

DISCOVER

FALL 2021

Vigilante Lynchings in Golden

Native
American
Ethnography
Project



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Director's Welcome

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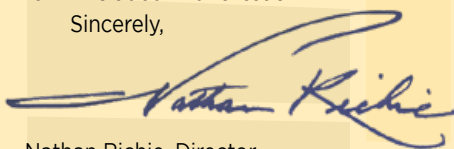
e're now more than two years into our Legacy Collection Inventory—a full audit and rebuild of our permanent collection records that were badly damaged in 2008 during a legal dispute prior to becoming a division of the City of Golden. Along the way we have been rediscovering treasures from the collection, finding new insights, and raising new questions. One object we found is a small carved parrot in a cage pictured on the cover of this issue of *Discover* magazine. The charming carved folk art belies its disturbing origin—a souvenir from one of Golden's most notorious lynchings. That discovery led us to ask more questions about the history of vigilantism and lynching in our community. We invited local historian Richard Gardner to explore this dark episode in a new essay for the magazine.

Our collection continues to grow. Within these pages you'll see images of some of our most recent acquisitions as well as some rediscovered items. In addition to objects,

we also collect archives and research. We recently acquired the Jefferson County Historic Place Names Directory, a trove of information that documents the origins of locations, natural features, and landmarks in our area. It was gifted to the Museum by the Jefferson County Historical Commission. We invited historian Mary Ramstetter to talk about her involvement with the creation of that directory as well as her award-winning book *John Gregory Country*, which resulted from her endeavor.

As ever, THANK YOU to our members and donors whose generosity makes collecting, preserving, and sharing these resources possible. And if you are not currently a member, I invite you to become a supporter of the Museum today by using the form included in this issue.

Sincerely,



Nathan Richie, Director

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*Amos Snodgrass
carving of parrot
in a cage.
See page 11.*
Photo © Justin LeVett
Photography

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Saving South Table Mountain

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*By preserving the land, we pass on its
history for generations to come. — Carl F. Eiberger*

By **Mark Dodge**, Curator

Are you thankful that South Table Mountain is protected and preserved, and not a quarry? You can thank Attorney Carl F. Eiberger and a team of dedicated volunteers for working hard to protect and preserve this iconic Jefferson County landmark, our “Gateway to the Rockies.”

On June 6, 2021, Carl’s Point, a scenic vista on the northeast part of South Table Mountain, was dedicated by Jeffco Open Space.

A Colorado native and an Applewood resident since 1958, Eiberger gave over 23 years of pro bono work between 1975 and 1998 to save South Table Mountain.

He did much more than just save a landmark, however. Eiberger ran a successful law firm and practiced several areas of corporate litigation, including labor law. Even with his demanding practice, he still found time to contribute pro bono work as Pleasant View’s attorney for 33 years and Prospect Park’s attorney for 25 years. He built 11 parks around Golden and founded Applewood Park and the Applewood Athletic Club. When all of the hours of his

day were filled, this father of four somehow found time to continue contributing to all that was important to him. For example, in addition to fighting for South Table Mountain, he loved the Denver Symphony, and when they were hurting financially, he contributed eight years of pro bono work, which at that time was valued at \$900,000.

Here’s what his daughter Mary had to say about Eiberger and the legal battle around South Table Mountain.

“I was seven years old when the STM [South Table Mountain] battle began. I was too young then to understand the impact of all that dad was doing. So, I inherited 17 boxes of legal work, just a few boxes—oh I’m kidding there—but these 17 boxes have led me to understand how one person can make a difference! And how one person can rally an entire community to make a difference.”

In 1974, a quarry was proposed for the top of South Table Mountain. It was estimated to have enough material to operate for at least 75 years. Leo Bradley and Adolph Coors Company owned the land



and wanted the basalt volcanic aggregate rock which is suitable for building roads. The mining would have made much of the mountain unusable for outdoor recreation at least through 2050, and even possibly longer, permanently changing the landscape. The quarry was going to be a mile long by a mile wide and 200 feet deep. A conveyor belt would have carried the rock down from the top of the mountain, down to 32nd St., destroying the mountain and the view.

Fortunately, Eiberger and his team prevailed. Next time you’re out at South Table Mountain think of them!

Do you know a legendary person we should feature? Write to MDodge@GoldenHistory.org.



Native American Ethnography Project

By **Nathan Richie**, Director

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*With virtually no Native
collections and no relationships
with tribes, we must start
from the very beginning of
forging connections.*

Native Americans have lived in the region that is today known as Golden, Colorado, for more than 12,000 years. They possess a rich history and culture, but were forcibly removed through warfare, displacement, disease, and other factors brought on by White settlers. Yet, dozens of tribes maintain this region as part of their historic homelands.

Golden History Museum & Park, founded in 1938, has almost exclusively focused on preserving and interpreting the White settlement of Golden. Over the years the Museum has mounted a handful of small exhibits of Native American artifacts but has not meaningfully included Indigenous history or perspectives into exhibits and collections. Museum staff and the Golden community desire to change this and

to make the history we interpret more inclusive of different voices, specifically Native Americans who lived in this area for millennia and who were dispossessed of their ancestral lands.

But how does an institution embark on this process? With virtually no Native collections and no relationships with tribes, we must start from the very beginning of forging connections. Museum staff consulted with representatives from both the Denver Museum of Nature and Science and History Colorado to figure out where to begin. Their recommendations were to begin with a Native American Ethnography to establish relationships with tribes and provide a baseline understanding of Native history. Ethnography is defined as the study of an individual culture as told from the viewpoint

◀ The 500-year-old Inspiration Tree, located at Rooney Road and West Alameda Parkway, in Morrison, Colorado. Alexander Rooney's grandson Alex built a picnic area and dance pavilion beside the tree on the slope of Dinosaur Ridge, where the Ute Chief Colorow held councils in the late 1800s.

Photo © Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

▶ Chief Colorow on the cover of *COLOROW! A Colorado Photographic Chronicle*, by Beth Simmons, Ph.D.. Braids wrapped in leather, he wears a beaded choker and his best fringed buckskins.

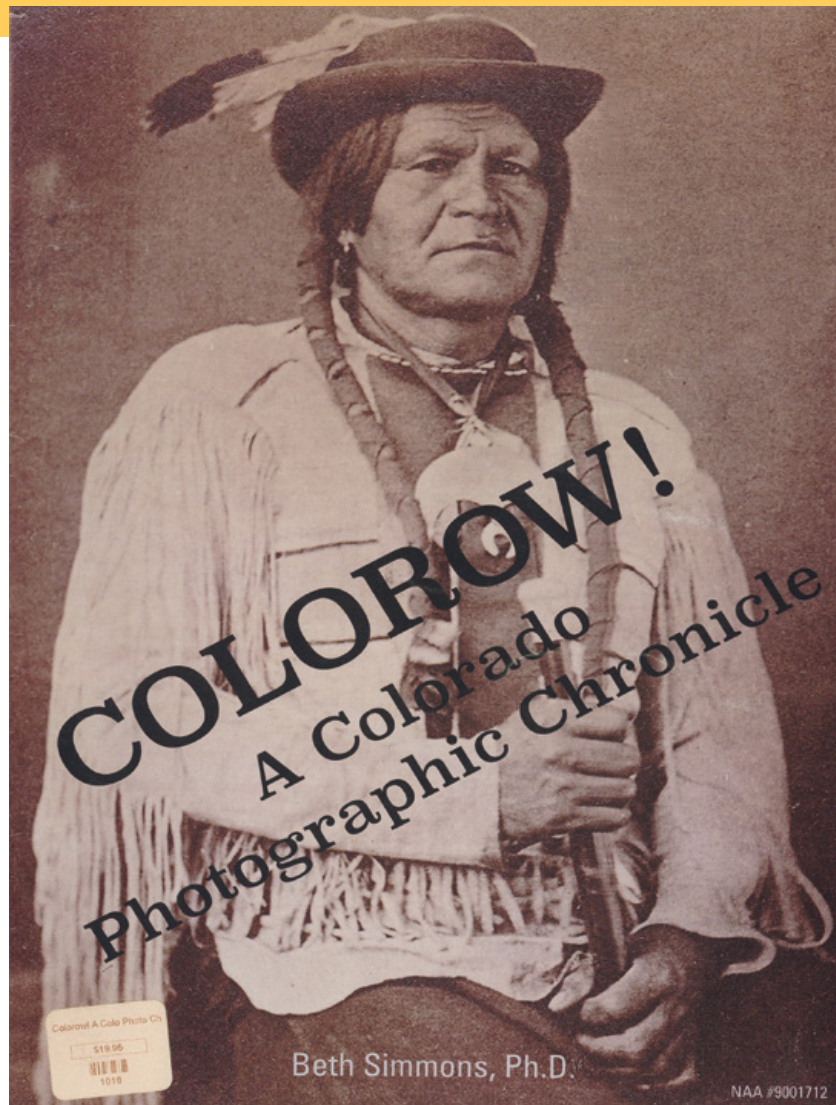
Photo © Golden History Museum & Park, City of Golden Collection

