

Palmer Historical Society

Promote Preserve Protect

It's time for History Night!
Palmer Historical Society Presents

September 2015 Newsletter
Volume XXXI No. 9

Katie Mangelsdorf

Accomplished local Author Katie Mangelsdorf will share History of Joe Redington Sr.

Katie will share Alaska as seen through Joe's "eyes".

The story begins with Joe's growing up years including life at Flathorn Lake, how he met the last mail carrier at Rainy Pass, and the beginning of the long distance race- "Joe's Baby".



Colony House Museum

316 E. Elmwood Ave.
In the Historic District

We are now open by
Appointment only
907-745-1935



Everyone is welcome Wednesday, Sept 16th, 7:00pm
at the Palmer Public Library.
History night is FREE, historical, and fun!

*History Nights are the 3rd Wednesday September thru May
Mark your calendar - Don't miss out!*

Palmer Historical Society



Colony House Museum

PO Box 1935
Palmer, AK 99645

HOT OFF THE PRESS!

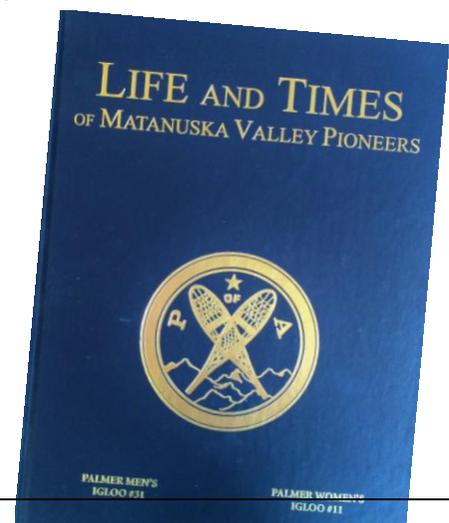
#1 on the Best Seller's list at Fireside Books!

"Life and Times of Matanuska Valley Pioneers"

*Interviews of 55 Valley Pioneers with new and vintage photos,
recipes and a few jokes.*

*This 200 page hardbound book contains stories from people you
will know from Palmer, Wasilla and other areas in the Valley.
Sharon Benson and Joann Utt with the help of many volunteers
compiled this anthology.*

*Sharon Benson will offer these books at our History Nights!
Be sure to shop early for Christmas gifts!*



Alaska State Fair ←2015→ Wineck Colony Barn

We had so many awesome visitors at the Wineck Barn!



Ray DePriest



Nancy Smith



Bonita Parks Strong



Earl & Rebecca Wineck

.....

Checking out at the store, the young cashier suggested that I should bring my own grocery bags, as plastic bags aren't good for the environment.

I apologized to the young girl and explained "We didn't have this '*green thing*' back in my earlier days."

The young clerk responded "That's our problem today. Your generation didn't care enough to save our environment for future generations."

I said that she was right – our generation didn't have the "*green thing*" in its day. I went on to explain: Back then, we returned milk bottles, soda bottles and beer bottle to the store. The store sent them back to the plant to be washed and sterilized and refilled, so it could use the same bottles over and over.

So they really were recycled.

But we didn't have the "*green thing*" back in our day.

Grocery stores bagged our groceries in brown paper bags that we reused for numerous things. Most memorable besides household garbage bags was the use of brown paper bags as book covers for our school books. This was to ensure that public property (the books provided for our use by the school) was not defaced by our scribbling. Then we were able to personalize our books on the brown paper bags.

But, too bad we didn't do the "*green thing*" back then.

We walked up stairs because we didn't have an escalator in every store and office building. We walked to the grocery store and didn't climb into a 300-horsepower machine every time we had to go two blocks.

But she was right. We didn't have the "*green thing*" in our day.

Back then we washed the baby's diapers because we didn't have the throw away kind. We dried clothes on a line, not in an energy-gobbling machine burning up 220 volts. Wind and solar power really did dry our clothes back in our early days. Kids got hand-me-down clothes from their brothers or sisters, not always brand-new clothing.

But that young lady is right; we didn't have the "*green thing*" back in our day.

Back then we had one TV, or radio, in the house – not a TV in every room. And the TV had a small screen the size of a handkerchief (remember them?), not a screen the size of the state of Montana.

In the kitchen we blended and stirred by hand because we didn't have electric machines to do everything for us. When we packaged a fragile item to send in the mail, we used wadded up old newspapers to cushion it, not Styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap. Back then, we didn't fire up an engine and burn gasoline just to cut the lawn. We used a push mower that ran on human power. We exercised by working so we didn't need to go to a

health club to run on treadmills that operate on electricity.

