



Clockwise from above:

- Cuddly plush stick horses are part of the store's toy selection.
- Little customers are big at F.M. Light and are treated to a vast array of Western-themed toys and kid-sized merchandise.
- Toy sheriff's badges were custom-made with the 100-year logo.
- A fashion-conscious cowgirl selects a hot pink pair of boots.

suits and Stetson hats. "Clothiers to men who know" was one of the many slogans Frank created. All of the suits were made to order.

"They kept extremely detailed records about their customers," Del said, "from sizes right down to their birthdays."

The Lockhart brothers have continued that tradition, recognizing the store's level of customer service as the biggest reason for its success. Today, they use CAM Data System retail management software and are pleased with how well it works for them. The system is customized to the clothing and footwear industry.

The retail road was anything but smooth back when the store first opened. Frank Light hit the first bump in 1908, when his financial situation became so desperate that he considered closing. He turned to the local bank, which saw a future for the store and loaned him enough money to get back on track.

The second bump in the road came in 1929 with the crash of the stock market and ensuing depression. Like most Americans, the Lights lost all their savings when their bank went under in 1933. Ty and Del's grandmother knew something was wrong when her husband came home from work in the middle of the day, which had not happened since the store opened.

The family fought for the store and soon came up with the idea of taking it on the road. Rather than wait for customers to come to Steamboat, they would go to them. Fully stocked F.M. Light trucks frequented farms and ranches near and far, and within five years the mobile unit represented half of the store's sales.

The yellow and black road signs for which the store has become famous were the brainchild of Ty and Del's grandfather, Clarence Light. The original signs were erected in 1911 on wagon and horse trails. They were small but had incredible details, including etched pictures of the Light family.

"The signs got bigger and less detailed in the '30s, when the road went in," Ty said, guessing that the speed of the vehicle determined how much could be seen in passing. The signs are still on all roads leading to Steamboat Springs today and attract a huge tourist clientele for the store.

Frank Light eventually sold his interest in the store to his sons, Clarence, Olin and E. Day. Surviving his brothers, Clarence

