

## Difficult Times What Day Is It?

John Rakowski

What time is it? June? July? Yesterday was May. Many people have lost track of days during the last few months.

We've seen a huge disruption to our lives since March when the Covid-19 illnesses and closings began. The PPHS and our museum is no different. We had to postpone the Annual Meeting and long-awaited ceremonial "burning of the mortgage". Our museum remains closed to the public, meaning that we have no regular income from donations coming in. We still have utility bills and maintenance items that are draining our accounts. Luckily our Board has an emergency fund buffer that should bring us through this crisis. We all look forward to a SAFE time to reopen to the public and that opening may not be until 2021.

Our parking lot has been resealed and restriped, a necessity to prevent deterioration. We did lose the PPHS sign on the CR 1 side of the building when a strong wind gust blew it down due to a rotted and weakened post.

We'll have some new displays when we reopen. Carolynne Forster is preparing a display of some of her Ute items, part of her family heritage that she received when her father passed away. She remembers many stories about these items told to her by her father when she was younger. We have a newly acquired display cabinet in the Ute Room for those items.

The Ute Pass Historical Society donated a Barksdale portrait to us because they felt it was more meaningful for the Florissant area. Part of the old Barksdale ranch dating from 1919 was incorporated into the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument and a Barksdale Picnic area was constructed there.



*The portrait from about 1900 shows a Spanish-American War medal being pinned onto Elisha Barksdale's jacket by his sister Nannie. This portrait is actually a colorized copy of an enlarged photo so it carries accuracy as a historical legacy.*

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## Editorially Speaking:

### What's Happening?

The Museum remains closed for the season, but PPHS remains strong and ready. We don't know when and how things will open up again, but we are ready to go with the flow. Aren't we glad we got our mortgage paid off last year so we don't have that added expense in a year of little to no income? Please consider a donation to PPHS to help with the expenses that continue even though our income does not.

I left the calendar for the remainder of the year in place (page 3), but we don't know whether any of these events will actually happen. All events are on hold and may be cancelled or rescheduled depending on Covid-19 restrictions. Maybe it will just be a reminder of what we are missing during the year of Covid-19. We will keep you posted. In the meantime, stay safe and healthy. Things will return to some form of normal, and life goes on.

John Rakowski gave us a run-down of what's happening with Pikes Peak Historical Society and the Museum (page 1); we will have some interesting new items and exhibits when we do re-open.

### 2020 PPHS Board of Directors

John Rakowski, *President*  
Scott Adams, *Vice President*  
Carolynne Forster, *Treasurer*  
Barbara Hickok, *Secretary*

#### Members at Large

Lois Voeltz, *Membership Chair*  
Diane Burton, *Board Member at Large*  
Robyn Proper, *Board Member at Large*  
Jeff McCammon, *Board Member at Large*

#### Other Chairs

Wayne Johnston, *Facebook & Website Chair*  
Toni Ratzlaff, *Chautauqua Chair*  
Sheila Naviasky, *Museum Docent Chair*  
Kathy Perry, *Geocache Chair*

#### Advisory Board:

AJ Hotchkiss	Lenore Hotchkiss
Celinda Kaelin	Brian Stewart
Sally Maertens	Susan Weinzapfel
Andy Weinzapfel	

#### Newsletter Committee:

Darice Zimmermann	daricezimmermann@gmail.com
Robyn Proper	robynproper@gmail.com
Donna Knudten	



# 2020 Calendar of Events

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## Pikes Peak Historical Society

(all events at Lake George Charter School unless otherwise noted)

### Florissant Heritage Day: CANCELLED

Saturday, July 25, 10:00 am-2:00 pm

### Chautauqua #5:

Sunday, August 16, 2:00 pm

### PPHS Annual Volunteer Brunch

Saturday, September 12, 12:00 PM

### PPHS Annual Auction

Saturday, October 17, 2:00 pm; preview begins at noon

### Veterans Day Ceremony

Wednesday, November 11, 10:30 am Florissant Pioneer Cemetery

### Chautauqua #6:

Sunday, November 15, 2:00 pm

### PPHS Christmas/Holiday Party

Saturday, December 12, 12:00 pm

**Mark your Calendars now and plan to attend these fun Pikes Peak Historical Society events.**



*PPHS photo*

*Waiting for our return.*

Thanks to Lois and her friend, Spencer Peregoy, for creating our new donation box at the Museum. It is a replica of the Florissant Elementary School with a slot in the roof for donations and is a great addition to our Museum. See pictures of our new donation box below and to the left.

