

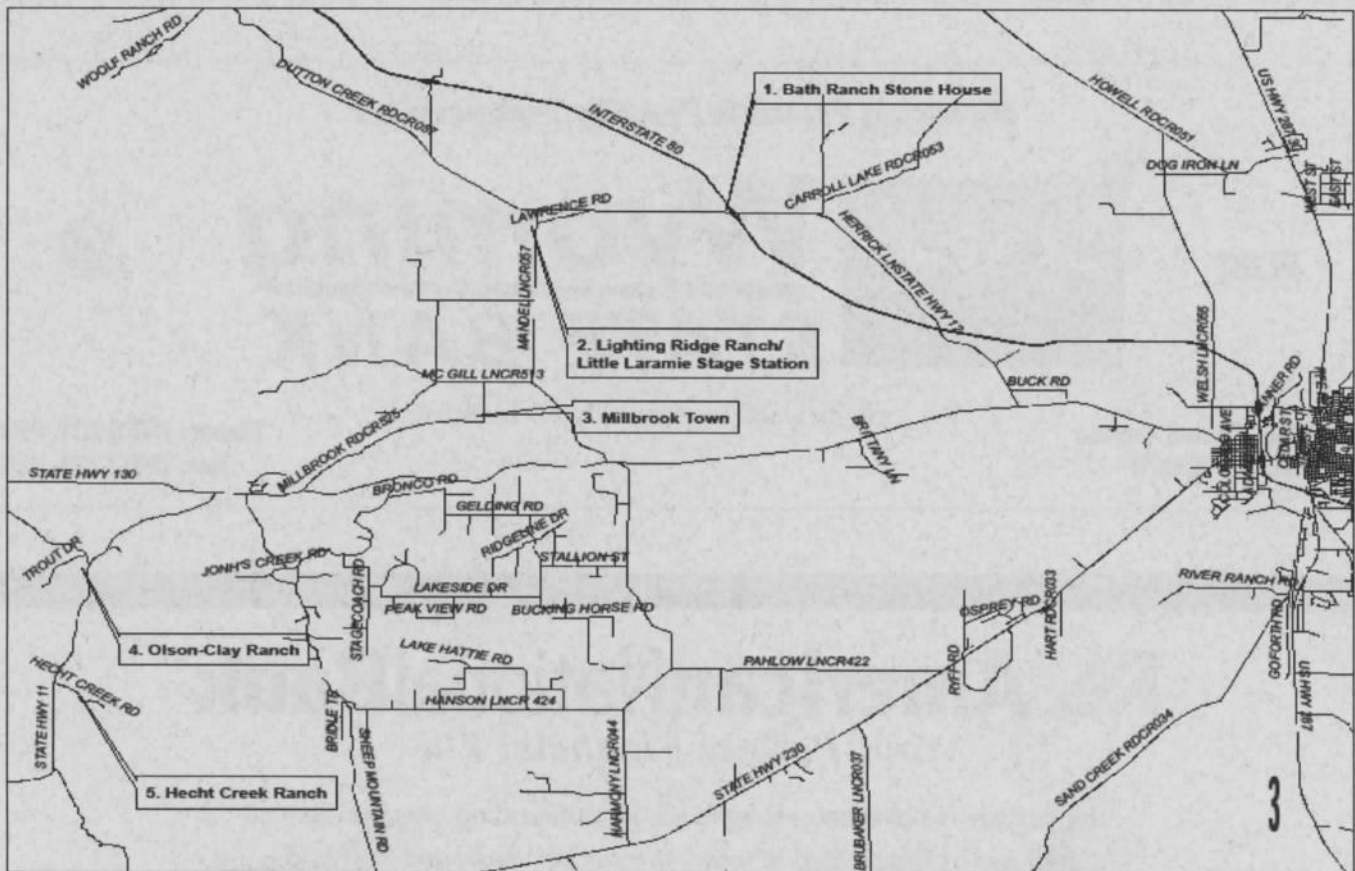
THE 58TH OLD TIME RANCH TOUR

STOPS ON THE 58TH OLD TIME RANCH TOUR
Saturday, July 18, 2009

- 1. The Bath Ranch Historic Stone House**
Hosts: The Bath Family Speaker: Randy Dunn
- 2. The Lightning Ridge Ranch/ Little Laramie Stage Stop**
Hosts: John and Kay Kemp. Owners Speaker: Amy Lawrence
- 3. Old Millbrook Town**
Host: Derrick Smith, Durbano Ranch Manager Speaker: George Gladney
- 4. Olson-Clay Ranch (T Bar K Ranch)**
Hosts: Perry and Gloria Clay, Owners
Speakers: Perry, Gloria and Jim Clay
- 5. The Hecht Creek Ranch**
Hosts and Speakers: Art and Dorothy Sigel, Owners

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The Laramie Kiwanis Club



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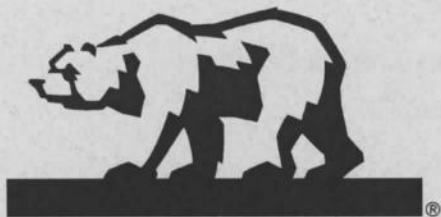


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THE FIFTY-EIGHTH OLD TIME RANCH TOUR
Saturday, July 18th, 2009

The Old Time Ranch Tours was conceived and promoted by Dr. Robert Burns. The series has continued annually since 1951, except in 1982.

The 2009 Old Time Ranch Tour Chairperson: Grant Showacre

Committee Members: Bob Nelson John Rowland George Gladney Wes Bressler

George Gladney is the master of ceremonies.

Restrooms are available for each stop at the trailer carrying the outhouses.

Safety: Safety is a primary concern. Tour marshals will coordinate the caravan. Keep lights on while traveling on paved highways. Stay to the right at crests of hills, Be careful making turns on and off paved highways. 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.

Keep a safe distance between cars. We will travel at fifteen (15) to thirty-five (35) mph on gravel roads and at fifty (50) to fifty-five (55) mph on paved roads. Drive carefully Respect the other drivers. Enjoy the scenery, and have a good trip.

Parking: Your cooperation is appreciated at parking sites. Parking is accomplished so that cars need not use reverse gear for entering of leaving a site. If you have difficulty walking, please inform the first traffic director at 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.

Courtesy: WE ARE THE GUESTS OF THE RANCHES AND HISTORICAL SITES. PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE ANY ITEMS INCLUDING ARTIFACTS FOUND ON THE GROUND!!

