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**DISCOVER**

*Platte County*

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# Discover Platte County

## Glendo Museum

A collection of history from fossils and primitive man to pioneer and early 20th century antiques

BY LISA PHELPS

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**GLENDO** – The Glendo museum is a must-see for the bucket list of rock-hounds, history buffs, art enthusiasts or anyone wanting to enjoy a walk through local history. It has been preserved by generous volunteers and donors, and much of the inventory is on loan from local families or the University of Wyoming. Almost all the artifacts and antiques are from the Glendo area.

“There is so much about it I like. I think we’ve got a lot of good stuff – most of it locally and on loan, but there are some donations,” Jeanette Chambers said. She has volunteered at the museum for nearly 60 years, after Mildred Twiford helped open the museum sometime around 1963. At that time there was only one room for the museum, the other room was a garage for the ambulance to park. It was converted for much-needed museum space when the ambulance service moved to a different location.

Chambers has seen some interesting characters come through the museum over the years, and she loves the excitement of children who see the displays. “Sometimes they don’t want to



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**A cross-section of history including the former Glendo telephone switchboard, fashion, art, and homestead-living can be seen at Glendo museum.**

go – I wish they could be exposed to these things more,” Chambers said, emphasizing the uniqueness and variety of displays at the museum.

Paintings from talented local artists like JR Wilson grace the walls, preserving the life and feel of the area and reflecting how things were -- and how some things haven’t changed. An old-fashioned food dehydrator shared among homesteaders from Slater to Glendo is on display, as well as a telephone switchboard station, WWI and WWII treasures, artifacts

from famous sites like Ft. Fetterman, Ft. Laramie, Fort Bridger, Natural Bridge, the attack on Horseshoe Station by Crazy Horse, The California, Oregon and Mormon Trails, the Overland Stage, Letters home from Saipan, pioneer and local fashion up through the early 20th century, photographs and antiques from local ranch life, and for the ironwork enthusiast, a huge variety of horseshoes.

Spend some time with Jeanette and her daughter Barb Chambers and you will learn more than just what you see

in the display.

Barb pointed out the beaded Indian moccasin near some unique Native American artifacts and photographs of daily life in an Indian camp.

“See that moccasin? My great-grandmother Retta was stolen by Indians when she was small. The men-folk got back from a shopping trip to Cheyenne and got her back and she was okay, but she was so mad about it, she stole that off a dead Indian but was too scared to take the second one. She had a lot of spunk – I don’t think the Indians probably would have kept her long,” Barb said.

Don’t let the two-room museum fool you, there is a lot to see and read in the displays. There are also some comfortable chairs for anyone wanting to go through the volumes of Glendo area history or look up obituaries in the complete collection at the museum.

The museum, located on main street across from town hall, can be seen by appointment or during Glendo Library business hours, currently Tuesday and Thursday, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and Saturday from 9 to Noon. The Chambers can be reached at 307-735-4115 for appointments. Volunteers are always welcome.



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**Items from everyday living in a pioneer homestead - including homespun linen and lace – are on display at the museum.**



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**There were many years the Indians and homesteaders were sharing use of Horseshoe Creek, and the Glendo Museum makes sure to include samples from their history as well.**

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# Discover Platte County

## Glendo State Park

Encompassing Glendo Reservoir, the park is vast in scope and variety of uses

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ist's dream with the variety of activities available and the vast space it covers, Glendo Reservoir inside Glendo State Park was built for many reasons

**GLENDO** – Touted as a recreation-



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Drew Kidd, Ethan Archer and Mekilah Marie of Douglas enjoy jumping from the cliffs at Glendo State Park. During major flooding in the 1990s, the top of the cliff where they are standing was a dozen feet under water.

– but recreation was not on the list.

Park superintendent Brian Johnson explained the debate and legal battles necessary to create Glendo Dam on the North Platte River began in the 1930s. The actual construction was finally complete in 1958 with a dedication ceremony on June 9, 1959. The entirety of Glendo State Park land is owned by the Federal Bureau of Land Management, but the state has been given the task of managing the park.

The main purposes the dam – and resulting reservoir – was built is for irrigation, flood control, and power generation at the Bureau of Reclamation's 38-megawatt hydroelectric power plant. But, as Johnson quoted, "If you build it, they will come." And if recent numbers are anything to go by, come they did.

Pre-Covid, in 2019, the average number of people using the park was 365,000; in 2020, the numbers doubled to 610,000. In the proceeding years the numbers have balanced out to around 580,000. Johnson said a lot of that is a signal of how the world has changed,

and people can "work from home," or really, from anywhere, and sometimes that place includes a campsite in the beautiful countryside of Wyoming near 29 square miles of water.

Johnson said he views the purpose and goal of the 22,000-acre Glendo State Park is to provide opportunities for its patrons to make memories. Having spent nearly 30 years working at the park in one capacity or another, Johnson knows more about it than most people want to hear about, but he is passionate about preserving the park for recreation use and providing a safe environment for people to make those happy memories.

Boasting around 530 campsites spread out among 19 campgrounds, Glendo State Park has a little bit of something for everyone.

