

Over the Fence...

Musings from the Editor

As the dark, cold days of winter slowly become brighter and warmer, our thoughts begin to turn to outdoor activities. We begin to make plans to enjoy the great outdoors of Colorado. Gardeners pore over plant catalogs planning their fantasy gardens like armchair quarterbacks lining out their fantasy teams. Hikers peruse trail maps looking for the routes less traveled or a peak that is begging to be conquered. And Fortune Seekers search old records and archives for the whereabouts of treasures hidden away.

Every year about this time, my son and a friend of his make plans to search for lost treasure. They both have a growing collection of books and other reference material regarding treasures which have been hidden away or lost in the mountains of Colorado. They make lists, draw maps, and then start the process all over again. For them the fun is in the plotting and planning; the searching just makes for a great time in the wilds. And they just happen to be learning a bit about Colorado in the process.

My mother liked to search for the treasure that could be found in the remnants of towns and buildings left by man. She and my sister would seek out the old ghost towns hoping to find an old autograph or poem penciled on a wall, maybe a bit of wallpaper or an old tin can.

I like to search for other kinds of treasure - those beautiful moments which can be found here in this gorgeous country called Colorado. A glorious sunset, a field of Spring flowers, a doe and her young fawn. For me, coming upon a gift of Nature is a treasure because they are so momentary and fleeting. If a person wasn't looking or paying attention, that memorable moment can be lost to the vestiges of time. Just like a chest of gold which has been buried away in a now forgotten location.

In this issue, you the Reader, will find stories of Hidden Treasures and Treasures Hidden. May your expeditions always find gold - in one form or another.

Jeanne Gröpp, Editor

Mulch Donated

Thank you to Wright's Tree Service and IREA, who donated many yards of mulch which were laid down on the 'weedy' section adjacent to the display area at the Museum. This really 'neatened up' the place!

Thanks to all the volunteers who helped out with this project!



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Treasures Hidden

Lost treasure tales are as much a staple of the Old West as gunfights and cattle rustling. Colorado is not short on tales of hidden treasures - lost gold mines, buried stolen loot, a forgotten cache of gold or silver. Who knows how many mine locations have been lost because the miner never registered his claim but rather kept it hidden away. Familiar tales tell of the Confederate Reynolds Gang, who terrorized residents from South Park to Conifer and purportedly hid a large sum of both paper currency and gold dust in the South Park region or the tale of the Treasure Mountain gold which spans more than 200 years and is filled with many curious events - from murder to superstition and a few things in between. Closer to home is the stolen gov't treasure buried near Devil's Head Mountain. But not all lost treasures are made of gold or silver. Somewhere in Fremont County is a Tungsten Mine believed to be richer than the mines found near Boulder, but its location has been lost all because of a few missing labels on rock samples. Outside of Strasburg lies Kiowa Creek where a 45 ton locomotive disappeared off a broken trestle during a torrential rain. Near Victor is a spring which was believed to promote hair growth, increase a person's libido and guarantee male offspring. Where will you find your treasure this Summer?

*****Please be respectful when searching for treasure. Be mindful of all boundary markers, rules/regulations and signs!!! *****

Hidden Treasures

The images below were painted by a sheepherder in the 1930's in an old barn located in South Park.
(a disk with these images can be found at the PPHS Museum)



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Chautauqua: *Local Plants and Their Many Uses*

Mari Marques, speaker

Sunday, February 15, 2:00pm

Florissant Library

PPHS Annual Meeting and Election

Saturday, March 7, 12:00pm

Florissant Library

Chautauqua: *PENDING*

Sunday, April 12, 2:00pm

Florissant Library

Chautauqua: *Cope & Marsh Bone Wars*

Thomas Price, speaker

Sunday, May 17, 2:00pm

Florissant Library

Chautauqua: *Science of Bigfoot*

Leon Drew, speaker

Sunday, June 21, 2:00pm

Florissant Library

Heritage Day Celebration

Saturday, July 25, all day

**Florissant Grange, Museum and
Schoolhouse Museum**

Tabeguache Ute Visit

August

*****info pending*****

PPHS Annual Volunteer Brunch

Saturday, September 12, 12:00pm

Florissant Library

PPHS Annual Auction

Saturday, October 10, 10am

Florissant Library

Chautauqua: *Old World Graffiti in Colorado*

Jeanne Gripp, speaker

Sunday, November 8, 2:00pm

Florissant Library

PPHS Christmas Party

December

****info pending****

Chautauquas are a public service of the Pikes Peak Historical Society. There is no admission and refreshments are served.

Chautauquas are normally held at the Florissant Library unless otherwise noted.

