He became a very good sheepman and ran about 20,000 head and improved his flock with better bucks. He used range on Foote Creek. Mrs. Sid Morris of Rock River remembered Currier shipping some high class bucks during 1876-79, and she reported seeing the six inch long, stapled wool. Currier made a statement about the sheep business being wiped out around 1889 which was printed in government bulletins. He stated, "Here on the Laramie Plains the sheep business is about wiped out. Six years ago there were forty sheep ranches, now there are six. Cause, no range. Parties bought the railroad land in large blocks and then fenced in both railroad and government land and allowed no one to go inside the fence. There are blocks of 50,000 to 100,000 acres so fenced here. I used to run 20,000 head of sheep here--now run 6,000 to 8,000 and shall have to move out next year, as they are now fencing the last of my ranges. It is a dog-in-the-manger business, as there is not one-fourth the cattle or sheep on the Laramie Plains there were six years ago."

Currier sold out to Frank O. Harrison in the early 80's, and moved back to Vermont. Harrison, an Englishman, had settled on a ranch in the area in 1878 where he built up a cattle business. Hebler and Murray, two Englishmen who worked on a ranch on the Medicine Bow River, were impressed with Harrison's location and made him a \$25,000 cash offer. While thinking over the deal, Harrison met with Currier whose spread was larger. He made Currier an offer of \$25,000 for the ranch. Currier was quite elated and closed the deal at once.

Buyers then were far and few between. Harrison then sold his ranch to Hebler and Murray. Gillespie and Burns suggest that this transaction indicates that the Yankees came by their shrewdness naturally from their English cousins!

As soon as Harrison acquired the ranch he began work in earnest to make many improvements for a cattle ranch. Gillespie and Burns report that Harrison took out several water rights from 1887 to 1892. The water rights for 1380 acres of land amounted to 18.27 cubic feet per second out of Rock Creek. He rented all of Frank Cooper's land on Rock Creek, Three Mile and adjacent lands for \$2500 per year--a bargain. That land included the old Diamond Ranch on Three Mile, a tributary of Rock Creek. The land extended down Three Mile to Rock Creek and then down Rock Creek to the Heart Ranch. Frank Cooper's land also included the Heart Ranch on Rock Creek.

Frank Cooper had 56.89 second feet of water out of Rock Creek to irrigate 1835 acres of land. In addition, he had 17.21 second feet of water out of Three Mile for irrigating 1205 acres of land and 4.42 second feet out of One Mile to irrigate 310 acres. Cooper's first water right was taken out of Rock Creek in 1881 and the last in 1897

Harrison and Cooper sold out to an elderly man named Haynes from the East about 1903. Haynes operated the land for a year and then sold it to Frank C. Bosler. Bosler consolidated the Harrison and Cooper lands with the Iron Mountain Ranch Company's property at Bosler, then owned by Bosler and John C. Coble. Bosler bought out Coble's interest in 1903 and organized the Diamond Cattle Company.

Frank Harrison used both the Diamond and 7L brands on cattle and ran about 5,000 head. The Diamond Cattle Company used the Diamond brand on cattle and the pot hook brand on horses. Both brands were acquired from Harrison. The 7L brand and others used by Harrison were dropped.

Bosler secured the services of John Pierce as manager about 1904. John was a stern but likeable man. Pierce ran a roundup wagon with 10 men and about 100 saddle horses in the fall for about a month and a half. They would gather the cattle off the range, classify them for the different pastures, vaccinate the calves and trail the cattle to the different ranches for the winter. A summer roundup immediately preceding haying gathered and branded the calves. The last roundup was in 1921. The large cattle losses of 1917 due to the severe storm were a big blow to John. He never fully recovered and died the next spring.

The Diamond Cattle Company operated the property intact until Bosler's death in 1918. In the spring of 1921 his widow started to liquidate the cattle and sold them out in a relatively short time. Then she sold some of the land, rented a greater part of it, and harvested and sold the hay off of the land she still held. Mrs. Bosler died in 1944. The land passed to Bosler's son, Frank C. Bosler, Jr. The younger Bosler sold the Diamond Home ranch, previously owned by Currier and Harrison, to L. W. Bailey. In the 1970's the ranch was incorporated with Mr. Bailey and his daughter and son-in-law, Dorothy and Robert L. Dody. Mr. Bailey's grandson, Bill Dody, is our host today.