of the subject of study. Ethnographers seek to learn about a culture's traditional understanding and worldview of their history, local environment, topography, plants and animals, and the relationship between people and the land.

GHM&P teamed up with the City of Golden's Historic Preservation Board which similarly identified Native American history as a gap in their preservation plan. Together we successfully obtained a \$25,000 grant from the Colorado State Historical Fund to undertake a Native American Ethnography Project. The study would fulfill two immediate City goals: 1) help the Museum and the City as an organization address a significant deficiency in their historical understanding of the Golden region, and 2) help address key goals within the City's Historic Preservation Plan.

The Ethnography Project is intended to be a first step in nurturing nascent relationships with descendant Native communities. We hope to lay the foundation of trusting and collaborative relationships that could be grown over time to include Native participation in preserving and interpreting Native history, developing future educational initiatives, and adding underrepresented voices in the City's ongoing work to preserve regional heritage.

To begin this project, the Museum contracted with a highly regarded ethnography company, Anthropological Research LLC from Tucson, Arizona, which has extensive experience working with tribes of the central and southwest United States. Colorado currently recognizes 48



Native American tribes with historic ties to the state. At least 28 of those tribes have associations to the Front Range. The Ute, Cheyenne, and Arapaho have particularly strong and lengthy connections to this area and for the purposes of this initial project are the tribes we will focus on and work with. Over the next year the ethnographers and staff will engage tribal historians to review existing tribal literature and conduct oral histories. The City of Golden and GHM&P will use the information from the completed study to better understand and interpret the traditional cultural landscape, identify places of importance to Native American tribes, understand the context of such places within the larger traditional cultural landscape, assist with the evaluations of preservation eligibility for such places, and assist with the evaluation of effects for future undertakings.

We invite you to follow our progress on the project by reading future updates in the pages of this magazine as well as on our blog at GoldenHistory.org.

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Facility Improvements

By **Nathan Richie**,
Director

The Golden History Museum & Park campus has undertaken numerous construction projects over the past year to enhance the facilities for visitor engagement and to preserve our collection of historic objects and structures. Here are a few highlights of what's happened recently.

▲ Creekside Patio

When the Museum building was constructed more than 50 years ago the architect didn't bother to include a south-facing entrance because the building pre-dated the Clear Creek Trail. Today, about 80% of visitors walk through that creek-side door. This year the museum obtained some funding from the City of Golden's CARES Act grant which allowed the replacement of broken, uneven concrete. The patio was extended, and a new grand staircase was built along the south edge connecting the Museum to the trail. A new ADA accessible ramp was built on the west side enabling visitors to access the museum entrance. At the same time, the City of Golden Parks department removed three dying and dangerous cottonwoods and planted beautiful, new, water-efficient and climate-adapted xeric gardens around the perimeter. The roses that were formerly surrounding the patio were saved and transplanted to a new showcase rose garden just west of the Pearce Cabin in the center of Golden History Park. Watch for the blooms next spring.



▲ Chicken Coop

The History Park hens are Golden's most famous fowl and greet thousands of visitors each year. Eager visitors, some with two legs and others with four, push against the coop fence to get a closer look at the hens while tossing them handfuls of scratch. Thanks to the help of City of Golden's facilities staff and the generous support of the Golden Civic Foundation, the perimeter fence has been repaired and upgraded with two new feeding windows. Additionally, our pampered chickens got elevated to a more spacious and comfortable roost and have newly installed heat lamps for those long winter nights.

Reynolds Cabin

The 1873 Reynolds Cabin is the oldest structure at the Golden History Park. The building was constructed by Adam Reynolds where he lived with his wife, Annie, and her three daughters, Henrietta, Mary, and Elizabeth. The cabin was relocated to its current location from Golden Gate Canyon in 1995. The building served as a garage and storage space for many years prior to moving to Golden and its raw interior had never been refinished. For the past 20 years, Reynolds Cabin has served as home base for Hands-on History summer camp. With capital funding from the City of Golden and a special project grant from the Golden Civic Foundation in 2020, new custom cabinetry was installed to hold the myriad games, crafts, supplies, and other camp materials. The cabin ceiling was finished with wood beadboard to help insulate the building and keep out wasps. New electric pendant lighting was installed, as was a high-efficiency mini-split AC/heater to provide a pleasant climate for our students year round. The cabin was reroofed in accordance with Secretary of the Interior's Standards using flame-retardant cedar shakes. (The roof of the 1878 Pearce/Helps Cabin will be replaced next year.)



Heritage Apple Orchard

The Golden History Park celebrates the region's agriculture heritage. Many of the farms and homesteads across the Golden area had large and productive orchards. In fact, Golden's first permanent White settler, David Wall, earned a respectable living from growing and selling food to the hundreds of miners who flooded the region. To illuminate that history, GHM&P planted a new Heritage Apple Orchard in front of the Guy Hill Schoolhouse in the Park. This past spring, the City of Golden Parks

team prepared the new orchard space by amending the soil and laying drip irrigation. Then, just weeks ago, they planted more than a dozen apple trees donated by the Montezuma Orchard Rehabilitation Project. The trees come from varieties that have been documented to have grown in the area more than a century ago. This fall, the Museum will work with UC Denver Public History graduate students to interpret the trees and regional orchards. New signage will be installed, courtesy of the Applewood Community Foundation.



Walking down the quaint downtown district of Golden's Washington Avenue, it's easy to be lulled by the city's easy charm and friendly residents. But, in the mid- to late-1800s, Golden was a rough and tumble frontier town. Located at the west end of the already thinly populated Kansas Territory, Golden's weak police and justice system made for an often dangerous and lawless environment. Local citizens who felt threatened or who felt that justice was not properly served sometimes resorted to vigilantism—a scenario whereby a person or group of people forcibly impose law without the legal authority to do so. Vigilantism often resulted in the hasty apprehension of a suspect, prejudiced determination of guilt, and quick and brutal execution, often by hanging. While any person who was suspected of a crime could face mob justice, nationally racial and ethnic minorities were disproportionately victims of these extrajudicial killing.

Vigilantism also had the power to bring out bloodlust in some community members. Lynchings were often public

affairs with riled-up onlookers cheering for the suspect's death. It was not uncommon for a victim's body to be left on view or for souvenir-seekers to take some sort of object from the killing as a memento of the occasion. Golden History Museum & Park staff was reminded of that when, just months ago during our Legacy Collection Inventory Project, staff rediscovered a small wooden parrot in the collection. The bird was donated by Amos Snodgrass who hand-carved the parrot from a railroad trestle salvaged from the site of the Seminole and Woodruff hangings in 1879. Enclosed with the parrot is a note that states somewhat ominously, "it can't swear, but it can swing."