One of the most popular day use areas is Red Hills, with its cliffs and a small cove good for fishing or swimming. Sandy Beach is a popular campground along the beach, and Whiskey Gulch is desired for its campground, quiet coves, and good fishing. Per-

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driving is  
driving  
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Glendo State Park has a nearly unlimited variety of recreation opportunities available in its 35 square miles of land and water located in southeast Wyoming in Platte County.

# Discover Platte County

manent cornhole games have been installed at the group shelter, and there are plans to install a disc golf course in the future. A little-known fact: the road that connects Mule Hill campground with Whiskey Gulch is part of the old railroad bed from the original train tracks that were moved when the dam was built. And a popular cove for kayakers down the road was actually man-made when the old railroad curved around a bend in the landscape.

Glendo Reservoir is known as one of the best walleye fisheries in the state, and the reservoir has produced state record holders for white crappie (2.45 pounds and 16.25 inches long with a 13.5-inch girth, caught by Terry Young of Douglas in 2009) and quillback (1.57 pounds and 14.5 inches long with a 9.5-inch girth, caught by Jeff Kirk of Douglas in 2012).

As the summer warms the region, the lake's use transitions to more water recreation activities with boating, parasailing, kayaking, swimming and more, with a peak one-day visitor population of 30,000 on the Fourth of July.

The lake has good ice fishing at the peak of winter and a traditional ice fishing tournament in January. But later in winter, because of the reservoir's shifting water levels, the shoulders of the ice cap can be soft, and warm chinook winds sometimes keep the ice from having consistently thick and solid ice. However, airboat rides have been increasingly popular during this time.

The privately owned Glendo Marina is the go-to place for all watercraft activities and rentals, summer and winter.

Bike trails, complete with bike repair stations with all tools necessary to make bike repairs, have increased the popularity of Two Moon campground. There are currently 45 miles of hiking trails throughout the park for a variety of terrain and opportunities for riders of all skill levels.

Installed in 2017 for the Total Solar Eclipse, three yurts – with modern air conditioning and heating – are available to be rented at Two Moon camp-



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**The road at Mule Hill campground was originally the old railroad bed but is now a popular wildlife viewing trail for locals and visitors alike.**

ground, in addition to a children's playground and group picnic shelter.

A popular addition since 2018, the archery range is available to use year-round, though the 1.1-mile trail of IBO-standard 3D archery targets is only available for summer use. The ranger station does have some archery equipment available for rent.

If anyone wondered why some sites and bathroom facilities are seemingly located far from the water's edge, it is because the water levels shift drastically during different seasons as varying volumes of water are alternately released down the North Platte River or held back for the purposes of farm irrigation, flood control and ecology of down-stream waterways.

### A little more history

The campgrounds were named in large part by the park's first superintendent, who was a history buff and named many things historically connected to Gen. George Custer (Reno Cove – Gen. Reno; Two Moon – Native American Chief; Whiskey Gulch – possibly Custer's horse). The campgrounds were also named after geology of the area (Red Hills, Sandy Beach) or landowners from the area (Bennett Hill, Waters Point).

In mid-spring 1993, there was major flooding in the region and the Glendo reservoir was at 13 feet above the "full" mark, and in 2010 there was so much snowmelt in a short period of time, the Laramie River, Grayrocks, and the Platte River were flooding, so Glendo held its water to reduce the domino effect of the flooding.

In the last few years, the Glendo Dam was raised six feet and a secondary spillway was constructed in anticipation of possible future flooding, to reduce pressure on the dam's main spillway and prevent catastrophic failure of the dam in a worst-case-scenario of a major flooding event. Basically, the secondary spillway was increased in height and length, and a road was moved to accommodate it, Johnson said.

"We've done a lot at the park to provide good quality service to a large variety of people," Johnson said. Even with restrictions on campfires because of fire bans, the goal of making good memories is possible. Johnson reminded everyone, "The campfire is not what makes the memories – it's the people you're with and the place you're at. I've seen people turn the ban into a great tradition of deco-

rating campfires: Christmas lights on stacked wood, s'mores on the grill, and other creative ideas. They have made great memories in spite of campfire restrictions."

There are many activities planned this summer and fall at Glendo State Park, including Once Upon a Trail with animal bingo at 6 p.m. June 22; Safety in the Great Outdoors mid-morning on June 29; movie night at 8 p.m. July 13; bike and hike with a ranger at 6:30 p.m. July 17 and at 9 a.m. on Aug. 3; Paddle in the Park on July 20 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; sandcastle building contest from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. July 27; owl pellet dissection at 7 p.m. on Aug. 10; Monarch butterfly releasing August 20; dog day hike, 9 a.m. on Aug. 24; National Public lands day: metal detecting beach clean-up at 1 p.m. on Sept. 28; and Trick or Treat event on Oct. 26, 6 to 9 p.m. Most events begin at Two Moon campground; further information can be found on the Glendo State Park Facebook page or on their website.

To enjoy the state park, it costs in-state residents \$7 per day or \$10 for overnight camping; out-of-state visitors pay \$12 and \$18, respectively. Anyone can reserve a campsite (120 days prior for in-state residents or 113 days prior for out of state residents), and some can be reserved on-the-spot through the Wyoming State Park online reservation system at [www.reserve.wyoming.gov](http://www.reserve.wyoming.gov).

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