

Park County Local History Archives

Issue VI

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2012

WWW.PARKCOARCHIVES.ORG

IN THIS ISSUE

Archive News

Archives Update 1

Articles from the Archives

Mosquito Pass 2

Guffey 3



Guffey jail, recent photo

Park County in 1940..... 4

1940 Census 4

A Pleasant Day at Lake George..... 4

Appendix: 1940 Census..... 5

ARCHIVES NEWS:

Several of the Archives staff were present during a meeting between the Park County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and the Friends of the Fairplay Library (FoFL) on April 11. The subject was a presentation by the FoFL on the new South Park Learning Center, followed by a general discussion. A formal Agreement is under negotiation about the roles of each entity in the planning, construction and future operation of the new library, and when terms are agreed upon it will be signed by the BOCC and The FoFL.

Send comments, requests and suggestions to parkcoarchives@yahoo.com

ARCHIVES UPDATE

Donations/Photos

We received the following donations and photos from patrons and supporters:

- A family history book entitled "The Fulton-Jeffries Family," donated by Patty Jeffries.
- Photos from the Thatcher family, Lake George area, donated by Julie Wallewein.
- 1970s era photos of the Bailey Depot provided by Clifford A. Mestel.

Research for Patrons

- Identified the Abraham Shoup grave in the old Fairplay cemetery for a genealogy project of Shoup descendants.
- Provided background information on the Orphan Boy mine and the Maddox Ice Company for newspaper articles.
- Assisted author Tom Klinger with railroad photos for a new book.
- Assisted Kenn Hicks with research for his presentation on the Roberts Tunnel held on March 10 at a PCHS event.

Archives Presentation

Jane Gilsinger, Christie Wright and Linda Bjorklund collaborated to give a presentation about the history and future of the Archives on May 6, to members and guests of the Park County Historical Society.

May has been designated as Colorado's Archaeology and Historic Preservation Month, and the Archives presentation featured all the partners that have teamed up to support our efforts to preserve history.

Jane began by relating the history of the Archives, which was originally a committee of the PCHS, and identifying our partners.

Christie described the information and photos available at the Archives for research by the public.

Linda told some of the stories of the Archives as our location changed a number of times, citing our need for a permanent home.

ARTICLES FROM THE ARCHIVES

Mosquito Pass by Linda Bjorklund

According to Father John Dyer in his autobiography, "The Snowshoe Itinerant,"

"Mosquito got its name from this circumstance: The miners met to organize. Several names were suggested, but they disagreed, and a motion was made to adjourn and meet again, the place for the name to be left blank. When they came together on appointment, the secretary opened the book, and a large mosquito was mashed right in the blank, showed it, and all agreed to call the district Mosquito."

Father Dyer became well-acquainted with Mosquito Pass early in his ministry in South Park for the Methodist Episcopal conference. When he first began preaching in 1861, Father Dyer had made himself a pair of Norwegian style skis from boards twelve feet long and four or five inches wide, so he could get from one mining camp to another. The local mail carrier had been using his mule to carry his mailbag between Buckskin Joe and California Gulch over Mosquito Mountain. Early in 1864 he offered the preacher the fabulous sum of eighteen dollars a week to do the job on his snowshoes.

In 1870, Augusta Tabor, then wife of H.A.W. Tabor, wrote in her memoirs:

"I have gone across the Mosquito Range with him (her husband) on horseback. Then we had no road at all. I had the gold in buckskins, then put in gunny bags, then laid on the horse, and then my saddle put on over the blanket, and bring it that way. Then there would be nothing visible but the saddle. If anyone came along he would rather search him than me. Then there were some miles that we could not ride our horses on account of the wind, it blew so fiercely. In some places it was so steep we had to hang on to our horses' tails."

In November of 1877 the Alma News reported that three miners left from California Gulch heading for Alma, not expecting the

winter storm that overtook them. Although they tried to stay together, encouraging one another, two of them were forced to leave the third as they struggled toward Alma. A crew was dispatched from Alma with a sled the next day and found the unfortunate miner, whose body was 'froze solid.'

In 1878 the Mosquito Pass Wagon Road Company was organized for the purpose of building a toll road that would serve the miners over what, at twenty-three miles, was the shortest route to Leadville.

By 1879 the road was in use and a telegraph line had been constructed along the route. In July of that year the Fairplay Flume reported: *"The stage station this side (east side) of the range on the Mosquito road is likely to become quite a town. Large stables are being erected at this point for McClellan and Spottswood, Wall & Witter, M. McLaughlin and the Despatch Company. John A. Nugent has moved his eating station to this place, and it is in charge of Will A. Price of Fairplay. A store and saloon is to be built at once for James Moynahan or some one with whom he is interested. Major Buttles is putting up a large log mess house for the use of the men employed on the road, and has ordered lumber for a large hotel building to be used by him. The general idea prevails that the road will be kept open the year around."*

Meanwhile the Denver, South Park and Pacific Railroad company was exploring possible routes to the mining camps in Leadville. One of those considered was a tunnel through the Mosquito Range. When the cost of just blasting the tunnel through the mountain was estimated to be \$4 million, that plan was scrapped in favor of the much longer route through Buena Vista, crossing the Arkansas River.

Although the crest of Mosquito Pass now appears lonely and abandoned, the trail is still used at least once a year for the annual Burro Races held the last weekend in July.