We started our series about Geocaching in last Fall's issue of the Newsletter, and continue it now. We are featuring two more of the Geocache sites that PPHS sponsors. This summer might just be a good time to try Geocaching yourself, or at least to read more about it. It is something you can do in the outdoors while NOT being part of a crowd of people. And you can learn new things about our area.

Thank you, Kathy and Rudy Perry, for introducing us to Geocaching!

Get out and enjoy the great outdoors this summer. We live in a beautiful area, and probably don't appreciate or enjoy it as much as we should. And you can't catch Covid-19 from a tree or a rock or a mountain. Talk to your friends by phone and plan what you want to do as the restrictions are lifted. It is a strange year for sure, but we can and will get through it. I just hope we learn something from it. And I hope that some of the good changes that have come from it will stay with us. In the meantime, stay in touch with your friends.

Stay safe and stay healthy.



# It's All About Geocaching

By Kathy Perry

Kathy and Rudy Perry introduced us to Geocaching in our Fall Newsletter, and we continue the series here. These are two more of the Geocache Sites sponsored by the Pikes Peak Historical Society.

## Ute War Trail

A cache by Pikes Peak Historical Society

Hidden: 05/21/2016

N 38° 57.045 W 105° 16.458

You are parked along the old Colorado Midland Railroad (CMRR), now Highway 24. The rail bed lies beneath much of Highway 24, and traces of the rail grade can be seen along to the north and south sides of Highway 24. CMRR used images of Ute Indians for its advertising.

The Colorado Midland ceased operations during WWI. It had the government contract for hauling troops and supplies through the Rockies, however it was too unreliable with numerous wrecks and derailments due to the steep grades. The government ordered it to cease operations due to the scarcity of fuel, and the ensuing bankruptcy court ordered the tracks torn up and sold to pay creditors.



Hwy 24 with Colorado Midland Railroad in background

The Colorado Midland RR began running from Colorado Springs, through Florissant, and to the west slope in 1887. Day-trippers from Colorado Springs were allowed to dig for fossils in the hillside opposite the Florissant kiosk (just a few hundred feet to the west). The kiosk was built by the Pikes Peak Historical Society, and



Colorado Midland Railroad Advertisement



UTE War Trail

tells the story of the Ute Indians.

The needs of these early tourists gave birth to the resort towns of Cascade, Chipeta Park, Green Mountain Falls, and Woodland Park, and created a boom in Florissant.

On the hillside north of you, above the stream, traces of the Ute War Trail can still be seen. War Trails were narrow, just wide enough for one horseman, and covered rough terrain. They sought the shortest, fastest route to battle sites. Lodge Pole Trails, on the other hand, were wide enough for a horse pulling a travois, and were used when the villages were changing location.

West of the kiosk is a rocky hilltop that holds the remains of a Ute stone fort. Ute scouts were posted here to prevent enemies from encroaching on their territory. This is called Fortification Hill, and on its eastern base the open meadow is a Ute battlefield. Famous mountain man Kit Carson witnessed a battle between the Ute Indians and the Comanche at this site in 1852.

### **PPHS Geology 101**

A cache by Pikes Peak Historical Society  
Hidden: 05/09/2016  
N 38° 56.657 W 105° 16.790

If you were standing in this area 36.7 million years ago, you would have been the victim of a widespread cataclysm: every living thing being incinerated in an instant by a glowing cloud of



Fortification Hill

superheated incandescent gas and volcanic rock debris traveling at enormous speed originating from the Sawatch Range to the west.

The evidence of this natural disaster is a hard, tan to grey rock known as the Wall Mountain Tuff, scattered on this hillside. Tuff is a light-colored volcanic rock, typically containing high temperature minerals such as the feldspar sanidine. Small rod-like crystals of sanidine can be seen on fresh broken surfaces of this rock.

The path of destruction would have generally followed the contours of the landscape at that time, the valleys being “ground zero” and the highest hills possibly a safe-haven. This event impacted as far northeast (37 miles) as Castle Rock, where similar rocks of the same age have been found.

Two million years later, the Florissant Formation, containing well-preserved plant and insect fossils from a much warmer and wetter climate than today, was deposited in a large lake in the valley before you (including the Florissant Community Park field to the south).