PPHS Annual Meeting and Election

The PPHS Annual Meeting and Election will take place on Saturday, March 7, 2015, 12:00 pm at the Florissant Library, located at 334 Circle Dr. in Florissant next to the Florissant Community Park.

We will provide the meat, **just bring a side dish or dessert**. We will also bring you up to date on the museum and the Society. Then we will vote on the slate of officers and board members for 2015. This slate includes the Board Members listed below, however, nominations may also be made from the floor.

Pikes Peak Historical Society Governing Board

Governing Board:

John Rakowski, President

Scott Adams, Vice President

Clint Waller, Treasurer

Rudy Perry, Secretary

Pam Adams, Board at Large

Linda Applebaum, Board at Large

Allan Applebaum, Board at Large

Wayne Johnston, Board at Large

Kathy Perry, Board at Large

Brian Stewart, Board at Large

Advisory Board:

AJ Hotchkiss

Celinda Kaelin

Andy Weinzapfel

Lenore Hotchkiss

Sally Maertens

Susan Weinzapfel

Chautauquas on Demand

Plans are underway to begin videotaping the monthly Chautauquas presented by the PPHS. The plan calls for the videos to be available for viewing on disc at the Museum as well as on the PPHS website. We'll keep you posted!

<http://www.pikespeakhsmuseum.org>

Thank you to the following newsletter contributors –

Celinda Kaelin

Kathy Perry

John Rakowski

2014 Volunteer Brunch

Rudy and Kathy Perry provided a delicious meal of Fajitas and all the fixin's at the annual Volunteer Brunch which was held in September. The Pikes Peak Historical Society provides a variety of services – from public talks to maintaining a museum which houses an extraordinary collection of items unique to the locale. If it wasn't for the untiring efforts of the many volunteers, these programs wouldn't be available.

Thank you to each of you for all that you do!



2014 PPHS Christmas Party

The 2014 Christmas Party was held at Twin Creek Ranch. Thank you to Harold and Celinda for hosting this event and for providing the delectable ham. And **Thank You** to everyone who brought food. It was quite a feast and a good time was had by all!



****editor's note*** the Pineapple Stuffing and the Cranberry Delight Salad were exceptional! Kudos to the Cooks! I think I may have gained a few "ounces" from all the scrumptious desserts as well!*



Have an idea for a story?
Got a tidbit or two you'd like to share?
Or maybe you just want to say "Hello!"
Email the Editor at woodespryte@gmail.com

PPHS Annual Auction

On a beautiful Saturday in October, anxious people spilled out of the Florissant Library. These people were all there in the hopes of getting the winning bid on that special item which would soon be put up for auction at the annual PPHS Auction Fundraiser. Thanks to their interest and excitement, the annual PPHS Auction was a rousing success. This was the second record breaking year for the Auction. Many **THANKS!** to all the people who generously donated items and to all the volunteers who helped make this event possible. The PPHS provides monthly educational programs; manages the Florissant Cemetery; supports informational kiosks & sponsor community outreach programs; operates the Pikes Peak Historical Society Museum, and facilitates the return of the Ute Nation to their ancestral lands here in the Pikes Peak area. The monies generated from the Annual PPHS Auction help fund these many programs.



Attie Thompson Portrayal

Historian and actress, Donna Knudten, portrayed Attie “Long” Thompson at the November Chautauqua. Donna held the audience spellbound as she spoke of Attie’s life on the western slope of Pikes Peak. Attie was born during the Civil War and came to what is now the Florissant Fossil Beds in 1872 with her family. She married Silas Thompson at age 17, lost her first two children to scarlet fever and later had her leg amputated on a table with only chloroform to dull the pain. In spite of these hardships, Attie lived to be seventy-five after a life full of amazing adventures.



Donna Knudten as Attie “Long” Thompson
speaking with descendants of the Long family

Mica

© John Rakowski

The Pikes Peak Historical Society Museum in Florissant recently acquired several very nice biotite mica crystals to add to the mineral collection. The new crystals were donated by Jesse Callender, grandson of Paul and Clare Callender and were found on their Crystal Peak property just a few miles north of the museum. The museum previously had a large sheet-like piece of biotite mica donated by Andy Weinzapfel which was found near Trout Creek Pass. It is unusual to find large sheets of biotite and well-formed crystals are very rare.