We know that at least five people have been lynched in Golden. To understand more about these events in Golden's history, we invited local historian Richard Gardner to share his research into this era of vigilantism. This article was edited for length. Read the entire piece on the blog.

— **Nathan Richie**

Vigilante Lynchings in Golden

By **Richard Gardner**

Through time five people have been hung in the city of Golden, acts committed by vigilantes following what *Colorado Transcript* editor George West sarcastically called "the erratic and merciful code of Judge Lynch." Each of those hung had committed their own crimes, with each hung under different circumstances, with not all facts known of these events. Here are their known stories:

Edgar Vanover

Frontier Golden, according to West, a founder of the city, faced a reality of law and order very different than today. He wrote during the region's first year "...society was somewhat crude, the roughest characters of course gathering in the towns in the valley. The seat of justice in Kansas, of which this region then comprised a part, was a long way off, and separated from us by five or six hundred miles of practically trackless desert. No courts had as yet been organized here and the better disposed people were compelled in many instances to take the law

into their own hands and mete out justice to offenders as the facilities afforded. Golden in the early winter of '59 had not, of course, arrived at the dignity of a jail, or indeed even a calaboose, and each punishment as offenders might require had to be given in the open air or not at all." Golden of 1859 was hastily raised and for months had no elected government, police, or courts, and by necessity its citizens were heavily armed. Denver was wracked by violence, with daily attacks by outlaw gangs countered by the ruthless, efficient



Vanover Park, completed in 1990 and managed by the City of Golden Parks and Recreation Department, is part of a network of 253 acres of parkland within Golden. Photo © Andrew Terrill

and profoundly secret Vigilance Committee. Central City and other towns endured violence and lynch law, and Golden was at severe risk of sharing their fate.

On September 5, 1859, according to an anonymous letter from "Truth" to the *Rocky Mountain News*, saloonkeeper Edgar Vanover went on a menacing rampage. Reputed to have only by luck not shot J. Saaltzbauch after he lost to him playing cards five weeks before, Vanover began the morning determined to settle up with his partners, vowing to kill someone before nightfall. He repeatedly threatened Mr. Pierson, demanding money and firing at the glasses behind the barkeeper who barely escaped jumping to one side. He then demanded money at several stores, threatening to kill, until Mr. Chinn wrested his firearm and fired it empty, after which Vanover went through town trying to get ammunition without success. Getting a knife, Vanover resumed threatening lives until citizens chased down and captured him in the log cabin of William Young at today's southwest corner of 12th and Jackson Streets. According to the newspaper's

letter, the citizens then held a meeting, weighed the evidence, and decided without a dissenting vote to execute him for the safety of the townspeople, as they believed expelling him would only get him back as he was no longer welcome at his old Missouri home. Vanover was then marched across the Ford Street bridge to today's southeast corner of Ford and Water Streets (today's Vanover Park) and hung from an old beef gallows there. The letter from "Truth" appears to have supported the action, stating "We refrain from extending our remarks, believing that all good citizens, when the circumstances are known, will uphold the people of Golden City in performing an act which they believed to be a duty they owed to themselves and the community at large."

However, on September 13, the *Rocky Mountain News* received a letter of protest. It was signed by five of the leading citizens and firms of Golden including William A.H. Loveland & Company, Joseph C. Bowles & Company, Richard W. Clarke & Company, Eli C. Carter, and John H. St. Matthew. They stated "Truth's" letter "...did not, in scarcely a

single particular, contain the truth in regard to the late lynching case at Golden City. The Citizens, it is believed nine-tenths of them, repudiate the entire act of the mob that hanged Edgar Vanover."

George West, in his known remarks upon Vanover and doubtless also an eyewitness, called him a desperado. He wrote, "This stern act of justice had been executed upon the victim because he was endangering the lives of the people by shooting, in his mad frenzy, into crowds of citizens wherever and whenever met."

The hanging of Vanover did have a lasting effect, for according to West because of this act and subsequent legal trials with stern punishments there came "...a wholesome fear among the roughs of the town of the sturdy justice of the law-abiding pioneers...very little trouble was experienced, as when any one, under the influence of liquor and a depraved heart, gave indications of losing control of himself, it was only necessary to hint at the fate of Vanover, and the troubled waters were settled."

Continued overleaf ►

Unknown Mexican

On the evening of June 18, 1866, Mrs. Kenney and Ms. Ward (probably the wife of Calvin Kinney and daughter of James Ward), after a meeting of the Good Templars, were on their way to the Kenney home. During their walk, according to William A.H. Loveland:

"...they were brutally assaulted by a Mexican, knocked down, and otherwise maltreated. It is supposed that, failing in his hellish design he intended to commit murder to cover his crime. Mrs. Kenney struck him several blows with a heavy glass lantern, and finally drove him off and escaped to her home, which is about a quarter mile from town. The Mexican was shortly after arrested by the sheriff and placed the custody of Mr. Williams for safe keeping until morning. During the night some parties came to the room where he was confined, took Mr. Williams away by force, and in the morning the Mexican was found hanging to an umbrageous cottonwood on the banks of Clear Creek. From the indications it is supposed that he was first killed at some distance from the tree, and afterwards dragged there and hung up. Both Mrs. Kenney and her friend, Miss Ward were considerably injured but not dangerously."

Golden by this time was recovering from the Civil War depression and did not have a true jail or government. It was up to Sheriff Charles A. Clark, with possibly an undersheriff and no standing deputized backup force, to make the arrest and incarcerate the suspect as best he could. However, a determined group could overpower makeshift arrangements. Where the prisoner was hung remains unknown; he was most likely buried upon Cemetery Hill.

Traveling journalist Bayard Taylor, delivering a lecture in Golden City on June 21, 1866, heard with dismay of the early accounts. He wrote, "Affairs of this kind make an unpleasant impression. The improvised code of a new settlement is no longer necessary here, and it seems to exist by virtue of a lingering taste for rude and violent justice... the few remaining Mexican residents, who appear to have had no fellowship with him, are ordered to leave the place." However, the forced eviction of all Mexicans turned out not to be the case, as revealed in a more detailed report the *Rocky Mountain News* provided four days after Taylor departed.

The Hayward Murderers

At 6:30 p.m. on September 10, 1879, teamster Reuben Benton Hayward was at the reins of his wagon, passing through the Mt. Vernon toll gate with two passengers. However, by the time his wagon reached the Cold Spring Ranch at South Golden Road, Hayward was no longer to be seen. Some time later his body was found beneath a nearby bridge, and he was laid to rest at Golden Cemetery, leading to an interstate manhunt for his killers.

