

# P. L. Historical Society

*Serving The Palmer Divide Area Since 1956*



In case you wanted to know:

- **Museum hours:** 10-2 PM Sat. and 1-4 PM Wed., June to Aug.
- PLHS President: Phyllis Bonser
- Vice-President: Al Walter
- Secretary: Ron Heard
- Treasurer: Victor Vaile
- Museum Director: Rogers Davis
- Board Members at Large:
  - Kim Braun
  - Bob Kirby
  - Mary Meyer
  - Hans Post
- **Mountain Lion:** "Old Disappearance"

## William Walk: Engineer of the Denver & Rio Grande

By: Dee Kirby

**William Walk's passion was railroads.** Born in 1863, he joined the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad at age 18. He worked as a section hand, fireman, master mechanic, freight engineer and passenger engineer. During his career, Walk was proud **that he never had "a wheel off the track or a serious accident."**

**"Engines in the early days were all named," Walk said.** The first engines purchased by the D&RGR from Baldwin Locomotive Works of Philadelphia were three sister engines called the **'Tabeguache,' the 'Shawano' and the 'Montezuma.'**

**Walk's favorite engine was the 12 ½ ton Montezuma**

which was the first locomotive put into service by the Denver & Rio Grande on July **3, 1871.** **"There was a sweet little engine for you; she was perfectly balanced, not top-heavy, and took the curves like a piece of tangent track, yet she never so much as spilled a drop of water from a glass set in any of the windows of the cab."**

**Walk's belief in a sixth sense averted disaster on more than one occasion.** One day out of Salida, instinct told him to stop. He sent the conductor ahead to check conditions. Six thousand tons of rock had split from the cliff and dropped onto the track. The same instinct occurred near Spikebuck. The conductor discovered a washed out bridge.

Walk earned several accolades from the General Manager of the D & RGR. While en route to Canon City, he observed a fire on the expensive **"hanging bridge"** built above the water level in the canyon. He managed to put it out using the spurt hose used to wet down the coal in the tender. Bringing the train down from Salida, Walk saw a 15 foot wall of water coming down behind him through the Royal Gorge. He opened the throttle full-out into Canyon City. His warning enabled people to seek safety before the flood hit.

Following a heart attack while at the throttle, Walk retired in 1923. He spent winters in Florida and summers in Pueblo, CO.

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## What's New at the Museum?

### Micro Maestro

William R. Robertson's chest with working tools.

See his work at the Toy and Miniature Museum of Kansas City, whose holdings include the largest collection of Robertson miniatures on public view.



The miniatures were created by L - R: Connie Goodhart, Lori Asiu, Doris Dillie, Mary Banner, Ina Coats (not pictured is Linda Shane, Gayle Wade of Monumental Miniatures & Toys, & the Tri-Lakes area merchants who created the miniature diorama of a Victorian lady's boudoir on loan to the museum)



## A Message from the President

Can you believe, summer is almost over! Our Father's day pie and ice cream social was a huge success, over 200 people attended. The music of the Jessum Buds was enjoyed by all on the Village Green. We had an entry in the Fourth of July Parade, a "new/old" PT cruiser carrying passengers from the past. The 2nd annual revival of the Rocky

Mountain Chautauqua was very well attended the first week-end in August. We thank all the volunteers who made this week-end so much fun.

Our two up-coming projects are the Historical Calendar and a booklet of photos from the past, covering the Divide Area. If you have photos of historic buildings or activities

and would be willing to let the Society scan them, we would appreciate hearing from you. If you would like to volunteer to help with either of these projects, please call me at 481-9245. Projects such as these enable us to continue our work of preserving the past.

*Phyllis V. Bonser*

## PLHS Upcoming Events and Programs



Campsite of William B. & Mary E. Young on their way to making a home on the future site of the Air Force Academy

All upcoming events held at the Palmer Lake Town Hall on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month.

All are welcomed free of charge. Doors open at 6:30 PM. The program begins at 7:00 PM. Refreshments are served.