The silicate molecules of mica have stronger bonding in hexagonal rings in a lateral direction than in the up to down direction and consequently flake (cleave) very easily into thin sheets. Biotite mica is black mica containing iron and magnesium in the crystal structure. Biotite is commonly found in small, less than quarter inch size shiny black specks in the granite of Teller and Park counties but is occasionally found in larger size pieces in pegmatites. When biotite mica is exposed to water and air for a long time period it often turns to a shiny gold color and is sometimes mistaken for flakes of gold. However the flakes of shiny gold colored altered biotite are not as heavy as gold nor can they be flattened by a hammer on an anvil as may be done with gold. The mica flakes will break apart by using a sharp knifepoint but real gold will not do that. They also wash out of a gold pan instead of settling to the bottom of the sand as gold does.

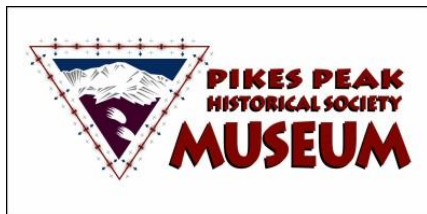
Biotite mica is not as chemically stable as the shiny clear muscovite mica. Muscovite mica does not have the iron in the crystal structure that biotite contains. The muscovite mica is very resistant to temperatures over 900 degrees Fahrenheit, is resistant to thermal shock of sudden temperature change and is a good electrical insulator. Nice muscovite pieces can be found locally in the pegmatites of the Badger Flats area northwest of Lake George. Muscovite mica was used for heat resistant windows in coal or wood stoves and was also an important insulating component of vacuum tubes and capacitors. Before the advent of transistors and other solids state circuits most radios and early TV's made extensive use of vacuum tubes for receiving, purifying and amplifying signals. During WW II muscovite mica was a critical war material and pegmatite areas such as Colorado were extensively prospected. The war effort needed the mica for vacuum tubes in radios.

Muscovite mica and another clear mica called phlogopite are still actively mined at several locations in the US and overseas and world production is over 300,000 tons. Russia, Finland and the United States are the largest producers of mica. Mica is mainly used today in oil well drilling to plug drilling fluid loss, as a high temperature insulator, used in rubber or plastic as a filler, or as the glittery substance in nail polish and makeup. Phlogopite is resistant to temperatures over 1600 degrees Fahrenheit, even hotter temperatures than muscovite. Certain specialty uses require very pure pieces of muscovite or phlogopite that command high prices of \$50-60 per ounce but most mica is sold for a dollar or two per pound.



FLORISSANT PIONEER CEMETERY

Florissant's cemetery received its first permanent "guest" in 1874. This is not surprising, since the town of Florissant was established by Judge James Castello in 1870. What is surprising, however, is that Frank, James' son, waited until 1886 to incorporate a Florissant Cemetery Association. This was probably in anticipation of the boom that would come to the area with the arrival of the Midland Railroad. The Pikes Peak Historical Society maintains this tradition of stewardship with its management of the Florissant Pioneer Cemetery on behalf of Teller County. If you meet the residency requirements; you may also secure a final resting place in this historic cemetery. Donations of \$300 are requested for a full burial, and only \$150 for cremains. Call Harold Kaelin at 719-748-3562 to secure your future at this historic site.



MEMBERSHIP

The Pikes Peak Historical Society is a non-profit corporation organized under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3). The purpose of the Society is to encourage the preservation of the history of Florissant and the west slope of Pikes Peak, and to educate the public regarding this historical legacy.

The Pikes Peak Historical Society (PPHS) is funded solely through memberships and donations, and supports its mission through volunteers who serve on its numerous committees.

PPHS owns and operates two museums; The Pikes Peak Historical Society Museum, at 18033 Teller County Road # across from the Florissant Post Office, and the Schoolhouse Museum located at Teller County Road #3 and Wildhorn.

Our Cemetery Committee manages the historic Florissant Pioneer Cemetery on behalf of Teller County. Our Beautification Committee sponsors an area-wide clean-up each spring, cleans along Highway 24, and plants flowers throughout the town of Florissant. Our Chautauqua Committee sponsors free educational programs each month, and our Trails Committee support these efforts in the area. The Tree Committee records Ute Culturally Scarred trees.

The volunteers and members of the Pikes Peak Historical Society make all of these community projects possible. Your membership entitles you to our tri-annual newsletter. Life Members receive a ten percent discount on all items at the gift shop.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (please print):

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Membership Type

_____ Sustaining Member	\$20/year
_____ Family Membership	\$30/year
_____ Supporting Member	\$50 or \$100/year
_____ Castello Life Member	\$200

Committee Interests

Museum	_____
Cemetery	_____
Beautification	_____
Chautauqua	_____
Trees	_____
Trails	_____

CHECK ENCLOSED FOR \$ _____ DATE: _____

MAIL TO: PIKES PEAK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 823
FLORISSANT, CO 80816

For more information, call Celinda 719.748.3562



Pikes Peak Historical Society
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