



Historic Ranches Tour
(July meeting of the Livermore Woman's Club)

*Sponsored by the Red Feather Historical Society and
The Livermore Woman's Club*

*On 20 July 2016, some eighty people, divided into two groups,
toured two historic ranches in the Livermore Valley—the Scottsdale
Ranch and the Hansen Ranch, both located along the Red Feather
Lakes Road.*



*Photos of vintage ranch equipment and appliances taken at
Walden Museum*

The Scottdale Ranch



The building above is the one a visitor sees when entering the Scottdale Ranch property. The Scottdale ranch originated as a number of homesteads, with the first taken out by George Weary. Weary built a claim shack on his homestead which was purchased by Louis Wetzler in 1874. Other owners of property that eventually became part of what is now Scottdale Ranch include George C. Burnam, J. R. Bellairs, and John McNey II. A considerably larger property was eventually purchased by Jack Goodwin, and partners Alvin Johnson and Albert Wolfson purchased the "Goodwin Ranch" in 1967. A year later, the partners purchased a second ranch to the east of Scottdale. These were referred to as the "west ranch" and the "east ranch". Locally, the ranches were known as "The Doctors' Ranch" because Johnson was a dentist and Wolfson a surgeon, both practicing in Denver.

Al Johnson (left) summarized the history of the ranch for us and answered many questions. One interesting fact about the ranch is that it was named for Al Wolfson's son, Scott.





Harry Gilpin-Brown, one owner of what is now Scottsdale Ranch, built the historic Gilpin-Brown house (left) in 1896 as a wedding present for his bride Sylvia Swan (who, incidentally, served as the second president of the LWC). The home is three stories, which was unusual in the Livermore valley at that time.

Al Johnson and Albert Wolfson dissolved their ranch partnership in 1986. Al Johnson lived at the “west ranch” (Scottdale) for almost a year and then moved to the “east ranch”, now known as the Johnson Ranch.

Albert Wolfson, owner of the “west ranch” was killed in a riding accident in 1988. His daughter married Dr. Michael Ptasnik, and they along with Dr. Ptasnik’s brother now own the ranch.

Hay meadows of smooth brome on the Scottdale Ranch





More scenic views of Scottdale Ranch

(These pictures were taken during an earlier visit to the ranch but are included to present a more complete picture of the beauty of Scottdale Ranch.)



The Red Feather Historical Society and the Livermore Woman's Club thank Al Johnson for taking time to tell us about the Scottdale Ranch. We are so grateful.

The Hansen Ranch



The ownership history of the Hansen Ranch begins with two men, Horace and Charles Emerson, sons of Samuel and Anna Emerson, a farming couple from New Hampshire. The sons made their way west and worked in a variety of endeavors in Colorado Territory until 1871 when both took up 160 acre homesteads in the Lone Pine Valley of Livermore Park. They added to their original holdings through both “rock claims” and “tree claims”.

Rock claims and tree claims allowed settlers to increase their holdings by grazing land too rocky to farm or by planting trees on the land. Their homestead, plus additional acquisitions over the years, became the Hansen Ranch. The ranch has some of the earliest water rights in Larimer County.

The original ranch house, built in 1877 and still used as a residence, is shown on the left.



The Emerson ranch was purchased by members of the Hansen family in 1940. Five generations of the Hansen family still own and operate the ranch. Lower left, Debbie Hansen summarizes the ranch’s history, points out a pictorial timeline that she composed for our tour, and enjoys a moment of humor with attendees.

Two Civilian Conservation Corps barracks (below) were moved to the ranch from the Red Feather Lakes area by Ed Hansen's father to be used as calving sheds. The barracks were used for showing livestock at the Larimer County Fair in 1949. A flood in Loveland had forced cancellation of the fair, and the Hansens offered to hold the livestock portion of the fair at the ranch. This initial event led to a rodeo held by Livermore 4-H annually until 1975, when the last rodeo took place.



The Red Feather Historical Society and the Livermore Woman's Club are very grateful to Debbie Hansen for taking time to tell us about the Hansen Ranch. Thank you so much.

Hay meadow on Hansen Ranch with Livermore Mountain in the background.



Lone Pine Creek (Hansen Ranch), a prominent part of both the Scottdale and Hansen ranches.





After our ranch tours, we gathered at the Hall for talks about local history.

Linda Adams (upper left) spoke about Livermore history in general; D. L. Roberts (above center) spoke about the history of The Forks; Kay and Tom Quan (right) used a picture board to complement their remarks about the history of the Livermore Hotel, now a private home where they lived for many years; Rene Lee, (below left) spoke about the history of the Hall.

Thanks to each of you for your informative contribution to our day of local history.