Public outrage was high, for Hayward was known as a fine and gentle man with a loving wife and sweet daughters. On the cold, clear, brightly moonlit night of December 27 a mob of 35 horsemen and

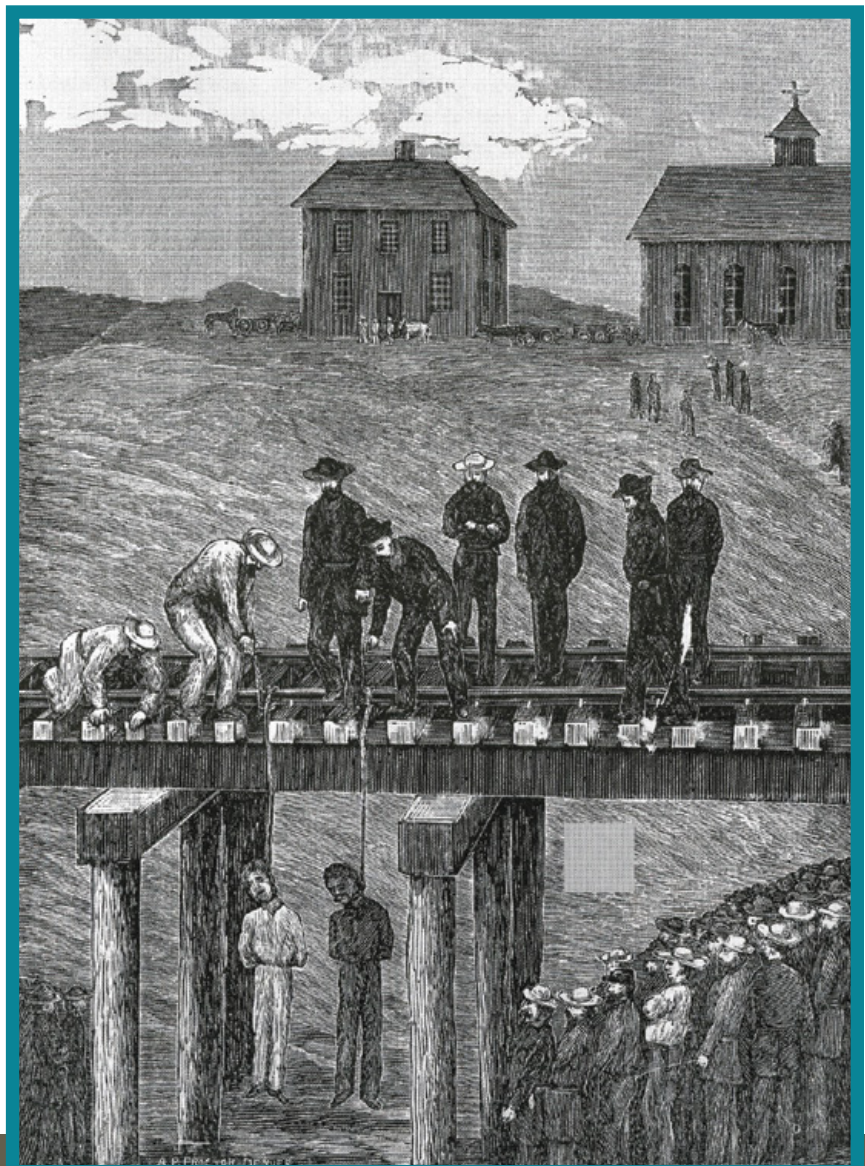
an equal number on foot came to the newly built Jefferson County Courthouse with its basement jail from the direction of Mt. Vernon, one crowd via Ford Street, the other via what is now 19th Street. The horsemen were followed by a double-team wagon full of men, and not a noise could be heard except for the hoofs and squeaking of the wagon springs. The men were masked or had faces blackened with burnt cork. Without noise or confusion the horsemen surrounded the jail with picket lines, while those on foot cut the telegraph wires, and sledgehammers, cold chisels, crowbars, and other tools were brought to bear.

The men easily subdued the two guards,



Engraving of the hanging of Seminole and Woodruff, by A. P. Proctor of Denver, 1879.

Photo © Golden History Museum & Park, City of Golden Collection





Wood carving of a parrot perched on a swing in a birdcage by Amos Snodgrass, 1879. It was cut from a tie that once laid on a bridge which crossed Kinney Creek on Jackson Street at Seventeenth Street in Golden. This was the bridge that Seminole and Woodruff were hanged on in 1879 for murdering one Mr. Haywood.

Photo © Justin LeVett Photography

splintered the outer wood door and the inner iron door. Jailer Edgar Cox quickly awakened to the sight of jail windows full of faces with rifles aimed straight at him. He could hear 25 pairs of boots enter and was told not to move while they pounded on cell door. This awakened Undersheriff Joseph T. Boyd who found the front room filled with masked armed men holding burning pieces of paper for light. He appealed that justice could not be served by this, but revolvers held at his head cut short his speech and he was seized and taken out. The men promised not to take his keys away.

The prisoners were forced out, bound, and taken down to the railroad trestle crossing Kinney Run at what is now 16th Street. Woodruff remained stoic while Seminole screamed and pleaded heartrendingly. Woodruff for his last words said, "Gentlemen, you are hanging an innocent man, but I trust God will forgive you as I do." He prayed for a minute and asked to jump and not be pushed to his death. His request was not granted.

As he watched his partner hanging below being restrung, re-hung, and yanked downward to hasten death, Seminole made a full confession. He said a prayer stirring enough to make the men of the mob take off their hats and bow their heads. Trembling like an aspen leaf, Seminole was pushed to his death, his neck snapping instantly. After the nervous crowd, taken by the awfulness of the scene, waited for some time, their leader finally gave them permission to leave. They rode down to the Haywards' Golden home at today's 2318 Ford Street, and with one simultaneous blast of their rifles in the air, shouted as one, "HAYWARD IS

AVENGED!" and rode off into the night. Dr. Joseph Anderson was summoned to check the bodies after an hour and cut them down, and a lone horseman returned, asking if they were dead, to which he replied, "Yes, deader than hell," to which the rider replied, "All right. Hayward is avenged. Good night."

Afterward the bodies were displayed on the floor of the courthouse for all to see. Upon visiting Golden after this event, the *Denver Tribune* reporter on December 30, 1879, noted:

"In wandering through the town of Golden, yesterday, and conversing with businessmen of all grades of social and intellectual standing, the reporter failed to find a solitary person who condemned this recent lynching. One every side the popular verdict seemed to be that the hanging was not only well merited, but a positive gain to the county, saving it at least five or six thousand dollars."

Woodruff was buried in Big Grove, Iowa. Seminole was buried at Golden Cemetery.

Alex McCurdy

At 4 a.m. on November 26, 1893, Mr. and Mrs. John McCurdy, hearing pitiful moans from an adjoining room but unable to raise the attention of the sufferer in their home, gained entrance and made a ghastly discovery. Her son, Arthur Berry, lay unconscious in bed, nearly dead from extreme loss of blood, having been emasculated by a knife. Dr. Kassler carefully dressed the wounds and barely saved him, and upon regaining consciousness Berry identified his assailant, stepbrother Alex McCurdy, who had sandbagged him and perpetrated the mayhem. Constable William C. Hendricks and Sheriff Samuel Sidney Poe immediately set out in pursuit of McCurdy as community outrage grew extreme, for the citizens knew the maximum penalty for the crime was only 1-3 years in prison.

A mob of several hundred first came to the Jefferson County Jail on November 28, but upon hearing McCurdy was not there dispersed peacefully. McCurdy was at last intercepted at Martinsville, Indiana, in February 1894 and returned to Golden for trial. After several days' testimony the jury found McCurdy guilty of mayhem and he received the maximum sentence of three years. This did not mollify the community, and some resolved to act. At an early hour on June 2, 1894, according to the *Transcript*, "McCurdy was taken from jail by a strong band of men, and after being accorded the same treatment which he had inflicted upon his victim, was lynched from a bridge across Clear Creek."

McCurdy was likely buried at Golden Cemetery.



The Jefferson County Courthouse, where on December 27, 1879, a group of citizens sprung two prisoners from the basement jail and hung them from a nearby bridge.

Photo © Golden History Museum & Park, City of Golden Collection

Collection Corner

We're now more than two years into our Legacy Collection Inventory—a full audit and rebuild of our 15,000 permanent collection records. Below you'll see images of some of our most recent acquisitions as well as some rediscovered items.

Do you have a Golden-related artifact collecting dust in your attic or garage? We are always looking to collect Golden memorabilia and would love to discuss all possible artifact donations. If you have an object, photograph, or document that you would like to be considered for donation, we want to hear from you.



