

Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum

2020 Junior Docent Program



READING ASSIGNMENTS

Week 2

City of Sunshine

"The climate of Colorado contains more of the essential elements which effectively promote health than that of any other country. These requisites are found in the chemical composition of the atmosphere; in the dry, pure, clean, soft, yet stimulating breezes which quicken circulation and multiply the corpuscles of the blood; in the tonic effect and exhilarating influence of the ozone; in the flood of its life-giving germ destroying sunshine..." Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce 1915

In the nineteenth century, tuberculosis (then known as consumption) was the leading cause of death in both Europe and the United States. The dreaded "white plague" killed thousands each year. Symptoms included high fevers, rapid pulse, night-sweats, a debilitating cough and significant weight loss. The tremendous physical deterioration of a tubercular patient gave the disease two other common names; consumption and phthisis, a Greek word meaning "wasting away."

Archaeological evidence suggests tuberculosis has plagued humans for thousands of years. TB lesions have been found in the chest cavities of Egyptian mummies and Hippocrates, the Greek "father of medicine" vividly described the disease over 2,400 years ago. With no known cure until the discovery of Streptomycin in 1944 and Isoniazid (INH) in 1952, nineteenth-century physicians prescribed "rest cures" for consumptives in mild, sunny climates. As a result, invalids sought the best care they could afford and "chased the cure" to Colorado Springs.

From its founding in 1871, local boosters advertised Colorado Springs as a premier health destination for the treatment of consumption and "lung troubles," among other maladies. Our region's greatest asset-turned-industry was its stunning scenery, abundant sunshine and mild climate. For decades the local Chamber of Commerce published pamphlets extolling the health benefits of the region. Distributed across the country and around the world, the advertisements encouraged invalids to breathe our "100% aseptic air" and enjoy the healing powers of our over 300 days of sunshine a year. For good reason, the city's official nickname became The City of Sunshine.

And they came! While no exact figures exist, historians and public health officials generally agree that by 1900, approximately 20,000 health-seekers emigrated to the southwest each year in search of health. In his 1907 memoir, *Chasing the Cure in Colorado*, Thomas Crawford Galbreath estimated that at least 1/3 of all Colorado residents came to the state in search of a cure for themselves or a close family member. Once cured, many stayed on in the region to build their lives, families, and businesses. Their economic, political, artistic, and educational contributions to this community are still visible today.

Once again, tuberculosis presents a major global health threat. Unlike previous strains of TB that react favorably to antibiotics and which have been on the decline for many years, a new, more virulent type is on the rise. Unfortunately, the new TB is Multiple Drug Resistant. The treatment for MDRTB lasts two years and costs an estimated \$250,000 per patient. Despite the great expense, the patient still has a 50/50 chance of relapse and death. A recent study indicated that by the year 2050, the cost of treating MDRTB around the world would be over \$15 trillion per year.

Journalist and Health Historian Helen Bynum described the fight against control and eradication of tuberculosis as "A Job Half Done." As Streptomycin and later INH proved useful in saving lives and

combating the spread of the disease, organizations and research institutes dedicated to the study of tuberculosis changed their focus. For example, the 1904 National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis, became the National Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association in 1968, and the American Lung Association in 1973. As TB was considered "cured," other diseases such as polio, muscular dystrophy, cancer and later HIVAIDS took center stage.

Today, contributing factors to the spread of the disease include poverty and malnutrition, a link between HIV and tuberculosis, a new MDRTB strain and lack of public health funding around the world. The World Health Organization estimates that worldwide between 2002 to 2020, hundreds of millions will become infected, over 150 million people will get sick and 36 million will die of TB. Arati Kochi of WHO's anti-tuberculosis program has called TB a forgotten epidemic, "Tuberculosis today is humanity's greatest killer, and it is out of control in many parts of the world." One hundred years after the height of the sanatorium era in Colorado Springs, tuberculosis is once again a prevalent and deadly disease. However, this time around healthy climates and rest cures are not the answer – only increased public awareness, public health initiatives and exponential increases in research funding will stop tuberculosis from being as much the scourge of the 21st century as it was the 19th.

