

Volume X Number 3

December 2016 through March 2017

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Email: plhs@palmerdividehistory.org

Museum: 719-559-0837



Palmer Lake Historical Society

Board of Directors 2016

President - Tom Baker

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Melissa Robohn

Rodger Voelker

Sigi Walker, *ex officio* (newsletter)

Mark your 2017 Calendars

Thursday, January 19, 2017:

**Annual Potluck and
Membership Meeting**

**Just bring a vegetable, salad, or
dessert - we'll provide the ham!**

Program Schedule:

February 2017 – April 2017

February 16, 2017, 7:00 PM – "John C. Osgood: Colorado Coal Baron" – Mike & Sigi Walker

March 16, 2017, 7:00 PM – "By an Act of Congress" – Bob Easterly

April 20, 2017, 7:00 PM – "The Alexander Film Company" – Steve Antonuccio

Note there is no program in December 2016



Contributing to this issue:

Tom Baker Eric Swab Rick Sauers
Mike & Sigi Walker

Thanks to all who reviewed and commented!

A Newsletter of the

Palmer Lake Historical Society

and the

Lucretia Vaile Museum

A Glimpse into Mining in El Paso County

It is said that the history of Colorado runs parallel to the history of mining in the state. In the early 19th century, there is no record of American explorers reporting the discovery of any minerals. About 1848, gold is said to have been discovered near the site of Lake City by a member of the Fremont party, but neither the place nor stream where it was panned have been identified. There was, however, early general knowledge of the geology of Colorado from geologists' surveys and from the United States Geological Survey between 1849 and 1858. That was the year gold was discovered in the Pikes Peak region!

For over one hundred years, the Rocky Mountains have been the source of sometimes astounding deposits of precious metals and minerals and a vast supply of coal. Colorado City, now known as Old Colorado City, was founded in 1859 during the Pikes Peak Gold Rush. It was the first settlement in the region and the first territorial capital before the capital moved to Denver. The 1860s saw the development of stage and carriage roads and cattle trails in the region.

Although El Paso County was the site of numerous coal mines in 1891, it was nearby Cripple Creek in Teller County where deposits of gold and silver were found. But ores had to be processed, and Colorado Springs became the hub of milling activity. Many who made their fortune from mines, mills, banking, railroads, mining exchanges and supplies built large homes in Colorado Springs.

Among the mills in El Paso County were the Golden Cycle Mill, the Colorado-Philadelphia reduction plant, the Portland Mill, and the Standard Mill. In 1894, railroads began building up the canyons to bring the ores to the mills, particularly the Florence and Cripple Creek Railroad, the Midland Terminal, and the Colorado Springs and Cripple Creek District Railway (simply called the Short Line). Then, in 1920, railroad operations ceased. (See Tivis Wilkins' *Short Line to Cripple Creek*, 1983)

World War II renewed interest in mineral deposits in El Paso County. The Western Mining History website uses data from the USGS Mineral Resources Data System and lists over 50 claims. The name of the claim, type of deposit, and the elevation of the site are identified. Deposits include gold, silver, copper, zinc, lead, iron, manganese, fluorine-fluorite, and two fissile materials, uranium and thorium. The elevation of these mining claims range from 6,201 feet to 10,059 feet, with the majority in the 7,000 to 8,900 foot range. Quarries which produced stone and crushed/broken stone are also listed and some are still active. The majority of the mineral claims have never been worked and exist only as recorded claims. The few sites that have been worked are now closed.

In El Paso County, coal deposits are found in the Colorado Springs lignite field. Lignite, also known as brown coal, is formed from compressed peat. It is easier to convert into gas and liquid petroleum products than other forms of coal.

