



# NEWSLETTER

Spring 2022

## A Spring In Your Step

Bringing in a Fresh Season



*Pasque Flower by Carolynne Cummings Forster*

To me, Spring has always meant exciting things – a birthday, a visit to family far down frozen (now thawed) roads, muddy boots, playing calves, a thin layer of green appearing in the pastures, wildflowers, and an early sun fueling it all. I'm hoping this spirit continues into 2022. The long-time editor of this newsletter has shepherded me into the role, sharing many resources for this wonderful communication. Eva Miranda here as the new editor. Growing up I spent summers in Teller County learning about minerals, mountains, and the people that spent their time here. That time, an interest in railroads, an aunt that trained me in cleaning

museums, and a few years volunteering at Denver Museum of Nature and Science has me looking forward to the learning and connections ahead. I will see your faces at the Spring Cleaning day in April – more details on page 5!

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# Pikes Peak Historical Society

## Geocaching Article

### PPHS Twin Creek Ranch Part 1 of 2

A cache by Pikes Peak Historical Society  
Hidden : 04/25/2016

N 38° 57.016 W 105° 18.334

Twin Creek Ranch is listed on the National Historic Register of Historic Places. It is a compound consisting of historic structures including:

1. Trapper's Cabin
2. Log Homestead/Barn
3. Harness Shed
4. Bunkhouse
5. Outhouse
6. Carriage House
7. Victorian House
8. Potato Cellars.

### TIPI LODGE POLES:

In the pasture northwest of the barn, leaning against a pine tree, two very old Indian lodge poles were found. These, coupled with dozens of stone tools found in the pastures, provide tangible evidence of the first inhabitants of the region – Ute Indians. [These stone tools are now on display at the Pikes Peak Historical Society Museum in Florissant.] The region from east of Colorado Springs, west to the border of Utah, and from I-70 down to Ft. Garland was the traditional territory of the Tabeguache Band of the Ute.

Chief Ouray, Piah, and Colorow were frequent visitors to the area. Atlanta Georgia Thompson recalled their visits:

"The [Ute] Indians were all through the country and some big camps were located near our place [now the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument]. Those camps were very interesting to all of us because they were so different from the white man's camp. They were very colorful because every tepee had a figure of a warrior or  
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horse painted on one or both sides of it with the bright red, green, yellow paint that only the Indians know how to make. They usually chose a level place near a little stream where they pitched their tepees and then after the ponies were relieved of their packs, they were turned loose to graze on the mountain grass which was very plentiful... Chief Colorow was in our house many times. He was very friendly toward the white man. He could speak some English, and father enjoyed talking to him. Sometimes he would come and bring some of his tribe with him. They would sit on the floor and say, 'Heap pretty squaw,' meaning my mother, and then say, 'Me like heap biscuits.'

[*Daughter of a Pioneer*, 1982]"

### 2021 PPHS Board of Directors

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**Twin Creek Ranch compound:  
(L-R) Victorian house, harness shed, Trapper's cabin, log  
homestead/barn**

## TRAPPER'S CABIN:

On the Northwest side of the compound is the oldest structure, a Trapper's Cabin probably built by Kit Carson and his free trappers in the 1840s. Carson and his men trapped the region for valuable beaver pelts during this era, and his last known foray here was in 1852. The date of the cabin was established by an archaeologist with the National Park Service, and the connection with Carson was established by a visit from his grandson, John Carson, in the early 1990s when he was doing an inventory of Carson's cabins in the area. All of Carson's trapper cabins exhibit the same dimensions, and have doors and windows opening to the south.

In his book *Thirty One Years on the Plains and In the Mountains*, Will Drannan writes that Carson brought his young trappers up from Taos by mule train, carrying with them a small wood stove for their cabin. Identical cabins were built in a trapping area approximately five miles apart.

Two men would inhabit each cabin, and trap the beaver streams in the area. The trappers would use the skin of a fresh elk kill for a bed after attaching it to the walls of the cabin with pegs.

The first written documentation of the cabin dates to ca 1865, when a mountain man named Frederick Smith provided written testimony on behalf of Thomas Burnham's homestead application. Burnham acquired the cabin from Smith. In the Pre-Emption Proof for Burnham, Smith states that he "used to live in it [cabin]."