Week 3

Cultural Crossroads

For millennia, the vast stretch of land between the Platte and Arkansas Rivers and east of the Rocky Mountains has been a Cultural Crossroads. Award winning Historian Elliot West has written, “White Pioneers who moved onto the plains east to west believed they were leaving the old country for the new. They had it exactly backward. Before the first human habitation on the eastern seaboard... plainsmen had fashioned flourishing economies... Different peoples lived with shifting resources – sometimes abundant, often scarce...reaching much farther to trade for more. The region’s deep history was a continuing, dazzling improvisation... ”

Many native people have called this area home, among them: Ute, Cheyenne, Arapaho, Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache. Although the Ute claimed the mountains to the west, for generations they joined their Plains Indian neighbors in hunting bison and game on the wild grasses of the plains. From the south came the Spanish who founded settlements in present day New Mexico in the sixteenth century. From the coasts came Russian, British, French and American fur traders, eager to profit from ancient trade routes and a preexisting system of intertribal trade.

With extensive contact and occasional conflict over shared resources, American Indians absorbed and transmitted the cultural influences of their neighbors. As a result, Plains, Plateau, Great Basin, and Southwestern tribes transferred traditions and technologies as they traded goods. The striking examples of American Indian beadwork, clothing, baskets, and other materials in this exhibit provide evidence of the ongoing creative innovation and adaptation of native peoples in a region noted for being – a **Cultural Crossroads**.

Long before Europeans arrived in North America, a well established system of robust trade existed among American Indians. Evidence of extensive intertribal trade includes seashells, copper, colorful Macaw feathers and cotton found in the ruins of Ancestral Pueblo Peoples in the southwestern corner of Colorado. Ancient trade routes crisscrossed the continent linking millions of native peoples through a rich system of trade that disseminated ideas and traditions as well as trade goods.

While Europeans did not establish trade on this continent, they certainly influenced it. As early as the seventeenth century, Spanish colonists in present day New Mexico actively carried on complex trading and raiding relationships with their Pueblo, Ute and Apache neighbors. During a period of fierce competition for territory and military alliances, the vigorous exchange of goods grew to include more trading partners and more trade objects including: horses, guns, food, cloth and a variety of metal objects.

Additionally, by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Plains Indians were engaged in trade with Russians, British, French and American traders for furs and skins. As a result, new trading centers sprang up alongside ancient trade routes and American Indians participated as both producers and consumers in a truly global economy.

Many tribes have called Colorado home — and they still do. Members of the Southern Ute and the Ute Mountain Ute live on two reservations in the southwest corner of the state. Native people also live in rural communities throughout Colorado and in urban centers like Denver and Colorado

Springs. American Indians are teachers, doctors, artists, attorneys, politicians, bankers. They are your neighbors.

American Indians are a part of **living** cultures. Native people in Colorado are actively preserving their languages, traditions and history. Ute elders like historian Alden Naranjo (pictured here pointing to ancient Rock Art in the Garden of the Gods) work to pass on Ute culture to the tribe's youth through culture camps and other programs. Audio tapes and written texts ensure the preservation and awareness of the Ute language.

All cultures balance continuity and change – and American Indians are no exception. As historian Will Wroth describes, “Innovation and change occur in Native American cultures just as they do in popular American culture... As part of an evolving contemporary culture, they make choices based on personal aesthetic preferences and use a combination of natural and traditional materials with contemporary and trade materials...”

The objects in this *Living Cultures* case in the exhibit embody both deep-rooted beliefs and modern adaptation. Just as their ancestors did in past centuries – American Indian artists today create products that reflect contemporary styles and culture. The tennis shoes seen here evoke a symbolic Cherokee beadwork pattern. They are part of a clothing line designed by Jay Red Eagle, Cherokee, who specializes in Hip-Hop clothing inspired by traditional American Indian designs.

Drawn from the collections of the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, Cultural Crossroads features an amazing array of over 125 artifacts and photographs illustrating the rich depth of American Indian history and culture in the Pikes Peak Region. Visitors are encouraged to compare and contrast the styles, patterns and traditions of the over 30 American Indian Nations represented in the exhibit.