In contrast to the dearth of mineral mining, there were quite a number of coal mines in the area. Settlements sprang up around these mines, and some became towns with stores, hotels, and schools. According to the El Paso County COGenWeb Project (<http://hometownchronicles.com/co/elpaso/cohist.htm>), these included the coal mining towns of Franceville in the eastern part of the county and McFerran, five miles northwest of Franceville. Lesser settlements included Aroways, Bassett's Hill, Big Sandy, Bijou Basin, Cheyenne Peak, Chico Basin, Colorado House, Crystal Peak Park, Easton, Elsmere, El Paso, Divide, Four Mile, Granger, Gwillemville, Highland, Hursleys, Husted, Jimmy Camp, Lake Station, Little Buttes, McConnellsville, "O. Z." Peyton, Petrified Stumps, Quarry, Sidney, South Water, Suffolk, Summit Park, Sun View, Table Rock, Turkey Creek, Twin Rocks, Weissport, Wheatland, Widefield, Winfield and Wigwam.

(continued on page 4)

President's Message



Those attending the excellent Monthly History Program by John Anderson in October were treated to birthday cake in celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Palmer Lake Historical Society. Roger Davis, director of the Lucretia Vaile museum, provided some background about the founding on Oct 18, 1956, and insights into the mission of the Society at the time and going forward today.

As 2016 comes to a close, we look back on highlights ranging from a cold, cloudy walking tour of the Monument Tree Nursery to a brutally hot day for the Ice Cream Social, and a Rocky Mountain Chautauqua filled with historic re-enactors, crafters, and music. Programs in the Monthly History Series ran the gamut from early autos in the Pikes Peak region and children soldiers in the Civil War, to cattle drives and Indian battles. November will see the world premiere of "Star on Sundance," a film by Telly Award-winning producer/director Jim Sawatski and sponsored partially by the Society.

We may be getting older, but we are not slowing down as we look ahead to 2017 and the 61st year of service to the Palmer Divide area. Expect more educational programming and family-centered events for the community beginning with the Annual Potluck Dinner and Membership Meeting in January.

We hope to see you in 2017 and urge that you consider joining as a member. The Palmer Lake Historical Society is staffed exclusively by volunteers. Email us at PLHS@PalmerDivideHistory.org or call 719-559-0837 for more information or to volunteer.

Tom Baker



The PLHS Board wishes to thank Treasurer Barbara Arbuthnot for her years of devoted service as she leaves the area for a new position in Omaha. She is shown at the PLHS table during the 2014 Return of the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua.

The best of luck in Omaha, Barb!

THEN AND NOW: Palmer Divide Photos Past and Present Monument Tree Nursery Site Tour led by Eric Swab on May 14, 2016



Above left: Monument Tree Nursery Packing and Tool Shed 1929



Above right: The same site as it looks today

Below left: Monument Tree Nursery Assistant Nurseryman's house ca 1930's



"Then" photos courtesy of Eric Swab; "Now" photos by Mike Walker



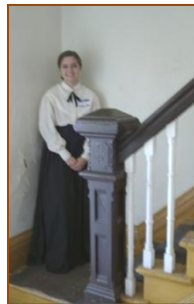
Below right: The same site as it looks today

When the railroads built along the Front Range, they each had their own right of way on which they built separate tracks, depots, engine houses, and water tanks. Both the D&RG and the Santa Fe built "Husted" depots. Today, the only remnants of the two depots are a few pieces of broken concrete, according to historian Jack Anthony.

The **Reynolds Ranch House** is the only residence still standing from Husted days. It has never been moved and can be found on Western Museum of Mining & Industry property. The photos below were taken during the museum's September 10th "Reynolds Ranch Restoration Day," held as a fundraiser. Foundation work is complete, funded in part by a \$117,502 History Colorado grant.



Photos below by Mike Walker; photo above courtesy of WMMI



Upcoming PLHS Programs and Events January 2017 through April 2017

Social Hour at 6:30 PM, Presentations begin at 7:00 PM in the Palmer Lake Town Hall, 28 Valley Crescent Street

Thursday, January 19, 2017, 6:30 PM

SPECIAL EVENT

Annual Potluck and Membership Meeting



Don't miss this event! Bring a vegetable, salad, or dessert to share - the PLHS will provide the main dish. We begin the evening with a short business meeting and election of 2017 officers. Attendees are encouraged to renew their 2017 PLHS memberships or to join if they're not PLHS members. Joe Bohler caps off the evening with his honky tonk piano, along with a short visit from a historical figure.