When Harrison and Cooper sold their land, they reserved the oil rights. Will McMurray, an attorney in Laramie in 1917, induced the Ohio Oil Company to drill a well and prospect for oil. The first discovery of oil was made at that time under the hill just west of the present town of McFadden. This is one of the oldest oil fields in Wyoming coming in shortly after the fields at the Big Muddy and Midwest.

Stop 3. White Ranch.

Bud Gillespie relates the history of the area in Wyoming's Pioneer Ranches and Clifford White has added more details. An Englishman named Frank O. Harrison settled on this ranch in 1878. The land was purchased

from Wyoming Central Land Improvement, Co. which had purchased it from the Union Pacific Railroad. Harrison had homesteaded a quarter section where the buildings are now, and George S. Kline had homesteaded another quarter section south. A short time later Harrison sold to Hebel and Murray in the deal described with the Diamond Ranch. Hebel and Murray made many improvements. In 1886, they acquired water rights for 1.43 second feet out of Rock Creek to irrigate 100 acres of land. In 1887, they secured 14.71 second feet of water for 1,030 acres of hay meadow. The hay supplied feed for Herefords and Shorthorns. In 1901 they traded the cattle for some registered Hereford cattle. One famous sire, Breastplate Lad, was include in the trade. Breastplate Lad weighed over 2300 pounds and his sons matured at 1600 to 1700 pounds. Gillespie quotes a description of this ranch and herd from the Industrial Edition of the Laramie Republican in 1901

"The home of this herd of pedigreed Herefords is located on Rock Creek, 12 miles above the station of Rock River on the Union Pacific Railroad, and is four miles from the foothills of the Medicine Bow range. It has telephone communication with Rock River station. The ranch includes four sections of bottom lands on Rock Creek and comprises a succession of broad and beautiful meadows, between which are streams and natural lawns and parks with willow clumps, aspen groves and towering cottonwoods, yellow and green in the early autumn, but gorgeously red and russet as the frosts increase. It is an ideal ranch for the raising of thoroughbred stock. Registered Herefords are the only stock now kept on the ranch, and some of the best strains to be found in the United States are here. Among the large list is "Breastplate Lad," who has weighed 2350 pounds, yet is active and of good disposition. His sire was Beau Real 11055, and his grandsire Anxiety 4th 99044 and his great-grandsire Anxiety 2238. No finer specimen of the Hereford herd can be found anywhere and among the cows are many fine pedigrees and symmetrical forms of rare beauty. This is the only herd of the kind in Carbon county. Messrs. Hebel and Murray will be able to supply the market with stock of the finest strain--an industry long needed, in our part of the state. Workmen are busy erecting breeding barns capable of accommodating the animal increase and in another year this firm will have a herd of 125 head of breeding stock and be able to handle contracts of carload lots, both bulls and heifers. The heifers and cows from this well known strain of Herefords will be valuable additions to any western breeder's herd, and there is no question of the success of the enterprise."

Hebel and Murray would sell the bulls for \$100 each. One interesting story Gillespie relates concerns John A. Winkler of the Riverside Livestock Company who went to Denver to purchase bulls to improve his herd. Winkler bought two bulls for about \$900 each. It turned out that the bulls had been raised on the Hebel and Murray ranch and then brought to Denver where they were pampered and dressed up for sale.

Another quarter section of the current ranch was homesteaded in April, 1902 by Samuel Coen near Arlington which was almost immediately sold to the Rockdale Hereford Association. The ridge above the ranch is still known as Coen Ridge. Archibald Murray was president of the Rockdale Hereford Association.

Hebel and Murray dissolved the partnership. Hebel returned to England and was killed in the Boer War. Murray sold to the Rockdale Livestock Company, whose president was Timothy Ross. Ross sold the ranch to the Laramie Valley Cattle Company in 1921. That company apparently failed because the ranch was sold to J. T. Hurst at a Sheriff's Sale in Rawlins in 1925. Within one month the ranch was sold three times to C. H. Fitzpatrick, Jacob Zeigler, and W. A. McDowell. In 1929, McDowell sold to C. H. Bowlby, who sold it to Keystone Cattle Company in 1931. That company was dissolved in April, 1941, and Alvy and Rosemary Dixon bought the land. Bryan White, Clifford White's father, took possession of the ranch in May, 1943, and completed the purchase in February, 1956. Alvy Dixon had died in 1945.

Two small ranches were added to the property: In the late 1950's, the Herbert J. King Ranch and in 1968, the Morgan McQuay Ranch. McQuay had homesteaded the property and obtained a 1921 water right. The ranch today is incorporated as the Lonesome Fox Corporation.

