

## Historic *Palisade Tribune* Archives Stay in Palisade

Though the community and the Palisade Historical Society were devastated in March when *The Palisade Tribune* ceased publishing, we are grateful Grand Junction Media donated archival issues of *The Tribune* to the Palisade Historical Society to preserve and digitize.

Our plan is to purchase suitable archival storage boxes to protect the paper—which began publishing 111 years ago on June 6, 1903—from further deterioration. We will also apply for grants and seek additional funding to digitize them. Another possibility is putting previously microfilmed issues of *The Palisade Tribune* on the Colorado Historic Newspapers Collections website.

We received an outpouring of support and encouragement from people who grew up in Palisade. Though some now live thousands of miles away, they are also deeply concerned about Palisade and the loss of *The Palisade Tribune*.

Our sincere thanks to everyone who supported us in saving the Tribunes, especially Susan Lorenzen Cesario and Roger Rowley who lobbied on our behalf, as well as *The Daily Sentinel's* Priscilla Mangnall who is also president of the Mesa County Historical Society. She facilitated the agreement and was persuasive *The Palisade Tribune* should stay in Palisade and with an organization that will care for the archives. We also appreciate Brant and Carol Harrison's letter to the editor and former Tribune Publisher, Bob Sweeney's help to make this transition possible.

As organizing and digitizing the archives will be a considerable expense, we are actively seeking donations for preserving *The Palisade Tribune*. Original issues of the paper are an irreplaceable source of history about our unique community. We will also attempt to continue the 100, 75, and 50 year ago column which was a popular feature of the paper for generations. Check our website for updates. Please send your tax-deductible donations to the Palisade Historical Society, P.O. Box 631, Palisade, CO 81526.

## Roller Dam Documentary Nearing Completion

Larry Seibert, local film producer and owner of InFilms and Design, Inc., is creating an interesting documentary about the Grand River Diversion Dam. Though Larry initiated his project separately from our Roller Dam 100th Birthday Party plans, we appreciate being included, and able to help with information and photos for the video. We look forward to having the documentary generate additional interest in the Roller Dam's history.



*Rollers in Place — April 30, 1915.*

*(Photo courtesy of Danny Williamson whose grandfather, Robert T. Williamson, worked to build the Grand River Diversion Dam in 1914-1915.)*

## Palisade has Plenty of Peaches! — Fruit Stands to Open Soon —

Palisade Historical Society business members Clark Family Orchards and Kokopelli Produce will open their fruit stands for the season as soon as the cherries are ripe!

Rumors that Palisade fruit growers sustained frost damage were exaggerated. There will be more cherries and apricots than last year—and substantially more peaches! Growers and seasonal workers have been busy thinning extra fruit from the trees to ensure maximum size and healthy trees.

Website links for opening day information:  
<http://clarkorchards.com/>  
<http://kokopelliproduce.com/index.html>

## Palisade Sunrise Rotary Club Puts Colorado Peaches Film On-line!

The promotional documentary produced in 1950 by the Rio Grande Railroad and Peach Board of Control detailing how Palisade peaches are grown and processed—and the service provided by the railroad to keep refrigerator cars iced en route to markets in the Midwest—is now available on line!

Members of the Palisade Sunrise Rotary Club, led by Vicki Felmlee and Scott Holzschuh, wanted to share it on the Internet so everyone can understand why Palisade peaches are better. Vicki and Dixie Burmeister approached the Visual Communications Department of Western Colorado Community College that agreed to format the video for the Internet and YouTube requirements. We also appreciate Dillon Hardy from KKCO's assistance as well.

The original film was distributed in the 1950s to schools and organizations interested in learning more about Palisade Peaches. It shows what growers do year-round to produce the best-tasting peaches. The remarkable footage includes pruning on stilts, thinning, spraying, and harvest.

We have dated its distribution to 1950 because Genieve Odneal, one of the Palisade High School cheerleaders in the film, graduated that year. Another interesting segment is the time-lapse photography sequence by Lorin Anderson who headed the Palisade Insectary in the 1940s–1960s.

For at least the last 10 years, the Palisade Lions Club made DVDs of the film available and provided copies to the Palisade Historical Society.



You can watch the video from the Palisade Sunrise Rotary Club's website: <http://www.palisadecorotary.org/sunrise/peaches/>

## Palisade High School Class of 1964 Visited the History Center During their Reunion

The Palisade Historical Society welcomed several members of the Class of 1964 at an open house at The History Center on Saturday, May 24 as a 50th class reunion event held Memorial Day weekend.



*Class of 1964 members and spouses enjoying displays at the History Center were (l to r) Marcia Moorehead Finke and her husband Jerry, Cindy Brown Files, Vonnie Bewley Kane and her husband Andy Carter, and John Creager. Historical Society member Bennett Young, visible behind John, greeted visitors at the Open House.*



*Watching the "Palisade in 1904" video prepared for the town's CEN-TEN celebration, were (l to r) Rodney Bauder and his spouse Marcia, Buck Bracken (seated), Marcia Reeves Campbell, Vera Edelen Creager, and Darlene Cutts Merritt.*



## Unique Palisade Magnolia Trees Putting Down Roots

Historical Society Board Member Harry Talbott is spearheading a project to spread the venerable *Magnolia soulangiana* tree that is unique in the Grand Valley and probably the oldest magnolia of any species in the state of Colorado.

As the story goes, the original magnolia tree in Palisade was planted in the early 1930s by Mr. Gentry on his property at 341 West First St. The tree came in a railroad boxcar loaded with box shoo (precut lumber pieces to be made into fruit boxes.) A worker saw the small, bare-rooted tree inside the car and took it to John Bridges, president of the Grand Junction Fruit Company. The car manifest showed it had been loaded with nursery stock in on its previous run. Mr. Bridges gave the tree to his neighbor, Mr. Gentry. It turned out to be a magnolia tree which miraculously thrived for the next several decades, in spite of Palisade's moderately alkaline soil, cold winters, and low rainfall that are not conducive to magnolias. Mr. Bridges was so impressed with the tree's beauty, he bought other magnolia trees and planted them, though none lived.