Joe Bohler, renowned artist and piano player, will provide the entertainment for the evening. Joe donates the cover painting for the annual PLHS calendar, for which we are most appreciative. In addition, he plays a rousing honky tonk piano and has recorded several CDs, which include his own compositions.

Thursday, February 16, 2017 – “John Cleveland Osgood: Colorado Coal Baron” Presenters: Mike and Sigi Walker



From humble beginnings, John C. Osgood at one time was said to be either the fifth or sixth richest man in America. He became the "Fuel King of the West," owning coal mines, coking facilities, company towns, steel mills, railroads, and a marble mine. Learn about his rise to power, his accomplishments, and his 42-room English Tudor manor house in Redstone, Colorado.

Mike and Sigi Walker are PLHS volunteers who have volunteered with a number of historical societies and railway museums. For this program, they have combined their interest in all things "railroad" with Colorado coal mining history as featured in this issue of the newsletter.

Thursday, March 16, 2017 – "By an Act of Congress"

Presenter: Bob Easterly



Bob Easterly presents the story of his great-grandfather, Lewis Henry Easterly, who followed his cousin to Colorado in 1878 and taught school in Pring, Pratt, and Spring Valley. After driving a freight wagon to Gunnison for Allen Teachout in the summer of 1880, he homesteaded there, raised his family, and eventually became involved in the Grand Army of the Republic.

Bob Easterly is a fourth generation Coloradoan and genealogical and historical societies member. Retired from banking and the U.S. Naval Reserve, he has researched his family history and published "By an Act of Congress." He is the current president of the Mount Evans Chapter, SAR.

Thursday, April 20, 2017 – "The Alexander Film Company"

Presenter: Steve Antonuccio



Founded in Spokane, WA, in 1919, the Alexander Film Company moved to Englewood, CO, in 1923, and then to Colorado Springs in 1928. Here the company purchased 260 acres on north Nevada, producing by the early 1950s between 2000 and 3000 advertisement films a year. But the advent of television and the closing of many local theaters in the late 1950s dealt it a crippling blow.

Steve Antonuccio is a Pikes Peak area writer, producer, and videographer. He was a 1991 Heartland Region Emmy nominee for "Everybody Welcome: The Story of Fannie Mae Duncan and the Cotton Club" and 2000 nominee for "The Treasure of the Cripple Creek Mining District."



No. 168 shown on display in 2015 in Colorado Springs' Antlers Park (Sigi Walker photo)

Built in 1883 for the Denver & Rio Grande RR, No. 168 ran between Denver and Salt Lake City via Palmer Lake, Colorado Springs, Canon City, and points west. Displayed in the park since 1938, it was moved to Antonito in September 2015 for restoration to operating condition by the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic RR.



Historic D&RG locomotive "Old 168" is pictured at left during the filming of a television commercial for a clothing company. The actors are posing in the Antonito engine house, which is where restoration work will take place.

(C&TS photo)

The locomotive is still owned by the City of Colorado Springs. The city signed a 45-year lease with the Cumbres & Toltec to allow the 133-year old engine to operate again. To put the engine back into service, the restoration team will have to take the locomotive apart piece by piece to determine the cost of restoration, estimated at \$650,000.

A Glimpse into Mining in El Paso County *(continued from page 1)*

Name of Coal Mine	Company Name	Average Number of Men Employed	Capacity of Mine per day in tons
Pike's Peak	Pike's Peak Fuel Co.	160	1,000
Patterson	Pike's Peak Fuel Co	34	
El Paso	El Paso County Land & Fuel Co	76	600
Rapson No. 2	Rapson Coal Mining Co.	40	300
Danville	Tudor Coal Co.	13	500
Williamsville	Thomas Coal Co.	11	50
Franceville	Dan. E. Davis	2	10

Source: El Paso County COGenWeb Project

In 1983, the Colorado Geological Society, Department of Natural Resources, published an annotated map, "Colorado Front Range Inactive Coal Mine Data and Subsidence Information for El Paso County." Interpreting the data, one can identify the largest inactive coal mining areas as the current Rockrimmon and Palmer Park subdivisions. On the east side of Colorado Springs, coal mines were located east and southeast of Peterson Air Force Base. Smaller inactive mines are scattered throughout the county. In 1889, indications of coal and oil were discovered in Monument (noted in the 2015 COGenWeb Project).