But she's right; we didn't have the "*green thing*" back then.

We drank from a fountain when we were thirsty instead of using a cup or a plastic bottle each time we had a drink of water. We refilled writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen, and we replaced the razor blade in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor when the blade got dull.

But we didn't have the "*green thing*" back then.

Back then, people took the streetcar or a bus and kids rode their bikes to school or walked instead of turning their moms into a 24-hour taxi service in the family's \$45,000.00 SUV or van which cost what a whole house did before the "*green thing*." We had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And we didn't need a computerized gadget to receive a signal beamed from satellites 23,000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest burger joint.

Isn't it sad the current generation laments how wasteful we old folks were just because we didn't have the "*green thing*" back then?

Third place prize winner Martha Guinotte
Senior Joke and Storytelling Contest in the Wineck Barn

History walked in the door.....

My husband, Harry "Bud" Campbell, Jr. and I have been docents at the Colony House Museum the last two summers. We enjoy every visitor that takes the time to stop by, and especially the local people who bring their family and friends.

In June we had a very special visitor whose family history connected him to our museum. Eric Fischer was at the museum when we started our docent shift, and he was making beautiful music on our colony piano. Our docent director, Barbara Thomas introduced us to Eric, and briefly told us the story of his Grandfather, Dick Meister who had lived with the Beylunds, a colonist family, and original owners of the Colony House Museum house. Barbara had suggested Eric might contact Arlene Benson Fox, as Arlene and her family were Beylunds neighbors. According to Arlene, she and Eric did meet and had a great visit reminiscing about the good old days, and about Dick Meister, who Arlene had visited in Minnesota.

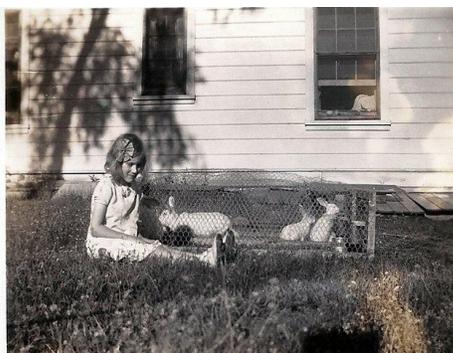
Eric is a classically-trained pianist who began his piano study at the age of seven. He received a BA in business administration at the University of Florida, and then went on to entertain aboard Carnival Cruise ships beginning in 2003. Eric is also a composer, and has recorded several of his own works, as well as continuing to entertain in various venues.



Dick Meister came to Alaska with one of his brothers in the early 40's. The brother went to Fairbanks, and Dick ended up in Palmer working at the Beylund farm, and also at the Matanuska Maid Creamery. One of his brothers shared that Dick related a story to him about a bear that spooked his horse when he was riding home from the creamery, and bucked Dick off. Fortunately the bear took off and spared Dick. He loved Alaska, and especially Palmer. His intentions were to send for the love of life and settle in Palmer. However, Uncle Sam had other ideas, and he received his draft notice. He and all five of his brothers served in World War II. After the war he settled in Duluth Minnesota with his wife and young daughter.

This was Grandson, Eric's first visit to his Grandfather's former home, now the Colony House Museum, but we hope not his last, and that he will once again play his beautiful music on our colony piano.

Joan Campbell



Irene Benson Fox



Oscar Beylund

The Colony House Museum saw visitors from almost every state in the U.S. this season. Only MA, NV, RI, WA, and WY were not represented this year – next year maybe all 50! We also had visitors from 14 different countries! All came to learn about Colony History – pretty amazing how far our (hi)story travels! It was a great season of meeting, greeting and storytelling at the Colony House Museum!

Palmer Historical Society
PO Box 1935
Palmer, AK 99645

Yes! I want to Preserve, Promote, and Protect the History of Palmer Alaska!

Please sign me up! I will circle the level I would like to commit to for 2015.

Individual One Vote	\$25.00 per year
Household Two Votes/One household	\$40.00 per year
Patron/Business/Organization One Vote	\$100.00 per year
Lifetime One Vote/One person/No transfer	\$500.00

Name:
Mailing Address:

Phone Number:
Email Address:

Please check the box if you would like to volunteer in one of the many ways we preserve Palmer History

Cut out form - Please mail to Palmer Historical Society, PO Box 1935, Palmer, AK 99645 or bring to History Night!

THANK YOU for your generous contribution – Palmer History will be preserved because of you!

Board of Directors

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