New acquisition
Ceremonial regalia worn by members of Golden Lodge No. 13, I. O. O. F., c. 1950s.

New acquisition
Our Lady of Victory wood statue from St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Golden, c. 1870s.



New acquisition
Brick from grand opening of the Eddy Taproom & Hotel, 2021.





◀ Inventory
rediscovery
Beaver fur coat owned by
Hettie Helps Milton, c. 1910s.

▲ **New** acquisition
Landscape chalk drawing
by Barbara Foss, 1991.



▲ Inventory
rediscovery
Mourning parasol owned
by Miranda Ann (Montgomery)
Loveland, c. 1900.

◀ **New**
acquisition
Genesee Grange
scrapbook, 1952-53.



Photos © Justin LeVett Photography

In the mid-to-late 1980s, the Jefferson County Historical Commission embarked on an ambitious Place Names Project to research, document, and catalogue known geographic place names in Jefferson County, both contemporary and historic. A large committee was established, and its members scoured USGS quadrangles, history books, and other sources to write descriptions of areas with which they were familiar. The database of almost 2,500 entries was first placed on the county's website in the 1990s.

As a part of the committee, local historian Mary Ramstetter, and her husband Charlie, a descendant of early Jefferson County settlers, were assigned to document the Ralston Buttes Quadrangle. Roughly bound by Coal Creek to the north, Highway 6 to the south, Highway 93 to the east and Gilpin County on the west, that quad includes many important sites related to the Colorado Gold Rush. Mary and Charlie

completed their work and grew frustrated by the slow pace of the overall project. Unconvinced it would ever be completed, the couple decided to publish their work as a book in 1996. She titled the book *John Gregory Country* in honor of the man whose first gold discovery launched an epic gold rush.

Mary and Charlie's book earned the American Regional History Award in the Western States Category in 1999. The book has been revised three times, including a brand-new electronic revision that came out in 2021. We invited Mary to tell us about the origins of her book project and to share some highlights of the new edition in Discover magazine.

Coincidentally, the Jefferson County Historical Commission did complete the place names project which was published in a now-defunct website. This spring, the Commission gifted the Place Names Directory to Golden History Museum & Park. Still a work in process, you can peruse the descriptions by visiting GoldenHistory.org/places.

John Gregory Country Genesis

By **Mary Ramstetter**

Working his way west to California in search of gold, John Gregory was teaming for the Army in Ft. Laramie when the Pike's Peak gold rush caught his attention. He looked into the matter, figured the gold for migrating downriver, and found it in the mountains. An altogether private man, Gregory shied away from picture takers and storytelling, leaving the countryside he would forever change devoid of his own recounts. John Gregory has no roots to go back to. Making it requisite for those who would follow him, albeit briefly, to explain how their tracks converged.

My husband's grandfather, Henry Koch, homesteaded in Jefferson County in 1868, inaugurating an interesting history that Koch descendants have been collecting ever since.

In the 1980s the Jefferson County Historical Commission embarked on an in-depth study of the place-name history of every quadrangle in the county. As residents of the Ralston Buttes Quadrangle, we drew that assignment.

My husband Charlie grew up in the old 8-mile stage stop in the heart of the quadrangle. He was my guide; I was his scribe. Drawing heavily on family lore, we drove and walked the land. Took photographs, talked to old-timers, heard stories that solved old mysteries, found cabin ruins we didn't know existed.

Quad name, section, township, range, one paragraph of history. That was the assignment. Our files ballooned.

As did everybody's files. Eventually the Commission threw in the towel and opted for a website. At which time we decided to publish what we had collected. Ergo, *John Gregory Country, Place Names and History of Ralston Buttes Quadrangle, Jefferson County, Colorado*.

Our sources include, but are not limited to, Golden History Museum & Park, Central City's *Weekly Register Call* newspaper, the Gilpin County Museum, and interviews with area residents. *John Gregory* is now in its 2nd edition. A free addendum is coming

soon on our clazy3.com website.

Our old friend John Gregory put an end to charges that the Pike's Peak gold fields were a hoax by finding the gold. This put his name on the toll road opened from the prairie to the site of his discovery in the mountains, on the gulch in front of his mine, on the mountain point overlooking his mine.

It also put his name on a canyon that opens on Boulder, Colorado. That's it.

But the lack of a name does not negate the need for a name. And what better name for the raw countryside that John Gregory saw on his arrival in 1859, transposed with what we see today — than that of *John Gregory Country*.

Indeed, had Gregory's 1859 discovery been preceded, the following could not be said:

Every night a world-renowned university lights the summit of a peak overlooking a town named Golden after the fellow who sold city lots at the gateway to the gold.

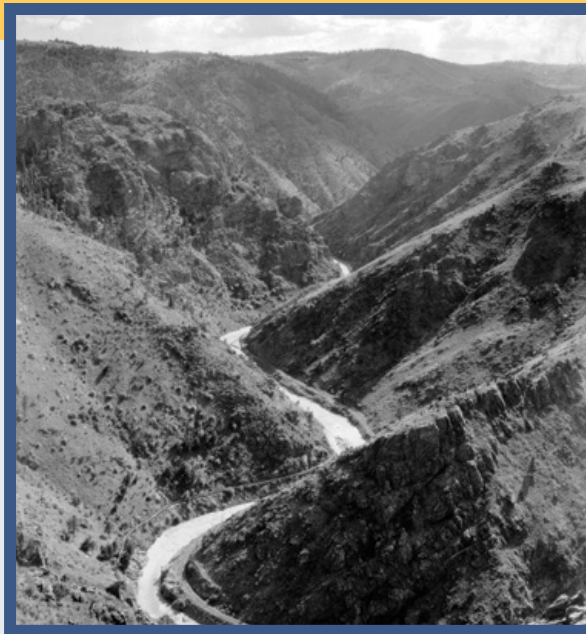
Mt. Zion

In the summer of 1911, at a daily cost of \$600, "Cement Bill" Williams hacked out a two-foot- wide mountain trail up Mt. Zion as far as Windy Point. He called the upturned dirt the "Lariat Trail." It was the doorstep of a highway he envisioned running from Golden up Mt. Zion and over the mountains to Idaho Springs.

William's trail completed, the next step was to follow it with a wagon road. At the base of Chimney Gulch he ran out of money and into a pothole of political and legislative troubles. Georgina Brown, in her rich history collection entitled *The Shining Mountains*, pp. 127-132, details the difficulties of the zig-zag climb followed by the long toss of road across the backs of the mountains. As history books go, it's a gold nugget of a read.

There is another story about Mt. Zion, a story that wouldn't exist except for the luck of the draw. In the 1900s Ernest Ramstetter owned the face of Mt. Zion, including the mountain's lower slopes to the north across Clear Creek and to the south across Chimney Gulch. Remnants of the Ramstetters' BonVue Ranch headquarters can be seen today west off Highway 93 south of the West 56th Avenue intersection.

Home builders made repeated attempts to buy the land from Ernest, but to no avail. When the Colorado School of Mines requested the school be allowed to create a large M with white-painted rocks beneath the summit of the peak. Ernest agreed. The M appeared in 1908.



c. 1898-1927. Clear Creek Canyon looking upstream (southwest) from Windy Point on Mt. Zion. In the foreground, the Welch Flume follows the left (south) side of the creek, with the Colorado Central Railroad on the right (north) side.

Photo © Z-7675 - Denver Public Library Special Collections

In 1932 electricity arrived on the mountain:

For and in consideration of the sum of one dollar (\$1.00)...Ernest A. Ramstetter has and by these presents does grant unto the Colorado School of Mines its successors and assigns the right, privilege easement and authority to construct, operate, and maintain an electric power transmission line and distribution system including all necessary poles, wires, and fixtures as now constructed and existing over, across, under, and upon the following ascribed real estate now owned by said Ernest A. Ramstetter..... said power transmission line being along an approximate extension westerly of Twelfth St., in the City of Golden from the City of Golden to the "M" on Mt. Zion....

