

## **Custer County Historical Society Monthly Program**

**Lois Wells – Program Director**

**Rachel Nepper -- Recorder**

### **“If You Have to Grow Up, it Might as Well be in a Small Town”**

**Ms. Phyllis Schrag – May 2, 2015**

Following the refreshment period, Lois introduced Phyllis Schrag, singer, actress, and storyteller from Chancellor, South Dakota. Her topic today was “If You Have to Grow Up, It Might as Well be in a Small Town.” Her town was small – 4 blocks by 6 blocks. Her parents had six children and there were a lot of older folks in town since farmers retired into town and everyone was “Grandpa or Grandma”. The town’s whistle would sound three times a day signaling the mealtimes. As a child she said she could go anywhere as long as she could hear the whistle. When she fell and was hurt someone in the neighborhood took care of bandaging. Everyone cared for all the kids in the neighborhood. She told a story about a renowned pie baker with perfect crusts who took her false teeth out to mark the edging on her pies. She told of going alone to the doctor’s office to get the polio vaccine. She told of the various places of business along the main street (the bar where one could get “sucked into sin”, the wonderful ice cream at the café, the boarded-up hotel, the barbershop, the pool hall, the upstairs doctor’s office) and the wonderful memories of growing up there. Audience members commented on their own upbringing and remembering their childhood in days gone by.