If you smoke outside your vehicle, please be careful and take your cigarette butts with you. Fire is an ever-present danger, and the dry grasses and old timbers of some structures offer excellent kindling.

Thanks: Many persons helped to organized and to promote this year's tour. In particular, we than the publicity given to the tour by the *Laramie Daily Boomerang*, and the Laramie radio station KOWB. Thanks, too, to the Pepsi Bottling Companies for the refreshments at lunch, also Marian Showacre at Allstate Insurance for supplying the ice, keeping the refreshments cold. Finally, we thank the members of the Laramie Kiwanis Club who helped.

During your next visit, please thank the fine people at these Laramie businesses for their support of this tour.

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Stop 1. Historical Bath Ranch Stone House

The text concerning the Bath Ranch is provided by William Dunn.



The plaque mounted on the entrance of the Stone House reads, "THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORICAL PLACES WYOMING PLACE #221"

The Stone House was built in 1857 by Henry Bath with the help of his six sons and two daughters. There is a large red flag stone rock just above the east upstairs bedroom window that has engraved in the stone, "H. BATH 1875" The stone

used on the construction of the house was quarried from the original homestead of Fred and Vallie Bath known as the Poverty Flats Ranch located about two miles southwest of the present stone house. This is an outstanding example of native stone constructions utilizing semi-cut stone which was common in the Laramie area in the late 1800s and a little German ingenuity. The house measures thirty-six feet wide and thirty-two feet long with the addition of an ice house and storage to the rear of the structure. It is a two-story dwelling with a cellar that measures fifteen feet by thirty-two feet long, with the depth of five feet, four inches. The foundation is the same type stone as used in the house. How much deeper the foundation goes is only a guess. Most of the walls are eighteen inches thick with the exception of the center partition which is two inches thick.