Historians believe that humans have been collecting ever since our prehistoric ancestors gathered groups of interesting rocks together. According to author Susan Pearce, “Individuals collect objects as either souvenirs or fetishes. Souvenirs memorialize a person’s life and adventures. They become the real things that connect us with the past. Fetishes, on the other hand, are objects of attraction that often have no connection with a person, place or event that we have experienced...but are pretty, rare or valuable.”

Most of the artifacts in this exhibit came from a handful of collectors. Have you ever wondered how and why objects end up in Museums? The reasons are as varied as the collectors themselves: the J.D. Clark Collection was purchased under unusual circumstances, the Spencer Penrose Collection was donated during his lifetime, and the Vida Ellison Collection was willed to the Museum after her death.

Throughout the exhibit you will see the term American Indian. Although many people still use the term Native American, the name generally preferred today is American Indian. According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs: “The term 'Native American' came into usage in the 1960s...” and can seem dry and bureaucratic to some. By choosing to use the term American Indian, the CSPM is following the example set by the Smithsonian Institution when naming the National Museum of the American Indian.

As Christina Berry, Cherokee, explains, “In the end, the term you choose to use (as an Indian or non-Indian) is your own personal choice... The recommended method is to refer to a person by their tribe, if that information is known. The reason is that the Native peoples of North America are incredibly diverse. It would be like referring both a Romanian and an Irishman as European...”

Following the lead of the National Park Service and many historians and archaeologists, we have chosen to use the term Ancestral Puebloans instead of Anasazi in this exhibit. Anasazi is a Navajo word that means “ancestral enemy or ancient enemy.” Many southwestern tribes who are descendants of Ancestral Puebloans prefer to call their ancestors by their own tribal name and in their own language. The Ancestral Puebloans lived in the four corners region of the Southwest (including parts of present day Colorado) until about seven hundred years ago.

Week 4

Evidence

It is imperative to look closely and accurately at the people and events in our past. Yet, we often find ourselves repeating familiar stories but never stop to ask, “How do we know if this fact is really true?” The Evidence exhibit is dedicated to debunking persistent myths about General Palmer and his family by inviting visitors to examine evidence firsthand. By doing so, viewers will come away with a deeper and more meaningful understanding of our city founder’s unique story and our community’s history.

Evidence will encourage critical thinking, foster historical analysis and provide a “behind the scenes” look at the work of historians and archaeologists. How do we know what we know about the past? How does this change over time? How can we tell fact from fiction? The answer is evidence! In the case of the Palmer Family and estate employees, we have never had more evidence than we do today.

Thanks to donations of letters, diaries, photographs and artifacts over the past two decades, we have a deeper understanding of the day-to-day life at Glen Eyrie. Combined with over 60,000 archaeological artifacts discovered in a long buried trash pile near the Palmer Estate at Glen Eyrie, an even clearer picture emerges. In many cases, new evidence negates commonly held misconceptions and reveals a more interesting and complicated story. For instance, General Palmer’s handwritten letters describe how he fought in the Civil War because of his Quaker faith – not in spite of it. Although Colorado Springs was a “dry town” that banned liquor, General Palmer was not a teetotaler. Archaeologists found approximately 50 intact food, medicinal and liquor bottles. Both archival and archaeological evidence indicate increasing wealth at Glen Eyrie over time, debunking the myth that Palmer was a Philadelphia “blueblood.”

Finally, an exploration of personal items, including Elsie Palmer’s diary, a metal corset fragment, a locket with strands of hair, a pair of shoes and even a tube of toothpaste, reveal close connections and intimate details of daily life. What do these objects tell us about the people who used them? What does the evidence tell us about the past? What does the evidence tell you? What are new stories we can tell based on facts?

We asked Archaeologist Mike Prouty, of Alpine Archaeological Consultants Inc., to help us answer this question:

Archaeology is the study of past human cultures through the examination and analysis of physical materials they left behind. These materials can include any combination of the items that they made or used (artifacts), natural items from their environment (ecofacts), and physical remains of things they built or accumulations of debris from their everyday lives (features, structures, and sites).

Archaeologists look at the past through a variety of approaches that may include perspectives from anthropology, geology, geography, sociology, and history. This multidisciplinary approach allows archaeologists to make meaningful interpretations of diverse cultural materials and sites.