This natural lake was dammed by a low-temperature mud flow which can be seen today near Evergreen Station on CR1. It was sourced from one or more volcanoes in the Guffey area 18 miles southwest.

The wide valley to the south and west is part of the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. This valley is probably where the Spanish army encamped in 1779 while on a campaign against the Comanche. They were led by 200 Ute warriors/scouts. The Ute Indians referred to the Fossil Beds as “Valley of the Shadows.” This referred to the 35 million-year-old fossils entombed in the ash by the Guffey volcano. It was thought that the shadow of the plants, insects and animals held their spirit.

There you have two more Geocaching sites, and two more places to visit and explore this summer. Thanks to Celinda Kaelin (Ute War Trail) and Andy Weinzapfel (Geology 101) for providing the history for these sites. We look forward to the next installment informing us about Geocaching and other interesting sites in this area.

## Gee, Thanks!

We always have people and businesses to thank for their contributions to PPHS in the form of money, time, energy, materials; so:

## Thanks!

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Thanks to Spencer Peregoy for creating our beautiful new donation box for the PPHS Museum.

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Thanks to all our volunteers and members for all you do to support the Pikes Peak Historical Society and Museum.

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Thank you to Kathy and Rudy Perry for keeping our Geocaching program going strong.

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Thanks to Lois Voeltz for keeping us informed in these difficult days.

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We don't say it enough, but a HUGE Thank You to John Rakowski. Your tremendous energy lifts us all

## Amazon Smile Program

Do you shop on Amazon? Did you know that you can benefit the Pikes Peak Historical Society every time you shop? Amazon has a program to support your favorite charity: Amazon will donate 0.5% of most purchases to your chosen charity, and PPHS is now registered as participating charity. Just go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) to get started, and select Pikes Peak Historical Society from the list of charities.

### Membership Information

If you have questions or need to make changes to your contact information, members may call 719-748-8259 and leave a message for a call back; or call President John Rakowski at 719-748-3861; or contact Lois Voeltz, Membership Chairman, at [PPHSMembers@gmail.com](mailto:PPHSMembers@gmail.com); or use the 'Contact Us' form via the website:

[www.pikespeakhsmuseum.org](http://www.pikespeakhsmuseum.org)

Memberships may be renewed either online through the PPHS website using PayPal or via the U.S. mail (PO Box 823, Florissant, CO 80816).

Remember you have the option of receiving your Newsletter by email or regular mail.

ATTENTION! The Editor is always looking for articles, old clippings, old photos, and story ideas for upcoming newsletters. Email the Editor with your submission. [daricezimmermann@gmail.com](mailto:daricezimmermann@gmail.com)  
Please send us your memories of our area "back in the day."

## 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 \$400 are requested for a full burial, and only \$200 for cremains.

Call Pikes Peak Historical Society at 719-748-8259 to secure your future at this historic site.

## MEMBERSHIP



The Pikes Peak Historical Society (PPHS) 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.

Pikes Peak Historical Society 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 CR1 (across from the Florissant Post Office) and the Schoolhouse Museum, located at Teller County Roads CR31 and CR3 (Wildhorn Rd.).

Our Cemetery Committee manages the 1874 Florissant Pioneer Cemetery on behalf of Teller County. Our Beautification Committee sponsors an area-wide clean-up each spring and plants flowers throughout the town of Florissant. Our Chautauqua Committee sponsors free educational programs during the year. If you become a Docent (Museum Volunteer), you act as host at the Museum, and meet wonderful, exciting people from all over the world.

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 10% discount on all items at the Museum Gift Shop.

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION (please print):

NAME(S): \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail1: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail2: \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer Newsletter by: Email  US Mail  both Email and US Mail

### MEMBERSHIP TYPE

Sustaining . . . . . \$20/year

Family . . . . . \$30/year

Supporting . . . . . \$50/year

Castello Life . . . . . \$200

### COMMITTEE INTERESTS

Auction  Beautification  Cemetery

Geocaching  Hwy 24 Cleanup  Museum

Refreshments for Chautauqua

CHECK ENCLOSED FOR \$ \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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

OR JOIN ONLINE AT:  
[www.pikespeakhsmuseum.org](http://www.pikespeakhsmuseum.org)

For more information, call John at 719-748-3861. Thank you.

( Updated 02/14/2020 )



Pikes Peak Historical Society  
P.O. Box 823  
Florissant, CO 80816

BULK RATE
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*Addressee or Current Resident*