During restoration, several people asked to see the port holes that we used in the event of attack. We are sorry to say that this was only a myth; there were never any such holes.

July 28, 1909, Henry, who had since moved to California, deeded the ranch to his son and daughter-in-law, (Charles) Fred and Vallie G. Bath.

In 1912 Fred Bath, with help from his brothers and the Carlson and Zeigler brothers, built the Stone Barn as well as the white house. The barn has many unique features. There are eight two-horse stalls. On the west side of the barn there are four pens, ten feet by thirteen feet with sliding gates so that each pen can be isolated. The east side has a twelve by forty-five foot shelter room. The front side has a garage on the left, an alley way, then a tack room. Who would have thought that in 1912 a garage was in the future? In the hay loft there are three-foot mangers on each side of the barn, so no matter where there might be stock, hay would be available. After the barn was finished, many barn dances were held there. People would come from all over the valley and Laramie to dance and party all night, then leave the next morning.

In 1940, Carl Bath, son of Fred and Vallie, gave up ranching to become a chiropractor and the ranch was leased out. Gerald Greaser leased it in 1942, John Dorman and Sonny Braunschweig in 1943, Al Sherwood in 1944 with the option to buy. On May 1, 1946, Al Sherwood picked up the option for the ranch for \$8000. This included what equipment was left as well as the brands and one-quarter oil rights. In the middle 1930s, three oil wells were drilled and oil was struck. But the oil people convinced Vallie G. Bath that it was such a low grade and would never be pumped, so the wells were capped. Sometime later they did start pumping and have pumped now for many years.

Ray, a grandson of Henry, and his wife Mary Beth, was able to purchase the acreage on which the buildings are located for \$8000. A family meeting was held, and it was decided that if the rest of the family would reimburse

Ray and Mary Beth for their outlay, a corporation could be formed under Bath Stone Ranch, Inc. This is now a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation, and the future plan is to have a Bath Museum open to the public. This should make the Bath heritage last for many generations to come.

Restoration has been ongoing for the past three years, and the progress as caught the eye of the locals as well as those driving I-80. The place had deteriorated so badly over the past few years that it was questionable whether it could ever be brought back. One of the former tenants had used the Stone House for a sheep barn. Bums and transients lived in both houses and the barn, building fires in pans to cook and maybe keep warm. It was a dump ground for anyone to get rid of junk. Antique collectors took anything that was moveable. The roof was off part of the house, and all the windows had either been blown out, broken out, or shot out. Vines covered the house, growing through the windows, along the baseboards, and in every crack in the wall (and there were many). It's hard to visualize how bad it was unless you had seen it prior to the cleanup. We hope with a lot of help and encouragement that it will be the show place that it was in the 1920s.

Stop 2. Lightning Ridge Ranch/Little Laramie Stage Station



According to R.H. Burns's Book, *Wyoming Pioneer Ranches*, Phil Mandel was the first settler on the Laramie Plains. He was born in Alsaca, France in 1834, left there as a boy of 15, coming to Wyoming at age 20. In 1895 he was in Utah fighting Indians but existing land records show that part of this land, section 2-16-76, was settled by Phil Mandel prior to 1860.

In the early 1860s, Phil Mandel took up a ranch on Lone Tree Creek near the Little Laramie River. He would purchase all the lame, sore-footed, and worn-out animals from passing freighters, then turn them out to grass. The animals wintered well, but early the following spring the Indians raided and captured almost his entire herd.

Phil Mandel was the manager of the Little Laramie Stage Station the entire time that stages stopped here. Mandel sold his ranch on the Little Laramie River to Charley Hecht in about 1880.

The Blacksmith shop that is still standing is known to have been at the old stage crossing. The central building has distinctive swinging doors under the archway which some say was an old bar. Others say the building was a place to work on stages.

Research points to the ranch being purchased by Gurley in 1942. In 1950, the ranch was sold to Gary Loban. In 1995, the ranch was purchased by C.L. Burton and in April of 2005 it was sold to present owners John and Kay Kemp, who operate the ranch as Lightning Ridge Ranch.