Archaeologists use standardized methodologies to examine and analyze the past, regardless of the culture being investigated, though each site has individual characteristics that may require specialized expertise or research needs to be fully understood.

Identifying and recording a site is typically the first step. Next, archaeologists will often test sites through systematic excavation of small shovel holes, 1-x-1-m test units, trenches, or other means in order to determine the extent of the site.

Data from testing can determine if buried artifacts, features, or structures are present and what their natural context is. If testing indicates buried cultural materials are present in good, relatively undisturbed natural contexts, further archaeological work might take place, up to fullscale excavations.

If a site is excavated, the variety of artifacts carefully recovered can tell us a lot about who was there, what they were doing, and how they fit into the society and culture they were a part of. Artifacts, such as stone tools, pieces of ceramic and glass vessels, and metal items, can be informative about the level of technology used to make them, mass manufacturing, and the activities of their users. Artifacts can help archaeologists understand how individuals adapted to and used their local environment and how they fit into the larger world.

Zooarchaeologists study the remains of animal bones from a site to better understand what animals they hunted, raised, kept as pets, used as work animals, or ate. Macrobotanical experts study the plant remains on archaeological sites to understand how past people used and manipulated their natural environment for food and altering the surrounding landscape.

Archaeologists incorporate modern technology, including geographic information systems, or GIS, on a regular basis. GIS allows archaeologists to collect precise locations of sites and site elements, and can even collect information about the precise place an artifact was found. It can also be used to create three-dimensional models from an entire landscape for spatial analysis.

Finally, for historic period sites, historical information can provide detailed information about people, artifacts, and specific sites that provide a framework for the analysis of cultural materials. Archaeological materials provide new raw data about people and places that can offer more detailed information about the past than is available from documents. Done correctly and with precision, this new data can provide insights and discoveries about the past that is more dynamic than what can be learned from documents alone.

How Do Historians Use Evidence?

We asked Historian Katherine Scott Sturdevant, Professor of History at Pikes Peak Community College, to help us answer this question:

Historians study evidence of the recorded past in order to organize and interpret that past. It is a path strewn with mysteries to solve, characters to portray, and meaning that inspires across centuries.

Imagine setting out to apply historians' knowledge and skills to a new project! It is exciting when a new source appears, you being the first to recognize its significance. The trained historian brings a body of knowledge and skills to each new challenge.

As a field or discipline, history sits between humanities and social sciences. Historians rely on these fields for information and methods. The historian weaves statistical analysis with literary skill for effective storytelling.

Primary sources are history's raw materials, created at the time or original to historical participants. Any original diary, letter, document, record, photograph, or artifact is a primary source. So

are the artifacts that archaeologists dig up. A later memoir, autobiography, or interview is a primary source, even though it documents an earlier time. Memory is a different perspective, but still primary. The historian is privileged to study primary sources. Past people shared windows into their lives.

Secondary sources are later accounts that narrate and evaluate history. A well-trained historian bases a secondary source on many primary sources. That historian checks and balances new discoveries and interpretations against what historians already wrote in their secondary works.

Facts matter. Context fosters understanding. When a historian researches a new project, that expert must know the agreed-upon truths of that historical time, place, and people. Those truths form the context of lives. Just as you use context to understand human motive and behavior today, the historian must use it to understand past behavior. Balancing ethics and biases is a critical challenge for historians. The historian must check one source or interpretation against another for “the truth.” The historian strives for objectivity and balance, to trust and be trusted.

Revision is constant. Some accuse historians of “revising” history inappropriately. To do so is against the historian’s ethic. Historians “revise” because they find new sources and contextual interpretations. For example, when historians recognized we lacked women’s history, they looked closer at women’s private writings and records to help construct narrative analysis. This kind of “revision” is simply casting history’s nets wider to be more complete.

Historians create new sources. Until the 1970s, historians resisted treating oral history as a valid primary source. Today, historians record oral history interviews. They also collect oral tradition (stories handed down) to save the experiences of those with less written history, such as Native Americans, former slaves, women, and poorer classes. Historians seek to discover and interpret the past ethically and accurately, to help all of us connect with our heritage, understand our present, and prepare for our future.

