Neal Forsling

Neal Forsling was born February 7, 1889, in Independence, MO. She moved to Casper, WY in 1920 with her first husband, Donald Ogilbee, and her daughters, Mary and Jean. After her marriage dissolved in 1929, Neal filed a claim on Casper Mountain. The homestead was named Crimson Dawn.

During that first summer, Neal held a small ceremony for her daughters on June 21 marking Midsummer's Eve. The folklore of Casper Mountain began that very first summer.

Early in the summer of 1930, Neal met Jim Forsling. They were married in September of the same year and spent most winters at Crimson Dawn. In March of 1942, Jim froze to death returning to Crimson Dawn with supplies.

After Jim's death, Neal opened Crimson Dawn Wildflower Studio in her cabin to sell her artwork. Her paintings began receiving recognition in the early 1950's. She exhibited in New York, Paris, Honolulu, and other various western locations.

In the early 1950's, Midsummer's Eve was first featured in the Casper Star Tribune. Soon the small gatherings turned into much larger celebrations with Neal leading guests through the woods on a tour of her folklore shrines.

In 1975, Neal donated Crimson Dawn to Natrona County with the stipulation that Midsummer's Eve must be held every year. Neal died in August of 1977.

Folklore & Landart of Crimson Dawn

Neal began creating the characters of Crimson Dawn in 1929 and they continued to evolve throughout her lifetime. As her stories developed, she utilized the distinctive landmarks within her homestead to create character shrines and earth art. The characters and situations in which they find themselves are directly related to Neal's own experiences on the mountain top. The park's shrines are representations of her most prominent stories or are very personal in nature. More can be learned about Neal's folklore through her book Crimson Dawn, The Story of the Casper Mountain Witches or by reading the plaques located at each shrine on Crimson Dawn's main trail.

Crimson Dawn Park & Museum

Crimson Dawn is a historical homestead located at the top of Casper Mountain. This site is unique in that it is an environmentally protected sanctuary for wildlife and a culmination of one artist's literature and homespun fairy tales. The park is opened June 15 – September 15 and Neal's cabin, now a museum of her art and artifacts, is open weekends throughout the season.

The Woodland Theater is available to rent for rustic occasions and performances. Crimson Dawn Park and Museum is a wonderful place for family day trip, picnics, walking your dog, and enjoying one of the most beautiful vistas in Natrona County.

Midsummer Celebration

Almost a century ago, Neal began telling her tales of witches, elves, leprechauns, and other forest spirits on June 21st to celebrate the summer solstice. What was once a small gathering of family and close friends has grown into an annual community event. Hundreds of participants come to enjoy the park and follow the Storyteller on a journey through Neal's beloved forest. Children especially enjoy meeting Neal's characters and receiving trinkets. As the sun sets below the beautiful red butte, family and friends gather around the bon fire where they make their wish for the coming year as they throw red earth into the flames. Then we gather for cookies and cocoa as we bid farewell to longest day of the year.

For more information about Crimson Dawn Midsummer's Eve Celebration or how you can support the park, **please visit our website at www.crimsondawnmuseum.org and like us on Facebook.**

1. Crimson Dawn Cabin / Museum
2. Topaz Witch
3. Star Witch
4. Shawn the Leprechaun
5. Phantom Wood Chopper and the Moon Maiden
6. Shrine of the Good Brother
7. Sherpa's Shrine
8. Undine the Sea Witch
9. Lavender Land \ Lavender Witch and Vermillion
10. Emerald Witch
11. Woodland Theatre
12. Bambi's Castle
13. Neal's Secret Shrine
14. Black Witch
15. Tin Owl
16. Squirrel Capitol
17. Heart's Desire
18. Branch, Root, and Twig
19. Truth Pond
20. Cardinal and the Blind Minstrel
21. Cemetery
22. Bon Fire
23. Parking
24. Guest Cabin
25. Picnic Area
26. Bathrooms
27. Wishing Well / Sapphire the Blue Spirit