

End of Year Report for Hayden Heritage Center Museum 2021

The Covid-19 pandemic remained a strong influence throughout 2021 and continued our education of becoming more adaptable. We were able to regain some normal activity level by the years end adapting to the new "normal" of Covid but with the various variants looming in the shadows we are working on changing the way we approach the Museum, our programming and events to be more adaptable. All three employees have been fully vaccinated and we have masks for any volunteers or visitors who are not vaccinated or are more comfortable wearing facemasks.

We have been very fortunate that although our in person visitor numbers were slightly lower than normal this past year, what activities we could hold were well attended and our online visitation to our web site and our online media has increased.

Memberships are beginning to rebound though we are still down. We have been fortunate to have acquired additional funding through grants. We received a grant through Colorado Department of Transportation to upgrade our main computer, gained two laptops- so we can work during any closures, also updated our PastPerfect database which includes online capacity. We were able to load our photos so they are now accessible online through our web page. We updated our gift shop streamlining it with our square point of sale so that much of our gift shop is on line as well. We received another PPP Loan which was forgiven and we were awarded funds through the Colorado Humanities for 2022 through the Sharp fund. We also were awarded additional funds from Colorado Humanities through their Social Media Challenge which was a stretch for us but thanks to a local college student we managed to enter.

Our Senior docent completed her training with SER (Senior Employment Retraining program) and was hired by the Museum as a seasonal docent for the summer months so that the Museum could be opened Tuesday thru Saturday- May through September and she would not have to drive in the winter months. We were also able to procure a part time office manager who is familiar with grants and grant management which has been a ton of help in addition to handling general office duties.

Regarding events and programs, we canceled just about all of our indoor programming for 2021 and only held outdoor events. We cancelled our largest fundraiser event, The Elkhead Rock School Tour as transportation had become an issue due to Covid restrictions. We moved our Spring fundraiser event, Ride the Cog, to September in hopes that Covid would lighten up. It was much better weather for the event and we had the largest attendance yet. We held the Pioneer Picnic in July out at the former Mt. Harris townsite under three large tents, thanks to the property owners who allowed access. This event was the kickoff event for the Mt. Harris Inventory project- a collaborative project that Historic Routt County is taking the lead on. This has been wonderful as it has sparked a renewed interest in Mt. Harris and we are working on improving the Memorial site on Hwy 40 and updating our Museum exhibit so that it is more comprehensive and inclusive which prompted us to submit an NEH grant for 2022. We participated with the Crane Festival giving a tour of the Mt Harris site. In the Fall we hosted the third grade class from the new Sleeping Giant School- they visited the Museum and we gave a tour of the Mt. Harris site. In December we held the annual Stroll with a book signing with historian and author Belle Zars. We saw over 165 participants over the course of the day in small groups inside the museum with horse drawn wagon rides to the Granary at the Goose which had a craft show and Santa in the granary breezeway.

We did not do any special exhibits at the Museum in 2021 however we did participate in the Routt Co Fair with an exhibit in the Exhibit hall. We also did two “pop up” exhibits at the new Hayden Rec Center. We moved our Smithsonian poster exhibit of ‘Women and the Vote’ to the Rec Center main hall and the other exhibit, artwork by Ernestine Purcell- a 1927 Hayden graduate who attended art school in Denver, is by the art rooms. These exhibits coincided with the Women’s Convention that was held in September and allows Totally Kids and Rec center visitors to have access. We are working towards opening the upstairs of the Depot-then former station agent apartment- for gallery space. It will contain a 1920’s kitchen, a gallery of household items, a Western room, plus a room for the Sullivan and Parfrey collections.

We are looking to 2022 as a busy year. We will be completing the construction documents for the Depot for the remaining issues outlined in the 2017 Historic Structure Assessment through a SHF planning grant which we were awarded in December 2021 along with the Fall 2021 MAHFAB grant. These documents will be used to bid out work so we can hopefully have the buildings major issues: updating the electric, heating and some structural and foundation regrading, rectified in the next few years. We are unsure about some of our event such as the Elkhead School Tour as the new omnicron variant will affect any large indoor event, but we are hopeful we can adapt. We are tentatively looking at doing our Kids history hour and walking tours in the summer and holding the Ride the Cog event in the Fall.

Thank you to the MAHFAB Board for your continued support!! We could not continue without it!!!