Week 5

Van Briggle

When Artus Van Briggle stepped off the train at the Colorado Springs station in March 1899, he carried a secret formula. After years of study and experimentation, Van Briggle successfully devised a matte glaze that was in contrast to the traditional High-Gloss pottery of the Victorian Era. Coming west to seek a cure for his tuberculosis, Van Briggle founded a pottery that combined his innovative glaze, unique artistic vision and inspiration drawn from our natural setting to revolutionize American ceramics.

Prior to arriving in Colorado Springs, Artus Van Briggle studied art in Paris from 1893 to 1896. His experiences there transformed both his personal and professional lives. Artus studied at the Julian Academy and often visited the Louvre and Sévres Ceramics Museums in Paris. There he admired the delicate, dead or matte glazes of China's Ming Dynasty. Inspired to rediscover the long-lost formula for these beautifully soft finishes, Artus began his life's work. It was also in Paris that Van Briggle met his fiancé, fellow art student Anne Lawrence Gregory. Anne joined Artus in Colorado Springs in 1900 and the couple married two years later.

Van Briggle Art Pottery produced award winning ceramics in the Art Nouveau style. Understood largely as a response to the mechanization and urbanization of the industrial age, Art Nouveau (new art in French) was an international style in vogue from 1890-1910. Incorporating natural decorative motifs such as plants and animals, artists stressed harmony between the object and its decoration. The innovative pottery of Artus and Anne Van Briggle featured colors and plants found in their adopted home of Colorado while perfectly epitomizing the values of Art Nouveau movement.

Tragically, Artus Van Briggle died of tuberculosis in 1904 at the age of 35. After his death, Anne became president of the company until she left the business in 1912. Together, Artus and Anne Van Briggle created a uniquely original — and enduring artistic legacy. The over 150 pieces of Van Briggle Art Pottery featured in this exhibit were created during 1900- 1912 and thus directly reflect the work and genius of Artus and Anne Van Briggle.

After the death of her husband Artus in July, 1904, Anne Van Briggle became President of Van Briggle Art Pottery. Searching to increase sales with new products, Anne and her protégé Emma Kincaid began to produce tiles in late 1904. The company went through a series of financial challenges and reorganizations over the next eight years including a name change to the Van Briggle Pottery and Tile Company.

In 1907 construction began on a new home for Van Briggle Pottery. The building soon became known as the Memorial Pottery in honor of Artus Van Briggle. It was built on land donated by General William Jackson Palmer at the southern end of Monument Valley Park. The Dutch Farmhouse style building was designed by architect Nicolaas van den Arend. Pottery production began in the building in September of 1908 and a grand opening reception was held on December 2nd.

In 1908, valued employee Frank Riddle returned to work for Van Briggle Pottery after obtaining a degree in ceramic engineering in Ohio. Riddle handled all technical and mechanical operations of the company while Anne controlled artistic matters. After her marriage in 1908 to Etienne Ritter, Anne continued to direct the company until she left the business in 1912.

Prior to his death in July 1904, Artus Van Briggle achieved an astounding level of international acclaim within a few short years. With his health deteriorating, Artus and Anne spent a few months in Tucson, Arizona during the winter of 1902-1903. After returning to Colorado Springs in the spring of 1903, Artus submitted 24 pieces of pottery to the prestigious Paris Salon — and all 24 were accepted. This was a remarkable accomplishment as the salon had extremely stringent requirements for entry.

When Van Briggle's precarious health prevented him from attending the Paris Salon, he enlisted the assistance of good friend and fellow artist Harold Mott-Smith to arrange his exhibit. 3 According to published accounts, the results were stunning. Mott-Smith artistically arranged the pottery on black velvet cloth, and placed the largest pieces on top to create visual impact. The Paris jury awarded Van Briggle 2 gold, 1 silver and 12 bronze medals for his pottery.

In 1904, Van Briggle submitted 100 pieces of pottery to the Louisiana Purchase Centennial Exposition, also known as the St. Louis World's Fair. There he earned 2 gold, one silver and 2 bronze medals. The fair was still underway when Artus passed away on July, 4, 1904. Organizers honored his life and work by placing black crepe on the Van Briggle Pottery exhibit.