Today the ranch consists of ±1630 acres. It is about 7800 feet in elevation with three months from frost to frost. Water rights date back to 1876.

Grass on the ranch includes Garrison, creeping foxtail, smooth brome, timothy and alsike clover, and red top. Yields can be anticipated to be about 3 tons per acre with fertilizer. Fertilizing is done in the spring using either liquid or dry material. The hay is put up in round bales weighing about 1600 to 1800 pounds.

The cows start calving around April 1st and then the pairs are hauled to summer pasture. They return to the ranch around Sept. 1st the calves are sold on the ranch. The commercial herd consists of black and red cows bred to charolais bulls for a terminal cross.

Thank you and we hope you enjoyed your tour! Remember, Eat Beef!!!

Stop 3. Millbrook

Text provided by Amy M. Lawrence, 1990, All Rights Reserved.



Millbrook was a station on the “Hahn’s Peak” Railroad, about midway between Laramie and Centennial and came into existence about 1906. The most prominent building of the settlement, the station house, was not only the “office” for the railroad business, but was also the living quarters for the station master and his family, the post office, and general store. By the early 1930s nothing was left of the buildings but the stock pens.

The railroad was responsible for bringing both coal and grocery items to the settlement of Millbrook. In 1930 the railroad charged

\$4 per ton to bring coal from North Park to Millbrook. A 1916 grocery slip indicates that the surcharge for delivery to Millbrook was fifty cents for the order.

Although the most prominent building in Millbrook was the station house, certainly the most important building was the dance hall; in fact it may have been the most important building between Laramie and Centennial.

While its origin is in doubt, it certainly was in place in 1914 when Rena Palmer (Lawrence) writes of the dances there in her diaries.

Baseball games and rodeos were also important functions held here. According to Les Crawford, who spent his summers at the nearby Wallis Ranch, the Bath brothers and their cousins were also top hands on the local baseball team, which was called



“The Hayseeds.” Their challengers were the “Mudders,” a crew then working for the county road crew building Dallas Lane, aptly named if they were coping with the thick, black mud that forms the hay meadows of the valley. Rodeos were held there too, with buggies and wagons and a few “flivvers” forming the arena. There was even a bucking horse named Millbrook. The rodeos were often held at the end of the yearly horse roundup which

ended at that time at Millbrook where the horses were sorted. With the exception of a few fenced yards and hayfields, the Laramie Plains were still open range.

Like many country schools, the Millbrook school was moved several times. As years passed, the number and ages of children varied from ranch to ranch, and the school was often moved to be as close to as many children as possible. Most of the youngsters rode horseback to school, and a mile could make a big difference when the temperature was far below zero.

Millbrook was also the site of activities by two of the most flamboyant promoters this county had ever seen: Isaac Van Horn and E.J. Bell. In fact, the station owed its existence to Van Horn, the Boston banker who built the Laramie, Hahn's Peak, and Pacific Railways. The first grading of the railway was begun in 1901 and it was 1911 before the tracks had reached their final destination at Coalmont, Colo., 111 miles away. Originally the railroad was headed for "Gold Hill" a gold camp in the Medicine Bows above Centennial, then over the Bows to Saratoga, and finally to connect the main line near Ogden. Only Van Horn's determination and ingenuity kept the line alive through five reorganizations until the Union Pacific took it over in 1935.

In the 1930s Millbrook started to disappear. The Union Pacific took over the line and wanted it shut down. The station burned and other buildings were sold off. Even the stock pens were moved to nearby Miller Station in the 1940s. Although the little settlement is remembered by only a few, it left a permanent mark on the ranch development of the Little Laramie Valley

Stop 4. Olson – Clay Ranch – T-K



Ranch in the Little Laramie community.

The following text was written by Wana Clay Olson for a previous Old Time Ranch Tour booklet and updated by Gloria Clay

In October 1900, John and Hulda Olson, with their small daughter, Emma, and son, Harry, three months old, moved to the ranch which they purchased from George and Elizabeth Ann Hutton. It was not a long move, for they only came from what was known as the Pingre Ranch, north of the present Highway 130, not too far east of the North Fork bridge.

