

Fort Caspar Museum Fact Sheet



Mission

Fort Caspar Museum educates visitors about the cultural history of Fort Caspar, the City of Casper, Natrona County, and central Wyoming by acquiring, preserving and exhibiting artifacts; interpreting historic buildings; and offering school and public programming.

Vision

Fort Caspar Museum serves as the regional history museum for central Wyoming. Through exhibitions, historic reconstructions, and educational programs, the Museum shares the stories of central Wyoming with visitors ranging from local students to travelers from foreign countries. The Museum provides a welcoming place for people of all backgrounds and abilities to make meaningful connections to our past in educational and entertaining ways.

History

Fort Caspar Museum was established in 1936 when Casper citizens reconstructed an 1865 military post located along the Oregon/California/Mormon Pioneer/Pony Express trail corridor through Wyoming. In 1967, the City of Casper provided funding for the first full-time staff at the site and, in 1982, built a new Museum building which included an exhibit gallery, collections storage, and office space. In 2002, the City of Casper added a new entrance, lobby, and store to the existing Museum building. In 2007, the City doubled the size of the Museum adding additional exhibit space, a classroom, and multi-purpose room that is used for programs, meetings, and available for rental. In addition to the Museum building and reconstructed fort, the Museum includes a reproduction Mormon ferry and Guinard bridge section, a carriage shed with open storage of the wagon collection, river trail, and memorial cemetery. In 1990, Centennial Park was added with picnic shelters, playground, Wyoming history interpretive signs, and signature cabin.

Operations

Fort Caspar Museum is owned and operated by the City of Casper as a part of the Special Facilities Division of the Leisure Services Department. The City of Casper funds the Museum's daily operations, while support for educational programs and activities is provided by grants, donations, and Fort Caspar Museum Association projects. The Museum Association is an IRS-recognized nonprofit organization founded in 1987 to support the preservation and education activities at Fort Caspar Museum through financial support and volunteer time.

Exhibits & Collections

The existing Museum gallery features a variety of exhibits, including three to six temporary exhibits that are generally changed on an annual basis. The reconstructed fort buildings are furnished with clothing, personal items, and equipment as they would have been in the 1860s. The Museum has a broad-based humanities collection ranging from prehistoric tools to a 2003 Casper National Guard deployment ceremony program. The Museum has approximately 6,000 artifacts, 7,000 photographs, and 3,000 archival materials in its collection.

Public and Educational Programming

Fort Caspar Museum offers a variety of public and educational programming. Public Programs for kids include Family Fun Days and Fremont's Friends Club (Spring Break and Summer activities). Adult-oriented programs include lectures, film series, book clubs, and other special events throughout the year. Educational programming focuses on Site Tours of the fort and a gallery activity in the fall and spring, Classroom Connections, and Discovery Trunks. Educational outreach programs are presented through the Discover Program with the Natrona County School District.