— Legal agreement dated May 3, 1932.

January 9, 1961, Ernest died of a heart attack. His son, Donald Ramstetter, died July 5, 1961, when shot by a sheepherder in Ramstetter employ. The Front Range population was growing. Municipalities and private developers approached Ernest's widow, lucrative offers in hand. Only to be turned down. Hang gliders asked for a site on the summit of Mt. Zion from which to launch their gliders. The widow was appalled at the thought. "Over my dead body!" she told them. (Did they show up shirtless? One wonders. Wearing shorts and flip-flops and sporting beards?)

The Mt. Zion pastureland remained in Gladys Ramstetter's name until the day she died. Now there was only one way to save it. Hat in hand, Donald's daughter, Jennifer Ramstetter, went to Jeffco Open Space.

Today a hiking trail leaves the Golden Library and approaches Mt. Zion from the east, circles around to the south and climbs Chimney Gulch. A second hiking trail heads west, along Clear Creek. Both trails crossing ground once grazed by BonVue cattle.

Meanwhile, today's hang gliders soar off the summit of Mt. Zion, circle and swoop and—when everything goes according to Hoyle—land in the meadow at the foot of Mt. Zion.

BonVue Ranch also owned the slopes across Highway 93 from its headquarters. Slopes that are today part of North Table Mountain Park.



Aerial view (c. 1917-1925) of the Colorado School of Mines "M" emblem on the face of Mount Zion above Golden also shows the freshly built Lariat Loop Trail Road winding across the slope. The Continental Divide is on the horizon. Every year since its construction in 1908, the freshman class whitewashes the 104 x 107 foot "M" in the fall and graduating seniors whitewash it in the spring. Nothing is recorded as to how Zion Mountain was named. It is presumed it was by early government surveyors, and the appellation obviously is for the biblical Mount Zion.

(Source: Georgina Brown, *The Shining Mountains*.)

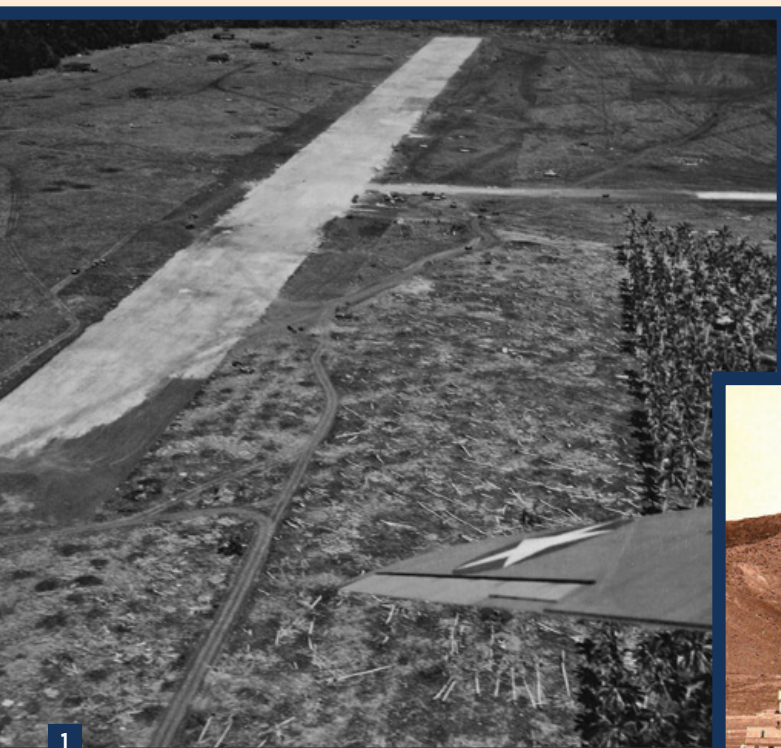
Photo © X-9872 - Denver Public Library Special Collections

Programs

These programs are subject to change.

Go to GoldenHistory.org/events
for the most up-to-date details.

Programs are free for members and \$10 for non-members
(plus eventbrite fee), unless otherwise noted.



1

November 6, 2021, 2 pm



Women & Children at Work & Play
Artist's talk and reception

See back page for exhibit description

November 11, 2021, 6 pm



Seesaw: How November '42
Shaped the Future

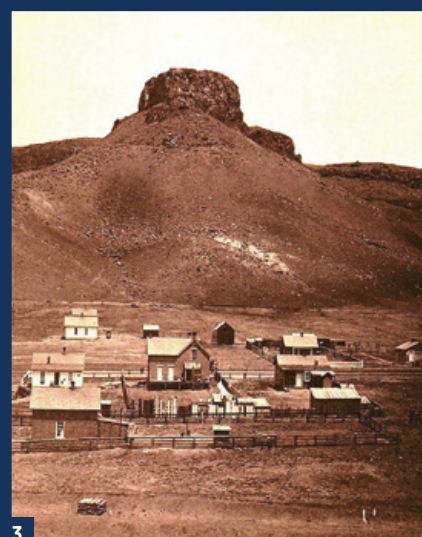
By late 1942 the world had been fighting for years, with no end in sight. The five weeks from late October to early December saw campaigns, battles and developments which decisively turned the war to the Allies' favor. Author and returning presenter Stan Moore takes a fresh look at the personalities and events that led up to this critical period.

1

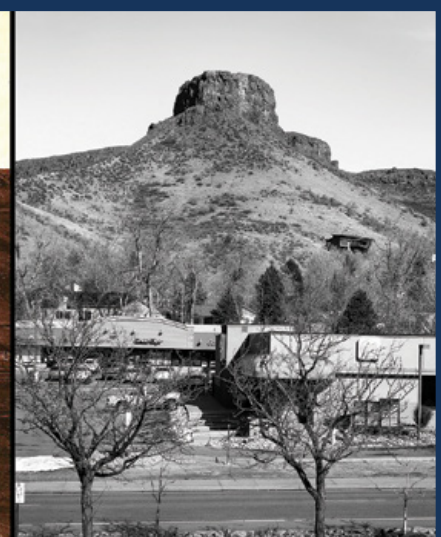
Partially completed airstrip on the island of Guadalcanal, Aug. 11, 1942. Half a year of fighting took place over this tiny bit of acreage in the South Pacific.



2



3



December 18, 2021, 5 - 8 pm



Homestead for
the Holidays

Join us at Golden History Park to experience holidays the pioneer way. This family event allows you to take in the History Park's colorful lights, enjoy the decorated interiors, try a craft, and bask in the season. It's time to go home(stead) for the holidays!

\$5 for members; \$10 for non-members
(plus online registration fee)

2

Golden History Park. Photo © Andrew Terrill

January 12, 2022, 6 pm



Golden:
Then & Now

While perusing historical photos of Golden online, Stuart Sipkin came across a collection of photos that were mostly taken during the last quarter of the 19th Century. Come learn how he used modern mapping and Geographic Information Systems to determine some of these locations and see the finished images of Golden's changing landscape.

3

Castle Rock: then and now.



Photos © Golden History Museum & Park, City of Golden Collection unless otherwise noted.

February 9, 2022, 6 pm



Getting Started - Tracing Your Family Tree

Overwhelmed by all of the tools that are available to do genealogy research? Join genealogy research enthusiast Lora Knowlton as she presents all of the basics.