Smith was born in Germany, and immigrated with E. Smith, H. Smith, and Conrad Smith around 1853. He married Minnie Hase prior to immigrating to Platte County, MO. Five years later he enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he served with the 5th Kansas Calvary, Company L during the Civil War. He contracted pneumonia at Camp Blunt, MO in the fall of 1862. Then in 1863, he "incurred chronic diarrhea from bad food and water and exposure" at Camp Shanghai, MO. In November 1864, his wife Minnie passed away. His bad luck continued nonetheless, and Smith suffered for several months from pneumonia. Dr. W.D. Bull advised him to move to Colorado in order to improve his fragile health. When he arrived in Florissant, he worked as a blacksmith and farmed. He remarried Emeline (Huffmann) Baker around 1865 in Kansas. Emmaline's first husband, Louis Baker, was killed by Quantrill's Raiders during the Civil War in 1862. She had four children at the time of her marriage to Smith: Ida (age 8), Emma (age 6), Louis (age 5), and Charles (age 2). Frederick Smith entered the Old Soldiers Home in Monte Vista, CO., where he died in April, 1904.

# Good-bye to a Good

## Friend

By Darice Zimmermann

Donna Knudten was a good friend to many of us. She was certainly a good friend to the Pikes Peak Historical Society, the PPHS Museum, the Cemetery, and many people, groups, and organizations in the Florissant/Lake George area. She was also a regular contributor to the Newsletter.

Donna was a Colorado girl. Doesn't matter that she grew up near Chicago; she belonged to the mountains, to Colorado. Her heart was, is, and always will be here, and she shared that love so willingly and openly. Her life embraced the simple pleasures of living in the mountains: wildflowers, star gazing, hikes, family, dogs.

Donna was very artistic and creative, and made many bracelets and earrings for the Museum Gift Shop as well as volunteering there as a docent with her husband, Knudt. She will be missed.

Donna went into hospice care in December for severe respiratory disease, and passed away on December 17, 2021. Her daughter and husband (and probably her dogs) were with her. Memorial donations may be sent to Teller County Regional Animal Shelter ([www.tcrascolorado.org](http://www.tcrascolorado.org)).

**Donna  
Knudten**  
1948 – 2021



## Community Happenings

Our events are still in a holding pattern due to COVID. Our usual events are on pause including:

- Chautauquas
- Annual Meeting
- Volunteer Appreciation Day

We are planning on opening the museum this Spring, which means we're planning a Spring Cleaning day! Right now we're thinking probably April 22<sup>nd</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup>. More details to come soon on sign up and scheduling.

May 7<sup>th</sup> is when we plan to open the museum to the public. We'll start with 1PM to 4PM each Saturday and Sunday. Then we'll see what our docent availability is and aim for more availability beginning Memorial Day weekend.

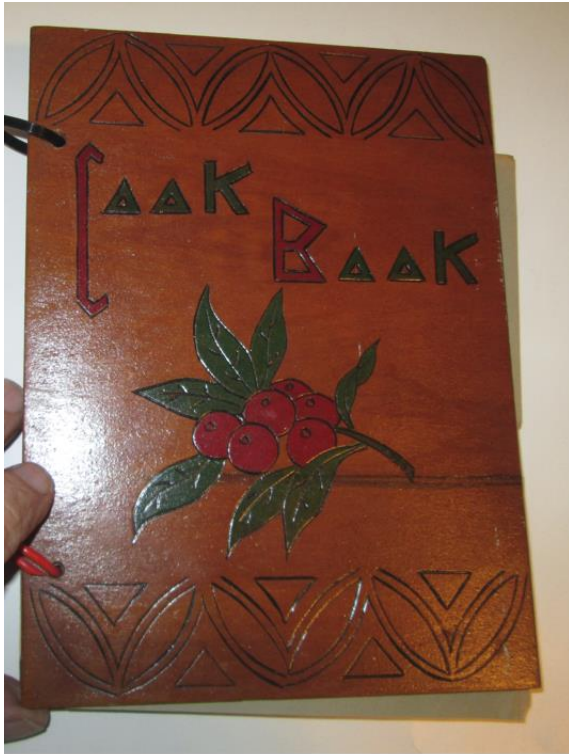
I think it's safe to say we all miss the joys and connections of the museums. Here's a quote from Sheila Naviasky about one of those connections.