Magnolia 'Palisade Peach'

Beginning in February 2000, Dr. Allan R. Taylor—who grew up in Palisade and lived in Boulder—clipped scions from the magnolia tree and sent them to a magnolia propagator in Oregon. Lucile Whitman grafted the scions and has successfully grown five "Palisade Peach Magnolia" trees. Harry hopes the trees will be distributed to preserve and prepare this venerable and unique tree in Palisade.



Harry Talbott displays the first five "Palisade Peach" Magnolia trees.

## Palisade Historical Society Loses Two Historians

We are saddened by recent deaths of two long time locals, Sherrill Gardner Dodd, and Samuel "Barney" Harry Davis. Both were supporters of the Palisade Historical Society and excellent resources for wonderful stories of Palisade's past.

Sherrill was born January 15, 1935 in Appleton and passed away unexpectedly on May 24, 2014. She had connections to many Palisade families and generously shared her photo albums for the Dodd, Akers, Gardner, and Riggs, as well as the current Cameo display at The History Center. She married Palisade native Jasper Dodd whose parents, Jap and Stella, helped construct the Roller Dam in 1914-15.

Sherrill eagerly answered random questions, like how much were peach packers paid per box, and most recently, she was a resource for details about the 1903 Cripple Creek miner's strike which resulted in Joseph Clay Rigg's sudden move to Western Colorado.

The Palisade Historical Society was fortunate to record an informal Oral and Video History session with Barney and Ruth Davis in 2011. Barney, who was born April 28, 1922 in Palisade, told us he raised peaches and also worked in construction for 15 years for "two bits and hour." He graduated from Palisade High School in 1940 and served in the Navy as a musician second class.

Barney attended Palisade Historical Society programs and, until his eyesight faded, was a resource to identify people and locations in historic photographs. He passed away May 8, 2014 at the Veterans Community Living Center in Grand Junction.

The Palisade Historical Society dearly misses both of them and the chance to hear more of their Palisade memories. Our thoughts and prayers go out to their spouses, children, and families.

## Early Morning Orchards Reward GJ Rockies Homers

Again this summer, every time a Grand Junction Rockies baseball player hits a home run, Skip Doty's Early Morning Orchards will donate a box of produce to local organizations, including Latimer House, The House, Grand Valley Catholic Outreach and Palisade's own Food Bank of the Rockies. The GJ Rockies first series in Ogden starts June 16, and first home game at Stocker Stadium is June 20.

## Palisade Historical Photo

Helen Swisher Maurer at Palisade Elementary north entrance in April, 1958.



*(Courtesy of the Bowman Family Collection)*

Fifth grade teacher Helen Swisher Maurer stands in front of the decorative tile entrance on the northeast side of Palisade Elementary in April 1958, the first month the school opened. The school's name was changed to Taylor Elementary in 1960 when long time principal and educator, Avon E. Taylor, retired. The decorative tile walls have long since been concealed by additions to the building.

Mrs. Maurer graduated from Palisade High School in 1923. She was not only a beloved educator, but also a talented musician. To commemorate the Town's 50th anniversary in 1954, she created the "Our Palisade Heritage" operetta.

In the April 2 production that year, Mrs. Helen Maurer is credited for the "Musical Script." She wrote new lyrics for popular tunes like "Glow Worm" to tell the uniquely Palisade story: "Grow Little Peach Tree."

Other teachers key to the operetta's success included Mrs. Jewell Colwell for the scenery, Mrs. Ruby Gaither for the narrative, and Mrs. Nancy Morrison and Mrs. Louise Tolman for the dances. The operetta was performed by "Grades Five and Six" that year.

The town and Chamber of Commerce has asked Palisade High School to produce "Our Palisade Heritage" this December 4th as part of the CEN-TEN (Centennial plus Ten Years) celebration.

Anyone interested in participating in the production of "Our Palisade Heritage," should contact Julianne Adams at the Palisade Chamber of Commerce, 464-7458.

**If you have photos you are willing to contribute for publication in a history book about Palisade, please contact the Palisade Historical Society at (970) 464-2177 or P.O. Box 631, Palisade, CO 81526. Photos will be scanned and originals returned to donors.**

## 1909–10 Orchard Mesa Dam Construction Photos Added to Upcoming Booklet

Thanks to a generous, anonymous donation, we were able to obtain scans of a photo album donated to the Denver Public Library Western History Collection. The 100+ photos detail the original Orchard Mesa diversion dam—constructed 3,000 feet upstream from the Roller Dam—the power canal that snaked through DeBeque Canyon to the base of Orchard Mesa Hill, and the power plant in 1909-10. We will incorporate these photos into our next booklet, "Irrigation History of Palisade and East Orchard Mesa," coming out later this year. Special thanks goes out to Elizabeth Wheeler for coordinating with the Denver Public Library.

## Renew Your Membership Today!

Our success is made possible only through the work of volunteers and donations. Everyone is invited to join the Palisade Historical Society – through volunteer time with committees and projects—and by membership. Annual membership in the Palisade Historical Society is just \$25.00 for Individuals, \$50.00 for Families, \$100 for Businesses, and \$500 for Patrons. New this year are 10 year memberships for \$200 and lifetime memberships for \$400.

Mail your tax-deductible checks to the *Palisade Historical Society, P.O. Box 631, Palisade, CO 81526.*

**LINK: [www.historicpalisade.org](http://www.historicpalisade.org)**