Mr. and Mrs. Olson were originally from Sweden. John received his citizenship papers in 1894. Before his marriage, he had worked for the Union Pacific Railroad and on the Phil Bath

A short distance from the buildings on the new ranch, the South Fork and North Fork joined to form the Little Laramie River. The original purchase was so small that the Olsons soon began buying land nearby. The lower and upper meadows to the south were bought from Sarah Bird in 1905 and 1909. Miss Bird had homesteaded this land, and the patent to the land was signed in 1892 by Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States.

Land was also available for homesteading east of the Olson Ranch, on the west side of Sheep Mountain, and at intervals John, Hulda, and Charley Olson, John's brother, proved up on land. John soon purchased Charley's

homestead. When John's son, Harry, was old enough, he also proved up on a strip of land. Many years later, Harry also proved up on a secondary homestead on Bald Mountain, several miles northwest. During 1934, meadowland, which had been a part of the well-known and historic Walbol Ranch, but more recently known as Dinwiddie Ranch, was purchased.

The Olsons built an eleven room log home during 1913. Ole Anderson and Gust Westerlund, skilled workmen with logs, constructed the house which today is still a fine, sturdy building. This home became a community center where for years annual Thanksgiving dinners were held. The local social club bought the turkeys, several women would each roast one and bring it back with dressing and gravy to dinners. Everyone else contributed their special holiday dishes. Such a gala day of visiting, laughter, and general good times was looked forward to each year.

The present barn was also built of logs in 1917 with many stalls for work horses, saddle horses, and a large haymow. This building was used for community barn dances for several years. Special occasions included twentieth and twenty-fifth wedding anniversaries which the Olsons celebrated July 14 with relatives, friends, and neighbors coming from miles around to the big dances.

John Olson and son, Harry, were soon raising Hereford cattle for exhibit at the Denver Livestock Show held each year in January. The calves were carefully fed and cared for from time of weaning until the January show. They always placed well in the shows and usually brought top prices. This routine and profitable ranch activity lasted for 23 years.

As time marches on, people become older and death takes its toll—Mrs. Hulda Olson passed away on June 6, 1951, John Olson passed away September 23, 1955. A tractor accident took Harry Olson's life on March 17, 1964. The daughter, Emma Olson, later Mrs. Lloyd Wilson, lived on a ranch about four miles south of her childhood home and has passed away.

Wana's youngest son, Perry Clay, was a county agricultural agent in Newcastle. In 1959 he left the UW Extension service. He and his wife, Gloria, daughter Riki, and sons Bill and Jim moved to the ranch.

The guest business was expanded to include people not only from the United States but also from many foreign countries. Most guests came for the excellent trout fishing, as well as the ranch activities and great food served by Mrs. Olson.

Harry and Perry began introducing other breeds into the Hereford cattle and started showing feeder calves at more shows. This has continued to the present day and the show calf sales have become one of the primary businesses of the ranch.

The guest business has recently been changed to a bed and breakfast and no longer takes in full-time guests.

Stop 5. Hecht Creek/Squires Ranch

The Squires Ranch (known also as the Sundby-Wilson Ranch) is located thirty miles west of Laramie, in Centennial Valley. The ranch buildings are situated on Hecht Creek at the base of Sheep Mountain. The ranch was founded in 1887 by Ryenold Hecht, who came with his family from Ohio and acquired a few sections of meadow land. Ryenold Hecht sold his homestead to his son William Hecht who homesteaded additional lands in 1906. William Hecht's homesteaded lands became the buildings, home, barns, and corrals of today's Squires Ranch. With the addition of Henry Hecht's original ranch, made up of a large meadow purchased from the Dole Brothers (of Dole Pineapple fame), a homestead proved-up on by Henry Hecht and a homestead purchased from Mrs. Snapp, Mrs. Henry Hecht's mother, these lands made up the remainder of the Squires Ranch. The Snapp land is located at the base of Sheep Mountain. The Henry Hecht meadow is located on the west side of State Highway 11. The Ryenold Hecht meadow is located on the east side of State Highway 11. In January, 1927, Gudmund E. and Emma K. Sundby purchased the ranch from William Hecht.