March 16, 2022, 6 pm



Water in Golden Cannon Ball Creek, Coors, and Kayaks: A History of Water in Golden

Even people from Tonapah, Nevada, know that Coors is so good because it is brewed with "Rocky Mountain water." In the American popular mind Golden is linked to fresh, clean water. Returning presenter Matt Makley will trace the history of water in Golden from the earliest days of native use to Euro-American trapping, irrigation farming, and eventually the creation of a kayak park and tubers' paradise.

4 Looking east from Clear Creek toward North Table Mountain and the Golden Flour Mill. The Ford Street bridge can be seen on the right side of the photograph, c. 1910.

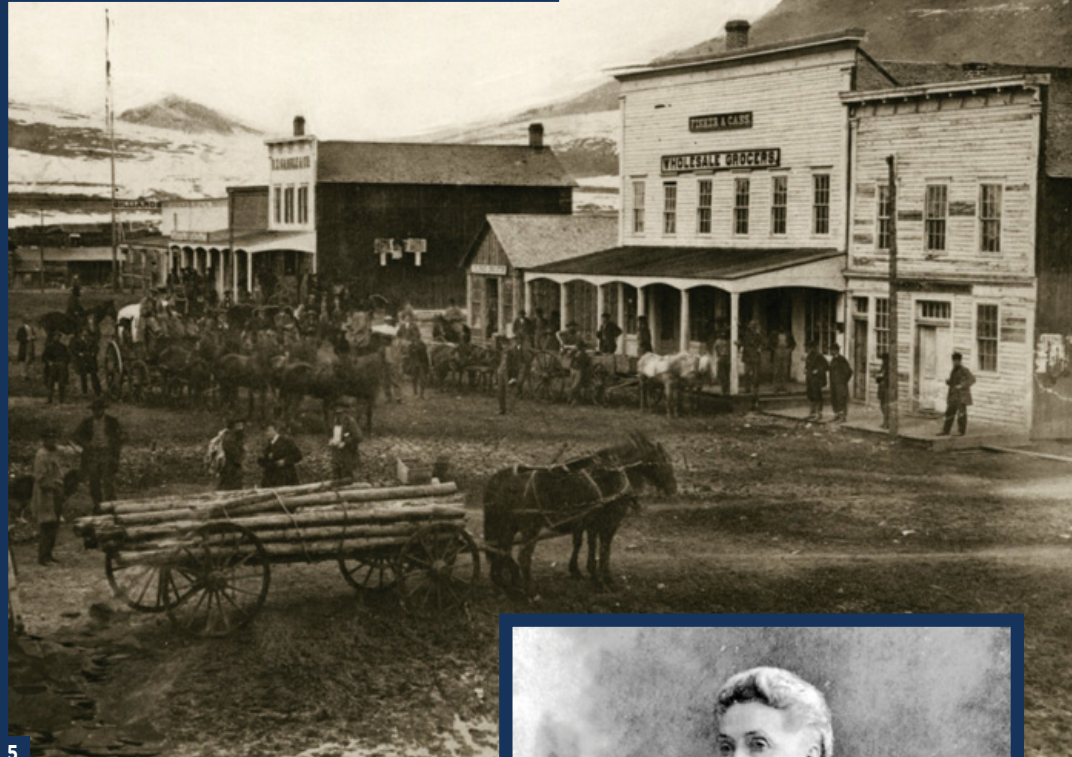
April 13, 2022, 6 - 8 pm



Golden - Colorado's Territorial Capital

Returning presenter Randi Samuelson-Brown will uncover the stories of Golden's yesteryear when the west was wild and the population was scarce. We'll examine some of the famous and infamous that passed through the town with an eye toward the off-kilter inhabitants.

5 Business district in Golden, Colorado, taken from the corner of 12th Street looking northeast up Washington Avenue, April 1867.



May 18, 2022, 6 pm



Isabella Bird's Visit to Colorado

Isabella Bird was a traveler and a writer with a wonderful ability to describe her surroundings in great detail so that one feels as if they were there. Storyteller Linda Batlin will share Isabella's lively adventures of her first trip to Estes Park in 1873 and her arduous climb of Longs Peak (she was the third woman ever to climb Longs Peak).

\$5 for members; \$10 for non-members
(plus online registration fee)

6 Isabella Bird.





How do you move a 3,800 lb. safe?

Very carefully!

By **Mark Dodge**, Curator



At least one professional safe mover said we were crazy and that it couldn't be done. "Old safes were not built to be moved," he said. But a team from the City of Golden's Streets Department proved otherwise, when on May 13, we safely transported a 120-year-old safe from Creekside Jewelers to its new home at the Golden History Museum.

Originally purchased for the Golden Post Office, the safe was mentioned in the January 22, 1903, *Colorado Transcript*. "The Golden post office has received its new Diebold anti-dynamite safe, and has it in place. It cost \$325 at the factory, weight 3,800 pounds and is a beauty."

A little worse for wear, it's still a beauty and just as heavy. "Golden Post Office" is hand-painted across the top with a pastoral mountain scene painted below it.

So how did it get to Creekside Jewelers?

In 1902 the Golden Post Office moved to the newly built southern storefront of the Rubey Block (1205 Washington). There, as part of his contract with the government,

Jesse W. Rubey purchased a new post office safe. In 1914 the post office moved to the northeastern storefront of the newly completed Armory at 1301 Arapahoe and presumably this safe was left behind.

When Wendell Plummer purchased what was then Tierney Jewelry in 1948 the safe was already there. Over 50 years later when the next generation of Plummers sold their business they told the new owner (Roger and Michele Tapia) they could use the safe. Daughter-in-law Donna Plummer used to retell a story that the safe was rolled across Washington Avenue to the jewelry store at 1206 Washington. Now that sounds fun!

Thanks to everyone (Richard Gardner for helping track down post office history, the Plummer family for the donation, Roger Tapia for facilitating) who helped with information and heavy moving. For now, the safe is resting in the lobby of the museum. It's fully functional and the original combination cards remain intact. Come by and take a look. And let me know if you have a heavy artifact you'd like to donate.

Diebold Safe & Lock Company

Founded in 1859 by Charles Diebold, the Diebold Bahmann Company of Cincinnati, Ohio, manufactured safes and vaults. Twelve years later, the company received a huge boost in popularity when it was reported that all of the 878 Diebold safes involved in the Great Chicago Fire had survived with their contents intact.

Sales boomed as private individuals, businesses, and banks wanted to protect their valuables in Diebold safes. Needing a larger manufacturing space, the company moved to Canton, Ohio, where they continued to grow in popularity.

In 1874, the Diebold Company was chosen by Wells Fargo of San Francisco to build the world's largest vault. From then on, the company which was incorporated in 1876 under the name Diebold Safe and Lock Company became a leader in the manufacture of huge vaults for commercial banks.

Hands-on History

Hands-on History summer camp is a fun-filled weeklong day camp for kids aged 6 to 12 in the beautiful Golden History Park.

Campers will use their hands as much as their brains, whether in Dirty Jobs, Pioneer Kids, or History Mystery.

In our full-day Silent Stars, exclusively for kids aged 9 to 12, campers will write, direct, and star in their own silent movie. Some camps fill very quickly, so keep an eye on the calendar!

Exclusive members-only registration (Household level and up): **January 3 - 14, 2022**

Early-bird discount: January 15 - **February 27, 2022**

Full-price registration opens **February 28, 2022**

Learn more at GoldenHistory.org/HOH
or by calling **303.278.3557**.