Our tour will stop near White's Recreation Reservoirs. As the brochure for the site says, "White's Recreation Reservoirs are beautiful lakes constructed solely for the purpose of fishing and recreation. They are located in a natural basin high enough to view the surrounding area while enjoying the sport of fishing and camping at a site that displays some of the most beautiful scenery in Wyoming.

"They are bounded by a ridge of Ponderosa Pine trees which provide shade and shelter for campers. The water in the lakes is clear and cool and is much better than most water supplied to our cities. A constant supply of fresh water runs into and out of the lakes at all times thereby assuring that the fish are really fresh-water variety.

"Our lake has a capacity of 734 acre-feet and covers a surface of 53 acres. The other has a capacity of 551 acre-feet and a surface area of 43 acres....The lakes are presently stocked with Rainbow, Brook, Brown, and Cutthroat Trout weighing up to eight pounds."

Stop 4. Arlington.

Goldie Pitcher provided substantial portions of the text which follows.

Arlington may seem to be merely the end of an exit off I-80. Actually, it is an exit into history, the site of the Rock Creek crossing known as Rockdale, on the Overland Trail. Mementoes of that era stand today. Among them are the log building alternately used as a blacksmith shop, dance hall, school, and bunkhouse; the post office, saloon, and store building; and the original homestead cabin.

The Overland Trail came from Denver. Old Time Ranch Tour participants may remember our recent visits to other Overland Trail sites: the Big Laramie Crossing at the Richardson Ranch in 1989 and the Virginia Dale Stage Station in 1992. The Trail may be seen as scars in the grass fields in the Big Hollow at an historical marker on Wyoming 130, the Laramie-Centennial road, about 16 miles west of Laramie.

Joe Bush had an early claim to the land in 1860 and built a toll bridge that has long been replaced. The toll was 75 cents for each vehicle. The toll bridge did a thriving business because the rocky nature of the stream bed and the thick brush along the banks made it difficult for any travelers to ford the stream.

A cemetery holds bodies of children drowned in an attempt to cross the treacherous Rock Creek in spring and others who perished on the Trail. The kidnapping of Lizzie Fletcher Brokenhorn during an Indian raid occurred after Cheyenne Indians attacked a wagon train near the cemetery.

Bill and Sadie Williams took over the claim around 1868 and built a small ranch. They sold produce from a huge garden to miners and emigrants and operated a way station and the toll bridge. Bud Gillespie wrote in Wyoming's Pioneer Ranches that in 1884 Bill secured a water right out of Rock Creek for 0.81 of a second foot of water to irrigate 60 acres of bottom land on which he produced hay to sell to the travelers for their livestock. Bill also opened a saloon and gambling hall. After a number of people had settled in the area a post office was opened named Rockdale.

Gillespie also wrote about the toll bridge. Bill Williams charged 75 cents per team to cross. A man on horseback paid 50 cents. "There was a pole swinging on a hinge which extended out across the bridge. The loose end of the pole had a padlock and chain which could securely fasten it, so transients could not cross."

Gillespie goes on to relate that the dance hall was a source of amusement for people who came many miles by horseback, and in wagons, spring wagons, and buggies. Also Gillespie said that many tie hacks worked

in the timber camps near Rockdale. Ties were cut during the fall and winter and stacked on the bank of Rock Creek. When the spring run off came, they floated the ties in the high, turbulent water.

After Bill Williams died, his widow Sadie Williams married Sid Morris. The two continued the business. The property was sold to Alva Dixon and his brother Joe in the early 1900's. When Joe died, his widow, "Aunt Mary" Dixon, sold her half of the property to Alvy.

Alvy Dixon had moved from Missouri to Colorado and thence to Wyoming in 1879, worked as a freighter between Rock Creek Station, Fort McKinney and Fort Fetterman, carried mail by horseback between Lookout and Rockdale, logged and took a homestead northeast of Arlington. Several years after the death of his first wife, Minnie, with whom he had four children, Edith, Lloyd, Charlotte and Margaret, Alvy married Rosemary Pitcher, adding two more children, Chester and Eunice, to the family.

Chet Pitcher married Goldie Morton in Cody, Wyoming in 1939 and had served in the Navy for more than seven years before hiring on with Ohio Oil Company. His mother had continued to live at Arlington following Alvy's death in 1945 until a few years before her death in 1970. Chet took early retirement in 1972 to continue to care for the ranch, a commitment now carried on with daughters Donna Pitcher Fisher and Christine Pitcher Ross and their families.