After the death of her husband, Anne continued to win awards. At the 1905 Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition in Portland, Oregon, Van Briggle Pottery earned a gold medal in the overall competition. In 1907 at their tenth anniversary exhibition, the renowned Boston Arts and Crafts Society awarded Van Briggle Pottery their highest exhibit award and granted Anne Van Briggle the distinguished degree of Master within their society.

Van Briggle's success at the 1903 Paris Salon brought critical acclaim to him, but was also seen as a point of pride for his adopted state of Colorado. As a Denver newspaper noted, "...the acceptance by the salon jury of art pottery made in Colorado Springs means that the barriers of prejudice that have existed in eastern minds against the west in its art work, will now be reduced, since the highest authority on art in the world has placed the Colorado product on a level with the best.." The enduring popularity and widespread praise of Van Briggle Art Pottery helped to establish Colorado Springs as a center for the Arts

Week 6

1903 Courthouse

This was the 9th El Paso County Courthouse and it operated in that capacity from 1903 to 1972. It became the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum in 1979.

The site for the new courthouse was donated by Gen. William J. Palmer. Two locations were considered – North Park (Acacia) and South Park (Alamo). Controversy erupted over selection of the site, with lawyers wanting the north location which would be close to their residences and would stimulate business. South Park was chosen. The Antlers Hotel fire had a lot to do with the decision to situate the courthouse in the center of the lot so that it could be defended against fire. People were not happy about all of the original Cottonwood trees that were cut down.

Mr. Smith first came to Colorado Springs to improve his health.

The area's history is directly related to its geographical setting, striking scenic beauty and high semi-arid climate.

On May 22, 1899, the El Paso County Commissioners contracted with Augustus J. Smith to make preliminary plans for the construction of a new courthouse. He was a self-taught architect with little experience and his selection caused an uproar among experienced architects in the community who had petitioned County Commissioners to hold a competition for the Courthouse design. Mr. Smith was selected instead by committee over more prominent local men in the profession such as Thomas McLaren. Smith was best known amongst the local citizenry for his evangelical activities connected with the First Baptist Church where he conducted a small mission.

Throughout its history, the Pikes Peak region has inspired creativity among the people who have called the area home.

Smith designed the building in an eclectic style, borrowing from Italian Renaissance Revival, with classic columns, round arches, symmetrical composition, and Doric, Ionic and Corinthian facades (building fronts).

Construction methods changed in the 1900's. This building has exterior masonry load bearing walls plus an interior steel structure. Some interior brick walls are load bearing.

The new courthouse was built and furnished at a cost of \$420,000. It was lavish by any standards and was expected to be adequate for as long as anyone could foresee at the time. Taxpayers were grateful that the building was debt-free when it opened and was dedicated on May 16, 1903.

This building has served our community well, from its beginning in 1903 as the 9th and most impressive El Paso County Courthouse, to the present where it houses in trust artifacts from our city's past. Throughout history, trends in art and architecture have changed and evolved from one style to another but somehow the one thing that keeps us connected to the past and where we find comfort and stability is in the classic designs. In these modern times, new buildings with modern design elements have surrounded the old courthouse but we can still see the clock tower and know exactly where and what it is.

We become melancholy thinking about the days when “everyone knew everyone,” a handshake was your contract, your word was as good as gold, children could roller skate and play on the park’s sidewalks with no objections from the many people who over the years sat in this South/Pioneer Park, enjoying their cold ice cream on a hot summer day. This nostalgia applies to the grand, beautiful building itself where memories, good and bad, were made.

In the 1960’s when the mindset was “out with the old, in with the new” and great landmark buildings were torn down, the enduring qualities of this building of memories inspired citizens to rally and save it for future generations. The historic preservation movement was under way.

The building still commands admiration and respect and still gives the impression that it is a place of authority and importance. According to some Museum staff members, people still think it is the place to do legal business, couples want to get married here, lawyers want to take their oath here and judges want to be robed here.

