

PALISADE Historical Society

www.historicpalisade.org

WWII GERMAN POW CAMP IN PALISADE CONTINUES TO DRAW INTEREST

The Palisade Historical Society continues to help locals and visitors understand more about the German Prisoners of War who were here in 1944 and 1945 for peach harvests. Since we presented a program and arranged for Grand Junction High School Colorado History Teacher Lisa Moot's class to interview Palisade residents who remember the POWs in October, KREX TV Channel 5's Ivan Fisher conducted more interviews to create stories which aired on December 31 and January 1.

KREX founder Rex Howell's daughter, Gerri Kendrick, came from Grand Junction every day during harvest in 1944 to sort peaches on a Palisade invented Edwards Grader at an orchard shed on East Orchard Mesa. She remembered how young the German POWs were. And later, after reading the book *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Gerri was struck by the contrast of how well the German Prisoners were treated here compared to what happened in Germany.



Gerri Kendrick at
KREX interview

Nancy Taylor and Harry Talbott were first interviewed by the GJHS class and then again for the two-part KREX feature, adding new and interesting memories. Nancy was the head packer at her family's packing shed. Harry's family's orchard is on East Orchard Mesa across the River from the CCC Camp. He explained without having access to the German POW workers, the crops would have been lost.

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January 2020

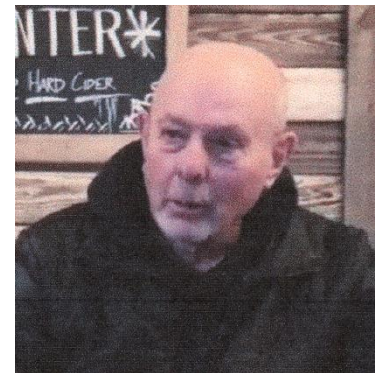


Nancy Taylor at
KREX interview

We've been very surprised at the interest in Palisade's German Prisoners which began last fall from the GJHS class. Subsequent media coverage revealed even long-time Grand Valley residents were unaware of the unique WWII and Palisade connection, though we have presented programs and had information available since 2010.

Harry Talbott at
KREX interview

Fortunately, as part of their learning, the GJHS students worked with the Museum to create a display to help those who visit the Museum better understand the WWII German POW story.



German POW Exhibit Is at The Museum of Western Colorado

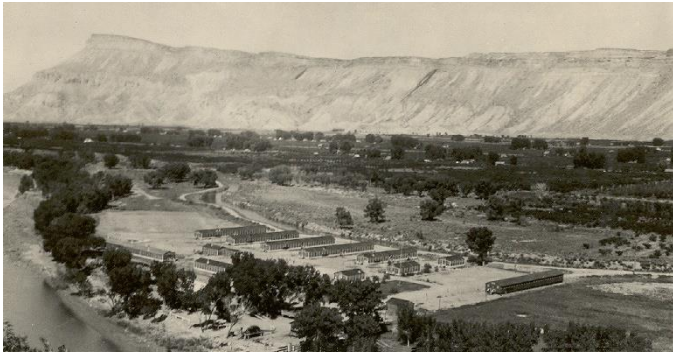
The German POW display created by the GJHS Colorado History students also includes their video interview of Nancy and Harry.

The German POW display is on the second floor of the Museum of Western Colorado building on Ute Avenue in Grand Junction until May. It features photos from the Palisade Historical Society's Peska Family collection of the CCC Camp five years before the POWs stayed there in the harvest of 1944. There are also artifacts provided by the Historical Society including a Palisade invented picking sack and wooden picking box which were likely used by the prisoners.

(continued)

Page 1

German Prisoners also came for the harvest in 1945, though they were housed in Fruita's CCC Camp.



This 1939 photo of Palisade's CCC Camp is from the Peska Family Album. The barracks were removed and this area is where Palisade's sewage lagoons are now located. The 200 cabin Migrant Labor camp suitable for families was opened by the Peach Board of Control for harvest in 1942. The Migrant Camp was 1 ½ miles further west in Riverbend Park.

Another source of information about the Palisade and German POW connection is the manuscript "Colorado Peaches and German POWs" written by the late Ron Jaynes who compiled it from talking with people who worked alongside the German Prisoners. He presented it as one of the first Palisade Historical Society programs in October 2010. The 16-page manuscript is available at the Museum's Gift Shop as well as from the Palisade Historical Society.

The GJHS-created display case at the Museum of Western Colorado features artifacts including a picking sack and wooden picking box.



Grand Junction High School students also created a peach tree for the display at the Museum. The photo next to the tree is Palisade's CCC Camp.

DAVE CECUGA, OUR "COL. BOWER," HAS A '60s LOOK



Dave Cecuga, who usually sports a mustache and recently won the Olde Fashioned Christmas beard contest, sported a new look for his January 8th morning "Hip Hop at the Hop" Zumba class at the Community Center. He promises to return to his Palisade pioneer Colonel Bower look for the next historic guided walking tour.

Sign Up or Renew Your Membership Today!

We are an all-volunteer, non-profit organization. Everyone is invited to belong to the Palisade Historical Society—through volunteer time with committees and projects—and by membership.

Annual memberships in the Palisade Historical Society start at just \$25 for Individuals, \$50 for Families, \$100 for Businesses, and \$500 for Patrons. There are also 10-year memberships for \$200 and Lifetime memberships for \$400.

If you haven't signed up—or it's time to renew your membership—please do so today! Mail your tax-deductible checks to the **Palisade Historical Society, P.O. Box 631, Palisade, CO 81526.**

Volunteers Welcome!

Please contact us if you want to meet interesting people, learn more about Palisade history and/or work on committees, projects, and fundraising for the new Palisade Historical Museum at the Bunte Shop. Send a message with your contact information to Gary at historicpalisade@outlook.com to learn how you can help. Right now, we're especially interested in volunteers to assist tour guides.

2019-2020 Directors of the Palisade Historical Society

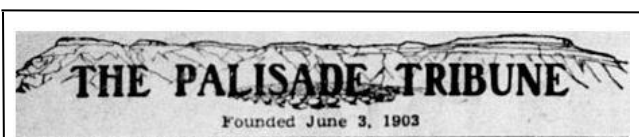
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Thanks to our generous donors, grants from CHRAB, and support from the Colorado Historic Newspaper Collection, we have raised funds to digitize 2,648 issues of *The Palisade Tribune* for the Colorado Historic Newspaper database website:
www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org

Please help us get more issues digitized!

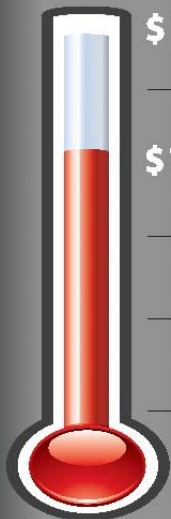
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PALISADE HISTORY MUSEUM

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to preserve Palisade history before it slips away.**

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PALISADE

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