I always enjoy having children visit the museum. The older children will look around and ask questions. The younger ones will get restless because the exhibits are fragile and we cannot let them touch things. So, I always take them over to the Mountain Man and let them touch the badger skin and mink. Then in the Ute Room I let them play the drum. At first most of them are very tentative about playing it, but when I reassure them they cannot hurt the drum their faces light up as they make music. Now and then someone with musical talent will actually play a tune on it. Every child who comes into the museum is offered a token mineral specimen. Watching the children debate which one they want is always enjoyable. When they are having a difficult time choosing between two of the specimens, I let them have both. Their faces light up when that happens!

Please share any of your favorite connections with the editor!



## The Help U Club



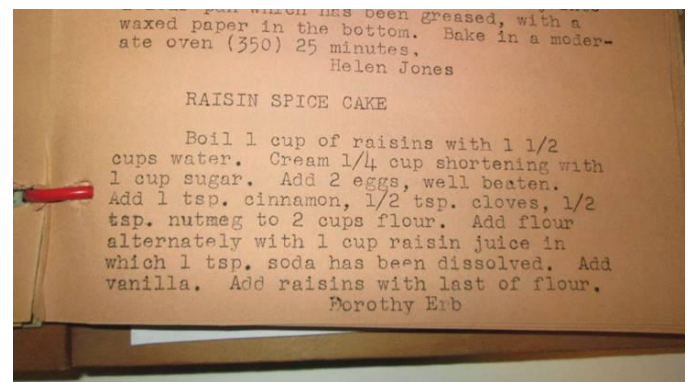
The Pikes Peak Historical Society has become the custodian of the remaining records of the Florissant-Lake George Help U Club and an exhibit will be prepared to honor memory of the group. PPHS even received a wood covered mimeographed recipe book from 1941 which someone found in a garage sale in Maine and mailed to us!

The Club first became a reality in 1939 when five women joined together to try to make their normal household tasks more fun and at the same time accomplish many chores. The earliest members were all from Florissant, but later included Lake George, Divide, and Cripple Creek. They met twice a month at one of their homes and each lady would bring a covered dish to share. The club's goals remained to assist with community activities and to help those in need. The motto for the group was "Gossip Less." In 1946 the membership totaled about 25 ladies and in 1948 the plans and the goals for the year were established. The dues

were set at 10 cents a month. In the 1980's to 2016 the Help U Club met at the Lake George Community Center for regular pot luck luncheon meetings.

The HUC was a registered charitable and service organization incorporated from 1985 until 2016. The purpose of the club continued to be providing emergency service in the form of clothing, food, and other assistance for those in need as it might arise in this area. Monetary donations were made by the HUC to other charitable, educational, and nonprofit organizations. Such money was raised through bake sales, annual Holiday Bazaar and a raffle for a handmade quilt. Some of the recipients of the club were Florissant Grange, local libraries, fire departments, schools, Senior Center, Cripple Creek Rehabilitations and Wellness Center, Home Care, county search and rescue and holiday gift bags for those in need.

During the almost eighty years as the oldest local service organization, their mission never changed—helpful neighbors helping neighbors with a hand up in times of need. The organization disbanded in 2017 and the small remaining treasury was finally liquidated with a donation to PPHS.



*If you give the recipe a try, let us know how it goes! Send your reviews, pictures, or samples to the editor.*

# *Gee, Thanks!*

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

Thank you to Darice for your time, commitment, and curation of the newsletter. Our community is grateful for your time and expert eye putting news, knowledge, and fun together.

Thank you from one editor to another for all your help, emails, and answers to get me going! I couldn't ask for better help getting started.

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Thank you to all of our wonderful members who have stuck with us through the twists and turns of the last few years. We appreciate your patience and can't wait to see you again!

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Thank you to the outstanding donors in our auction! In addition to our community partners that contributed items, we had some truly special members that made donations over \$100. They contributed over \$4500!

Thank you Scott Adams, Cindy Birgen, Laurel Clark, Rick & Tonya Favinger, Carolynne & Jerry Forster, Knudt & Donna Knudten, High Country Realty (John Magoon), Gary Kraudelt, Park State Bank & Trust (Tony Perry), Pikes Peak Polaris (Jeff Book), John Rakowski, and Brian & Ginger Stewart.

## 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 donates 0.5% of most purchases to your chosen charity, and PPHS is now registered as participating charity. Just go to [smile.amazon.com](https://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. [eva.miranda717@gmail.com](mailto:eva.miranda717@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

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