



Golden Landmarks Association
Preserving Our Past, Protecting Our Future

Living Landmark Award

2012

Meg Van Ness

In 1961, Meg's life turned to ruins after reading an archeology article in "National Geographic". Meg grew up in Evanston, Illinois. After attending a high school with a summer archeology program, Meg's passion for archeology was secured. Meg attended the University of Missouri, and she later completed a Masters program at the University of Northern Arizona. By 1984, with her husband, Steve, they left Flagstaff for the big city of Golden, Colorado.

Thirty years and one child later, there's no place Meg would rather be than Golden. It's the perfect small town with friendly people and a stunning setting. In 1990, development threatened their modest neighborhood in northwest Golden, and Meg joined a community organization to try and influence those changes. That same year, Meg was appointed to the Golden Historic Preservation Board – and remained on the Board for ten years. Those were turbulent years for historic preservation in Golden with growth pressures on several historic properties, changes in museum management, and the establishment of the Clear Creek Historic Park. Some battles were won and some were lost – but that's how historic preservation goes.

In 2000, Meg joined the Golden Planning Commission and remained on that Commission through 2011. It was a decade of constant learning and re-evaluation. Keeping Golden *golden*, controlling change and listening to community voices were her underlying goals in an environment that was constantly evolving.

Meg has spent 16 years as an archaeological consultant, 16 years at the Colorado Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, and now Meg is seven years into what she hopes will be a long career as the Regional Historic Preservation Officer for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – National Wildlife Refuge System. When not working professionally Meg has had the privilege of serving on various committees in Golden and helping with several educational and outreach programs in the region over the past several years. In addition to her work in the professional community, Meg is currently serving on several City and non-profit boards in Golden. She enjoys the learning and partnerships inherent in those collaborations.