The buildings on this portion of the Overland Trail have withstood the changes of time to a large degree. Both the homestead cabin and store building have become museums marking and linking past to present. Goldie Pitcher attempts to strengthen that link through the history of McFadden she is currently writing and a history of Arlington to follow.

Stop 5. Brokaw Ranch.

This account was provided by Howard Brokaw.

The Brokaw Ranch is built upon homesteads filed upon in the 1880's by John Clearwater and Marshall Dixon.

In the period after the Civil War, Marshall Dixon and his son Alvy hauled freight from St. Louis, Missouri, to the Montana and Wyoming territories. They discovered the area along Rock Creek from what is now Arlington to McFadden and thought it to be prime ranching country.

As their freighting business dwindled because of improving transportation, Marshall Dixon, his son Alvy, brother Joseph, and a brother-in-law came into the Rock Creek area to file for homesteads. They found John Clearwater, a frontier minister, already in residence, but there was ample land for each of them to file for homesteads.

They moved their families from Joplin and Carthage, Missouri, to the new homesteads and set about developing their ranches. Within a few years Marshall Dixon died and his wife, Margaret, married Mahlon Hampton, providing the basis for calling that area of the ranch the "Hamp."

In 1913, John M. Brokaw sold his farm at Mount Vernon, Iowa, so he could move an asthmatic son to the drier climate of Wyoming. He bought a farm on the Bosler Irrigation Project north of Rock River and moved his wife, four sons, and a daughter to the farm.

Soon thereafter Ralph Brokaw, a teenage son, sought work on the Dixon Ranch. Ralph Brokaw finished high school in Rock River. He worked summers on the Dixon ranch and spent a term at the University of

Wyoming before entering the Army for World War I. He returned from the Army in 1918 and married Alvy Dixon's daughter, Edith.

In the meantime Mahlon Hampton had died, and Margaret Hampton bought the Clearwater homestead.

In 1922, Ralph and Edith Brokaw bought the Hampton/Clearwater property and leased a 40 acre section belonging to the Union Pacific Railroad, creating the nucleus of the present ranch. Additional acreage by gift and bequest from Alvy Dixon brought the ranch to its present size.

McFadden--The Vanishing Oil Camp by Goldie Pitcher

Once rows of houses lined the top of the hill overlooking the lush valley below. Now fast becoming a ghost camp, little remains of two more camp sites, 100 buildings and 85 foot wooden rigs towering over 400 residents.

The name "McFadden" is a simplified spelling of the name of geologist Jack McFadyen, who, with his crew, discovered an oil holding layer of rock at Pine Ridge, indicating an oil or gas dome possibility. Ohio Oil Co., later Marathon Oil, drilled the discovery well in 1917. Many miles from town in that era meant workers would need homes for their families, bunkhouses for single men and, obviously, a store. The first one, below the hill, even included a pool hall, beauty shop and post office.

The cook house, open 24 hours daily, fed 200-300 men. Supplies for the cooks, bakers and dishwashers were trucked in from Colorado, Laramie and Wheatland. It took nine to eighteen months to complete a well with cable tools in those early days. On fourteen drilling rigs operating at the same time men worked twelve hour shifts, two to a shift.

The first houses, hastily built and called "tarpaper shacks," were soon joined by frame houses, especially for the "VIP's." A school for grades one through eight was built in 1919. High school classes were held in the basement of the community hall, a building large enough to accommodate 200 people where many social activities and meetings were held. Basketball games were played there, too.

There are still memories of the great meals served at the cook house where visiting officials stayed rather than in the bunkhouse. After the first store burned, a second was operated above the hill. Having a company doctor was imperative, and several served at the hospital over the years. Although houses were small, they were cozy with gas and electricity furnished, and the residents paying only token rent. There were garages for vehicles, a rooming house for girls working in the cook house, a pipeline building, a bathhouse and residence for the company doctor.

When traveling pastors failed to arrive, church and Sunday school services were conducted by lay readers. Mammoth snowdrifts nearly covered houses in winter, and bitterly cold nights kept crews fighting to keep the field in operation. It was, by today's standards, a simple uncomplicated life when people worked together, played together, sometimes cried together and were always, with the local ranchers, "there for each other."

Marathon Oil sold the field to Incline Reserves in 1988.