Guffey by Linda Bjorklund

The name Guffey was established in 1896 after the name 'Freshwater' was turned down by the post office department because there was already one of those in California. No one is sure who the namesake really is, but one account is that Joseph Guffey, a Senator from Pennsylvania, whose uncle was a wealthy oil producer, paid the town site \$500 to say that the town was named after him.

One of the historic buildings still standing in Guffey is the jail. Virgil White explains in "Guffey: One Hundred Years of Memories" that his father was appointed marshal after a nearby rancher was murdered. There was no jail, so he built the jail that is still there, only it had two cells instead of one. The chief suspect of the murder was the owner of a local undertaking establishment, who was apparently afraid of being caught, so he left in the night and was never heard from again.

According to Harry Epperson in his "Colorado As I Saw It" the jail was used by at least one visitor.

It seems that there was a roving cowboy who worked from place to place, but took an extended vacation at least every thirty days. He was an Irishman, but no one knew his real name: "*When the first jail was built in Como, he donated ten dollars for its construction. He was the first to be locked behind its steel door. By having the honor of dedicating the building, he was christened 'Como Jim.'*"

Como Jim found himself in Guffey on one of his vacations, insisting that "*Me throat is so droy I om spittin' cotton and me belly is craving a good dronk of licker.*"

After a session of 'celebrating with the byes' rather more than he was able to tolerate and still mount one of his three horses, Como Jim as usual retired for the night in the Guffey jail.

Virgil White's father also helped build the old dance (city) hall that is still there. Dances were held every two weeks and featured per-

formers sometimes included the prison band from Canon City.



City Hall in Guffey, recent photo

The city hall is still used for occasional meetings, but a popular annual event celebrated there is the 'Fourth of July Chicken Fly.' On a platform ten feet high in back of the building, a mailbox with openings at both ends is placed. Contestants rent chickens for the contest and take turns ejecting their rented chicken out the front end with a plunger inserted from the back. The record chicken flight has been registered at 138 feet.

Although Guffey as an unincorporated town does not have normal elected officials, it boasts two political parties—the 'Democats' and 'Repuplicans.' In 1998 Guffey voters unanimously elected Monster the Cat to hold the office of mayor.

Charley Morreale, who looks after several buildings when owner Bill Soux is out of town, insists that Monster still roams the premises and comes by the garage for meals.

Other buildings that have been around since the late 1800s include the survey office and a building next to the jail that houses a number of historic artifacts for public viewing. And to prove that Guffey residents have a sense of humor, there is an old 'paddy wagon' with skeletons driving it.

Park County in 1940 *submitted by Jerry Davis*

Do you have a hankerin' to see a written "portrait" of your ancestors back in 1940? Or maybe you'd like to find that long-ago neighbor's name that you just can't quite recall. Now's your chance. Uncle Sam has released the 1940 U. S. Census for public research.

At this writing, the Colorado Census on most computer sites is not yet searchable by name. But the Park County information is not too hard to research if one knows the precinct in which Grandpa (or Grandma) lived. Park County is divided into 8 precincts, numbers 1 to 8 being Fairplay, Alma, Como, Jefferson, Bailey, Lake George, Guffey and Hartsel. The incorporated towns are further split out within those precincts. The Fairplay precinct was the most-populated, taking up some 27 pages to cover the precinct both within and outside the town. It really doesn't take too long to scan through those 27 pages in search of Grandpa or Grandma. At 7 pages, Guffey is the shortest precinct to search.

The fee-based Ancestry.com website is one computer source. It can be searched at no charge (on-site only) at a number of larger libraries. This site includes a lot of additional information – everything from Civil War records to Sears catalogs. For the budget- and convenience-minded, FamilySearch.com is a free website which includes the 1940 name-searchable Census. Happy Hunting!

And on the same subject:

1940 Census *submitted by Jane Gilsinger*

The long awaited 1940 census was recently released and it provides much valuable information about households. Some of the categories: names, ages and relationship in household, occupation, residence on April 1, 1935, color or race, value of home, home owned or rented, place of birth, income in

1939, education and marital status. Although indexing is still underway those of us who come from small towns can browse and locate our households.

The census is available on Ancestry.com, National Archives website and USGenWeb.

The next page shows a sample of an entry from the Bailey area that includes Ned Corbin, Emma and Jess Fitzsimmons and the Soderstrom and Vavra families.

A Pleasant Day at Lake George *from the Colorado Springs Gazette 8/22/1904*

"Excursion to Mountain Resort Was a Success Despite the Unfavorable Weather. Four Hundred Took Trip

Even with the disagreeable weather, there was an attendance of 400 at Lake George yesterday, and the crowd thoroughly enjoyed the trip. The excursions from Colorado Springs and Cripple Creek were not as heavily patronized as they would have been with clear skies and fair weather.

All the events for the big outing were pulled off. The broncho busting was first class. It was participated in by Colorado Springs and Tarryall Creek cowboys, who did some good "stunts" racing busting bronchos and riding wild steers and other features. The blowing of the mountain top into the air was a success. Nine big blasts were touched off simultaneously and with the sound of heavy artillery firing and the appearance of a volcanic eruption, the explosion went off.

One of the best features of the day, however, was the balloon ascension and parachute jump by Professor Le Van. On account of the dampness the ascension was not made until about 4 o'clock, but when the aeronaut did go up it was a successful trip. He ascended about 1,500 feet in the air and came down without accident. He came near falling into the lake, but luckily was not compelled to undergo the ducking."