Legacy Collection Inventory

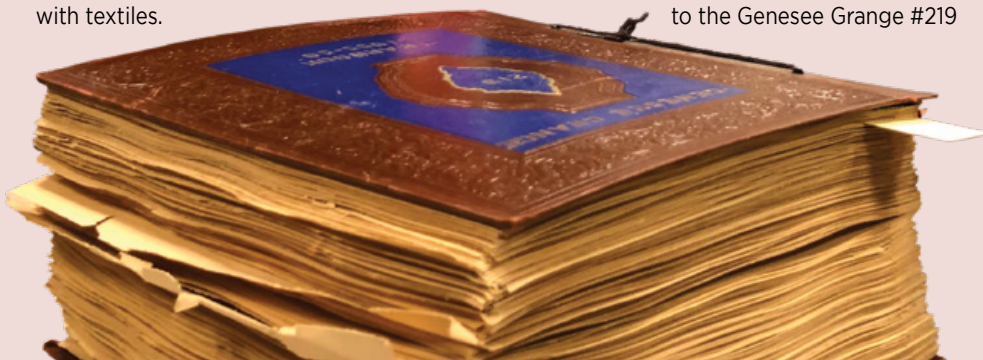
By **Megan Murphy**, Collection Technician

When I came across the job listing for the Golden History Museum & Park Collection Technician position I immediately knew I had to apply. I finished my master's in 2019 in archaeology at CU Boulder, focusing on the Colorado Fur Trade of the 19th century. After finishing my degree, I interned at Louisville Colorado Historical Museum where I reviewed oral history interviews from the town's residents. I felt that working with the GHM&P collection would provide me with another opportunity to expand my knowledge of Colorado history. I have thoroughly enjoyed learning about collection management with Assistant Curator Vanya Scott.

On a typical day we review and inventory boxes of textiles to make determinations for the permanent collection. As a registered professional archaeologist, I have experience working with a variety of artifact types, but I did not have a lot of experience working with textiles.

Through the process of reviewing and inventorying textiles in the collection I feel that I can confidently handle and assess the condition of historical clothing.


I also was given the opportunity to review a collection of scrapbooks related to the Genesee Grange #219



and make my own recommendations for how they should be incorporated into the collection. I had never had the opportunity to make my own curatorial recommendations and reviewing the scrapbooks illustrated the challenges these kinds of decisions entail. I recommended specific scrapbooks to bring into the collection that I felt were exemplary of the history of the Mount Vernon communities and the activities of the Genesee Grange. I first had to review each scrapbook in detail and conduct my own research into the history of granges.

My time working at GHM&P has taught me that while every artifact has a story and value, sometimes museums must make decisions about collection management that are not easy. The management and care of collections requires resources, time, and energy; decisions about which artifacts to take into a collection need to take this into account. This has helped me formulate my own professional philosophy regarding what artifacts I would consider bringing into a collection for when I manage a museum collection in the future. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to explore my own collection philosophy and to learn from Mark Dodge and Vanya Scott.



 Megan Murphy and Mark Dodge review grange scrapbooks at Golden History Museum.
Photos: Doug Skiba



Golden History Museum & Park Donors January — December, 2020

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Scientific and Cultural Facilities District
Pat Spieles

\$1,000 — \$9,999

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John and Andi Pearson
Danielle and Louis Samuel

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Larry and Betty Weaver
Laura and Michael Weinberg
Angela and Tom Wheaton
Jeanne Whittaker
Mike and Mary Wood
Alan and Elizabeth Woodard
John P. Young
Frank Young and
Terre Deegan-Young



Staff Profile Kathleen Eaton

In 8th grade, I went home to my parents and declared I was going to work in a museum when I grew up. I don't think this came as a surprise to anyone in my family since history has always fascinated me. Growing up, my mom took us to every free museum day and my dad always chaperoned museum field trips. I devoured books about history, especially *Horrible Histories*, and became obsessed with Ancient Greek and British history.

I grew up in Arvada, so when it came time to attend college it seemed only natural to stay in the state. I was accepted into Colorado State University in Fort Collins which led to some sibling rivalry as my older sister attended the University of Colorado in Boulder. I earned a dual degree in history and anthropology, with a

concentration in archaeology. During that time, I volunteered at the History Colorado Center and found I loved working with the public. Upon choosing public history for my master's degree, I decided to leave my beloved Colorado and venture across the pond to England where I attended Royal Holloway, University of London (and drank copious amounts of tea). Combining my love of both archaeology and history, my dissertation focused on creating a miniature archaeological dig based on a large bronze age site near my university.

Upon returning to Colorado with my degree in hand, I took an internship at the Denver Art Museum. I stayed on as a program facilitator, helping visitors of all ages engage with the art. My first full-time museum position took me down to Cañon City, where I worked at the Royal Gorge Regional Museum & History Center as the education coordinator. Four years later, I'm thrilled to be back home with my family and enjoying this new adventure with Golden History Museum & Park. In my free time I'm often found anywhere there is a dog (especially a dachshund), hiking a mountain, or playing board games with friends.



Volunteer Profile Martha Gould

Volunteer extraordinaire Martha Gould was born in 1931 in Claremont, New Hampshire, and studied American history at the University of Michigan before acquiring a master's in library and information science from Simmons College in Boston. Starting as a children's librarian and storyteller on a bookmobile in the Bronx, Martha worked her way up through libraries in Oklahoma, Santa Fe, and Los Angeles until becoming the director of the Washoe County Library in Nevada.

In 1993, Martha was appointed by

President Clinton to the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. She served on NCLIS for 10 years, becoming the commission's chair before retiring in 2003.


Martha received many awards for her work, but the two that mean the most to her are the plaque in Reno's northwest branch library with her photograph and the inscription, "Once upon a time a unique individual transformed our libraries," and a little silver plastic Oscar inscribed, "To the Best Boss Ever" given to her by her staff when she retired.

Martha's husband died in October 2005 and her son and family moved her to Golden in the summer of 2014. You can meet Martha while she's working at the front desk in the Golden History Museum on Fridays and Saturdays.

Please join us in wishing Martha a Happy 90TH Birthday!

Membership

Be a part of Golden history. Become a member today!

	INDIVIDUAL (\$40)	DUAL (\$60)	HOUSEHOLD (\$75)	PATRON (\$125) BEST VALUE	BENEFACTOR (\$250)	FOUNDER (\$500)	DIRECTOR'S CIRCLE (\$1,000)
							
Free tickets to most programs	1	2	4	4	4	4	4
10% merchandise discount	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Special pricing on premium programs (e.g. Cemetery Tour)	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Discover magazine subscription	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Access to <i>Members Only</i> webpage with recorded lectures	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Member update letters via US Mail	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Hands-on History camp discount			●	●	●	●	●
Exclusive early registration for Hands-on History			●	●	●	●	●
Guest passes to most programs when accompanied by member				1	2	4	6
Recognition on website and donor wall				●	●	●	●
Reciprocal admission and benefits at over 1,200 museums				●	●	●	●
Free tickets to <i>Christmas at the Park</i>					2	4	6
Insider's Discovery Tour of new acquisitions and exhibits					●	●	●
Invites to special seasonal member activities						●	●
Golden History Park VIP Tour for 10 (ten) guests							●
Gift of Household Membership (\$75) for new member							●
Lunch with the Director							●

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YES, I want to support Golden history.

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Seniors (65+) may deduct 10%.

Please accept my extra, tax-deductible donation of

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$_____ (other)

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GoldenHistory.org/member

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City of
Golden



Art Exhibit

Women & Children at Work & Play By Melinda Laz

Oct. 16, 2021 – Feb. 6, 2022

A friendly snowball fight during the blizzard of 1913; berry pickers at the Truelson Berry Farm; riding burros beneath South Table Mountain. These are some of the historic images that inspired artist Melinda Laz in her series of ceramic tiles which will be on view at GHM starting Oct. 16. Using the GHM&P online collection as inspiration, Melinda translated the vintage photographs into ceramic tile portraits. The faces are left blank, allowing the figures to remain anonymous yet universal. The original photographs that inspired her ceramic works will also be on view.

Join Melinda on Saturday, November 6, from 2 - 4 pm for an artist's talk and reception. Refreshments will be served.