Today, the mines and mills in El Paso County and the railroads that served them are gone. The Mining Exchange is now a high end hotel. The beautiful large homes located in what is now known as the Old North End Neighborhood are still grand residences. Subdivisions have risen and are rising on old tailings sites. Philanthropic foundations established by the mining barons still provide needed resources for the county. And today, the only mining activity in El Paso County is the stone quarry which is visible on the eastern slope of the Rockies as you travel through Colorado Springs on Interstate 25.

To experience Colorado mining - past and present, here's a list of places you can visit: Western Museum of Mining & Industry (Colorado Springs); Steelworks Center of the West (Pueblo); Cripple Creek Heritage Center; Mollie Kathleen Gold Mine Tour (Cripple Creek); Cripple Creek & Victor Gold Mine's new Grassy Valley Overlook; Argo Gold Mine and Mill (Idaho Springs); Georgetown Loop Railroad and mine tour; and Creede Underground Mining Museum.

Mike and Sigi Walker

Lucretia Vaile Museum Hours:

Saturday 10 AM - 2 PM all year
Wednesday 1 - 3 PM Sept - May
Wednesday 1 - 4 PM June - August
1st Thursday of month: 10 AM-noon
For information or tour requests,
call 559-0837 and leave a message.



Like us on Facebook

Visit the PLHS website by scanning our QR code with your smart phone.



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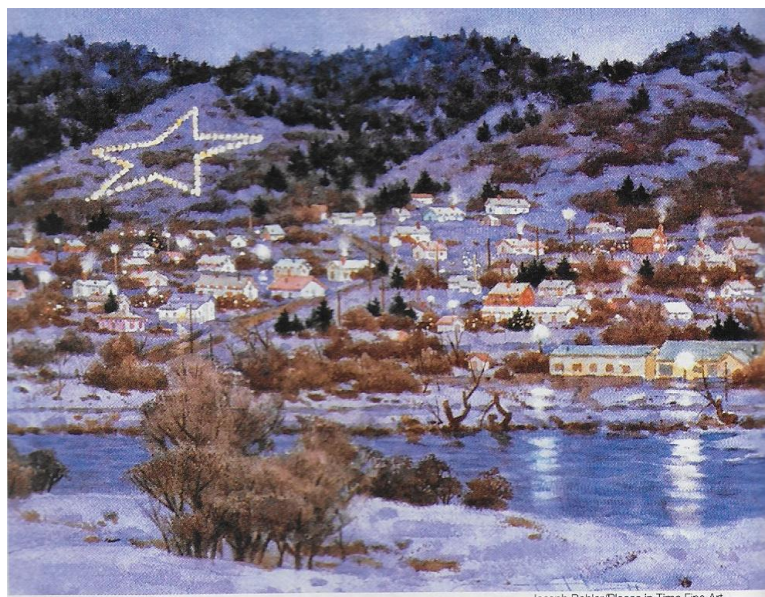
Layout and Editing: Sigi Walker

Note: All submissions may be edited for content, grammar, and space allocations, and become the property of the Palmer Lake Historical Society unless other arrangements have been made. Digital word submissions in .doc or .docx, photos in .jpg format, please.

Submit pieces and photos to Editor at
 mikensigi@comcast.net

2016 - Another Successful Year Comes to a Close

On October 18, 2016, the Palmer Lake Historical Society and the Lucretia Vaile Museum celebrated 60 years of service to the Tri-Lakes area. We are sure you'll agree that this is a remarkable achievement. Join us as we begin another decade of "making history more than a memory." Volunteer to help with refreshments, programs, or events and make 2017 another successful year.



Joseph Bohler/Places in Time Fine Art

Artwork courtesy of Joseph Bohler

Happy Holidays

from the
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 Historical
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 and the
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