**September 17, 2009 "High Drama in Colorado"**  
Colorado's Historic Theaters

Presented by: Beth Barnett

**October 15, 2009 "Railroads & the Military"**

The impact of the railroad on the military, past and present. Presented by: Paul Seeling, U.S. Air Force Academy

**November 19, 2009 "Pioneers of the Air Force Academy Area"**

Local history Presented by: Jack Anthony

**December 15, 2009: John Fielder and Chuck Pyle will pair up for a fund raiser concert for PLHS. Time and place to be announced.**

**December, 2009 - No Regular Meeting - Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays!**

## February: Mining History and Ore Processing

Text paraphrased from **Bernard L. Minettie's article** in Our Community News

David Carroll of the Western Museum of Mining and Industry, which is the only Museum of mining accredited in the United States by the American Association of Museums, discussed the origin of the museum, which was started by Fred and Kath-

erine Farrar. Farrar had aspirations to be a mining engineer, but since he failed to meet the academic standards, Farrar studied to become an attorney and specialized, instead, in the mining industry. **During Farrar's career**, he collected many mining artifacts. When his family asked him what he intended to do with all his

**"junk," he decided they** needed to be displayed, thus he established the Western Museum of Mining and Industry, located at the I-25 and Gleneagle exit of Interstate 25.

Carroll further discussed the formation and evolution of the Gould Mining and Milling Co. which eventually evolved into the Gould Mining Co.

located in Wyoming. Ownership varied and the entrepreneurs were also involved in railroad ownership and development since the two industries depended on one another.



Al Walter & D. Carroll

## May: Early Preachers

Text paraphrased from **Bernard L. Minettie's article** to Our Community News.

The Rev. John Snyder spoke about John Dyer, a Methodist minister and the Rev. Sheldon Jackson, who founded the Presbyterian Church in Monument. While both men often found themselves **"trudging through** the often snow-filled areas of **this part of Colorado,"** Dyer became known as **"The Snowshoe Itinerant."**

Dyer earned the affectionate but unofficial title of Father.



**"It was sign of respect** by those he ministered to because he acted in such a genuine fatherly role as he provided spiritual facility and hope in the mountain mining **communities."** In 1872, Dyer established a parsonage in Monument, and later, was installed as the Colorado Legislature chaplain.

Jackson, known as the **"Flying Horseman of the Rockies"** because of the territory he covered, planned

church communities. He established approximately hundred Presbyterian churches in Colorado which includes the Community Presbyterian Church in Monument, circa 1880. **"The first church building, the Sheldon Jackson Memorial Chapel, still stands in Monument."**

A photograph of the Rev. Sheldon Jackson was not available for this newsletter.

## July: The Battle of Glorieta Pass

Text paraphrased from **Bernard L. Minettie's article** to Our Community News

Retired Col. Dave Hughes of Colorado Springs discussed the importance of the Battle of Glorieta Pass during the Civil War to a record attendance at the monthly Palmer Lake Historical Society meeting.

Hughes said that there were several battles in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico but the most famous

strategic skirmish was the Battle of Glorieta Pass, which occurred March 26 to 28 in 1862. Some historians refer to it as **"The Gettysburg of the West,"** and claim it was a deciding event in the Western history of the Civil War.

The Confederacy planned to establish a stronghold in the Southwest by taking the federal stronghold of Fort Union in northern New Mexico and make it a Confederate center of operations. At first, the

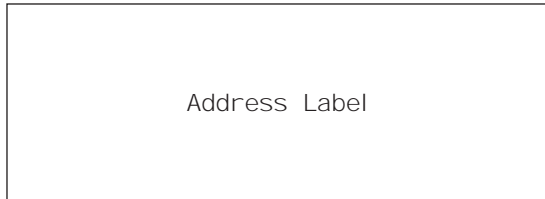
Union forces were pushed back through the Pass. But, eventually they overwhelmed the Confederate contingent by destroying most of their pack animals which subsequently cut off their source of supplies. After the failed attempt, the Confederate forces retreated out of



New Mexico which ended major action in that area. Fort Union still stands and is preserved for viewing.

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Stamp



*"History Should Be More Than a Memory." (rme)*

Visit Us At: <http://www.ci.palmer-lake.co.us/plhs/>

## Palmer Lake Chautauqua Returns

The 2009 'Return of the Rocky Mountain Chautauqua Assembly' took place in Palmer Lake during the weekend of August 7-9, 2009 to standing-room-only crowds who enjoyed the picture-perfect weather. During the Chautauqua movement (1874-1930), people were exposed to prominent speakers, educators, artists, and entertainers at a time when less than 2% of the adults held high school degrees. Nationwide, an estimated 45 million Americans attended a Chautauqua. Chautauqua also provided training to thousands of teachers, furthering public

education.

The original Rocky Mountain Chautauqua Assembly, the first in Colorado, was founded in 1887 in Palmer Lake, and continued until 1910.



The 'Swans,' the home baseball team.

Anyone can Juggle a ball, a plunger and , of course, a rubber chicken.....

Don't try this at home!



At the Vaudeville show.