The early 1900 Centennial Valley ranch houses were built of logs. The Squires Ranch's original ranch house was built by Mr. and Mrs. William Hecht in 1906. Swedish logsmen built the two-story log house along with many barns and other necessary ranch buildings. In those days travel was done by horse and wagon. There was a stagecoach stop at the Gordon Wright Ranch, known today as the Vee Bar Ranch. The Vee Bar Ranch is approximately seven miles north of Squires Ranch.

Ranching was a difficult business in the early days. Feeding cattle and horses with a wagon and team during the harsh winter weather and deep snow was a constant challenge. Irrigation dams and ditches had to be built by hand.

Before the Laramie Hahn's Peak and Pacific Railroads were built to Centennial, the town had been platted and a dance hall, depot, hotel, three residences, a bank building, and the Centennial Post building had been built. One of the residences belonged to the president of the railroad company and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Van Horn Miller. Starting in 1910, the Railroad Company, on many Sundays during the summers, had special trains running from Laramie and the dances lasted until the train went back to Laramie around 10 p.m. When the Hahn's Peak Railroad reached Albany, Wyo., an open-air dance pavilion was built. Albany was a popular place for picnics during the summer.

Two years before World War II, Gudmund Sundby, his brother Oliver, and a cousin, Harold Sundby, built the beautiful rustic log Mountain View Dance Hall in Centennial. The rationing of gasoline during the war ended the dances in the community. In 1950 the Sundbys sold the Mountain View Hall to Mr. and Mrs. Self, who changed the name to the Old Corral. Pat and Nicci Self added the café and featured delicious steak dinners. June 11, 1952, two days after Gudmund Sundby's fatal auto accident, the Old Corral went up in smoke from a fire caused by a gas stove explosion. In a few months of Self's had a new Old Corral built in Centennial. Today, though not the original building, the Old Corral still operates as a restaurant.

In September 2005 the Siegel Family purchased the Sundby-Wilson Ranch from Suzy and Roxy Squires. The ranch was renamed the Hecht Creek Ranch, recognizing the people who founded the ranch in 1887, and the creek that flows through the area of the houses.

Place	Distance (miles)
Start-3 rd and Curtis	0.0
Turn on I-80	1.2
Exit Herrick Lane, Turn Left	14.1
Stop 1 Bath Ranch Stone House, Turn Off	14.6
Left on Mandel Lane	18.6
Stop 2: Lightning Ridge Ranch/Little Laramie Stage Stop	20.0
Turn on McGill Lane	23.0
Turn onto Millbrook Road	24.0
Stop 3: Millbrook Station	24.7
Turn onto Highway 130	29.4
Turn on Highway 11	31.3
Turn on T-K Ranch Road	35.7
Stop 4: Olson – Clay – T-K	36.4
Turn onto Highway 11	37.1
Buckeye Turnoff	40.0
Stop 5: Hecht Ranch Branding Area	40.5
Return to 3 rd and Reynolds	

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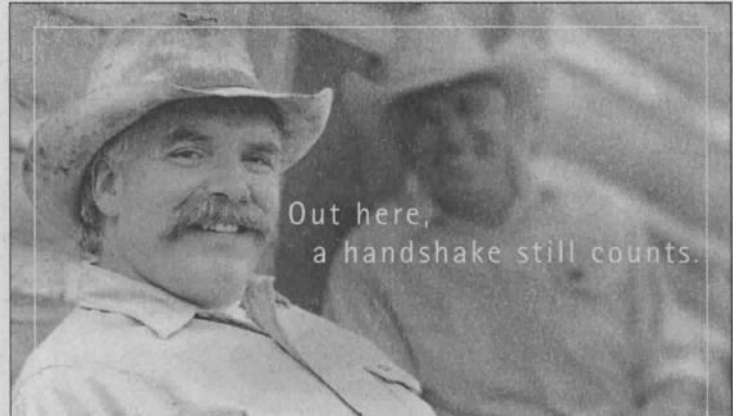
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