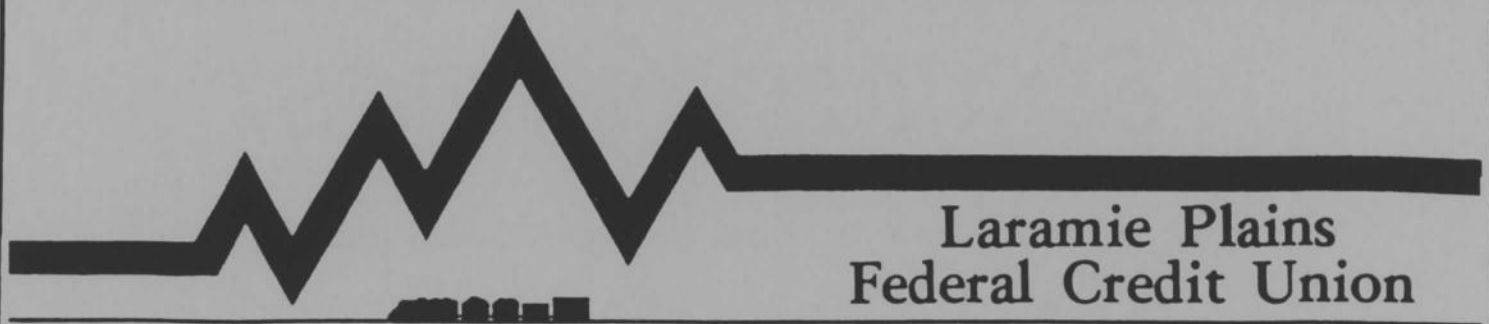
The return to Laramie

To return to Laramie retrace our path back to Arlington. Go under I-80 and through Arlington until you reach the entrance to I-80. Take I-80 East to Laramie. Alternatively, you may retrace our route along WY 13. You will then return to US 30 in Rock River where you will turn right toward Laramie.

The 42nd Old Time Ranch Tour

Saturday, July 17, 1993

<u>LOCATIONS AND STOPS</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>MILEAGES</u>	
		<u>TRIP</u>	<u>LOCAL</u>
Leave Albany County Courthouse	7:30 am	0.0	0.0
Rock River Town Line	8:13 am	38.1	38.1
Turn Left to Museum	8:14 am	38.7	38.7
STOP 1: Rock River Museum	8:16 - 9:30 am	39.4	39.4
Left onto US 30/287	9:30 am	39.6	0.2
Left onto WY 13 to McFadden	9:32 am	40.1	0.7
Pass Heart Ranch	9:37 am	44.5	5.1
Pass Valley Station	9:44 am	50.0	10.6
Right near McFadden	9:46 am	51.7	12.3
Immediate right	9:46 am	51.7	12.3
Bear left	9:48 am	52.2	12.8
Turn right	9:56 am	54.3	14.9
STOP 2: Diamond Ranch	10:00 - 10:55 am	54.8	15.4
Turn left	10:58 am	55.4	0.6
Bear left	11:07 am	57.7	2.9
Left toward WY 13	11:08 am	58.0	3.2
Turn right onto WY 13	11:08 am	58.1	3.3
Pass LeBeau Ranch	11:09 am	58.7	3.9
Turn right toward White Ranch	11:10 am	59.5	4.7
Pass Gerald LeBeau Ranch House	11:10 am	59.6	4.8
Clifford White Ranch House	11:12 am	60.1	5.3
STOP 3: Clifford White Ranch	11:20 - 12:15 pm	60.7	5.9
Turn right at gate	12:18 pm	61.5	0.8
Clifford White Ranch House	12:24 pm	62.4	1.7
Back to WY 13	12:26 pm	62.9	2.2
STOP 4: Arlington	12:35 - 2:00 pm	68.6	7.9
Turn left under I-80	2:08 pm	70.6	2.0
Bear right after underpass	2:08 pm	70.7	2.1
Left	2:10 pm	71.1	2.5
Left	2:10 pm	71.2	2.5
STOP 5: Howard Brokaw Ranch	2:15 - 3:05 pm	71.5	2.9
Bear left toward underpass	3:08 pm	72.3	0.8
Turn right after underpass	3:09 pm	72.4	0.9
Arlington	3:17 pm	74.4	2.9
Right onto I-80 at Arlington	3:17 pm	74.6	3.1
Curtis Street turnoff in Laramie	3:53 pm	112.8	41.3
Third and Curtis Streets	3:56 pm	114.0	42.5
Albany County Courthouse	4:01 pm	115.2	43.7



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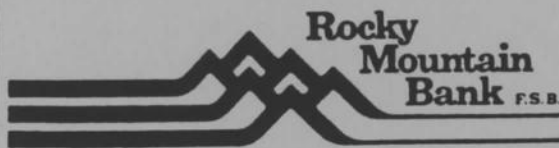
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