When the Courthouse was dedicated on May 16, 1903 it was lavishly celebrated with great fanfare as the jewel of the city. The politicians gave speeches, the Midland Band played and 140 gallons of punch were served. Civic pride was high and the citizens of Colorado Springs and El Paso County looked forward to prosperity and the recognition and prestige the courthouse would bring being the county seat. Today, the wide sidewalks, beautiful landscaping and benches still invite our citizens and visitors to sit, relax and take in the sights of the day.

In 1961 the new El Paso County office building at 27 E. Vermijo was built.

In 1966 the county commissioners decided the old courthouse should come down.

In 1972 the building was entered in to the National Register of Historic Places.

In March, 1979 the courthouse opened as the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum.

“The verdict of the people is that the building is the finest in this section of the country, and that the present generation, as well as those that follow, will point to it with pride.’

Week 7

Story of Us

Welcome to The Story of Us: The Pikes Peak Region A - Z, an exhibit that seeks to collect and share stories that broaden our understanding of who we are as a community. Using artifacts, photographs, and oral histories, this exhibit explores what is most unique about us and how we differ from any other city in the United States. Taken separately, each story within our A – Z framework is interesting, provocative and/or anecdotal. Understood as a whole, these stories demonstrate the complex processes that have shaped our region over time.

Inside you will find intriguing objects from our collections, many of which have never before been on exhibit. Framed by whimsical text, colorful graphics, playful design and the distinctive artwork of local phenom Phil Lear, the stories unfold before you. There is no particular way to navigate the gallery — instead we encourage you to meander in whichever direction you are drawn.

Sit down, relax and watch “The Man of a Thousand Faces” Lon Chaney in the classic silent film *Phantom of the Opera*. Born and raised in Colorado Springs, Chaney’s acting skills were shaped by his difficult childhood and creative inclinations. Or perhaps you have never heard the stories of the cataclysmic grasshopper plagues of the late nineteenth century, and the extremely dangerous methods implemented to eradicate them?

Who is Nikola Tesla you wonder? Or do you? Find out how despite his brief stay in the region, Tesla left an indelible mark on local memory and landscape. He also went on to become one of the most important scientists of the modern era. Did you know that the first women to wear pants were ridiculed? Have you heard the story about Julia Archibald Holmes and the Dress Reform Movement? She came west in a “Bloomer Costume” and made the first recorded ascent of Pikes Peak by a woman. These are just a few of the stories that await you in the gallery.

Finally, there is an interactive element to The Story of Us that we know you will want to explore. Available through state-of-the-art touchscreens in the gallery, and accessible online in the comfort of your home or school, we have created a dynamic software program that allows you to explore the history and geography of the Pikes Peak Region. Open a letter from A – Z and learn about the people, places and events that make our region unique. Navigate dynamic maps that allow you to go back in time to understand how neighborhoods, businesses, climate and transportation have shaped our community. This exciting technology allows us to see and understand our history and geography in a whole new way. Ready to get started? Have fun exploring The Story of Us!

www.cspmstoryofus.org

Week 8

Any Place North & West

In his poem, One Way Ticket, Langston Hughes eloquently described the exodus of millions of African Americans out of the South following the Civil War. Pushed out by repressive Jim Crow laws, threats of violence and little economic or political opportunity, African Americans moved Any Place That is North and West. This exhibit explores what they found when they arrived in Colorado Springs, the supportive community they created for themselves, and the role they played in shaping the city we live in today.

According to award winning historian Isabel Wilkerson, the Great Migration was a "...decades long migration of black citizens who fled the South for northern and western cities, in search of a better life. From 1915 to 1970, the exodus of almost six million people changed the face of America."

Traveling north in segregated passenger trains, migrants headed to the large urban centers of: New York, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh. A diverse set of factors led to the Great Migration including: opportunities to work in for higher wages in northern industrial plants during WWI, Jim Crow laws in the south that enforced segregation, discrimination and even violence, and the lack of economic and political freedom.

In 1917 the Chicago Commission on Race Relations asked recent migrants why they left the South. Some of their answers were:

- Some Of My People Were Here
- Persuaded By Friends
- For Better Wages
- To Better My Conditions
- Better Livin
- More Work; Came On Visit And Stayed
- Wife Persuaded Me
- Tired Of The South
- To Get Away From the South

For many families the journey was often not one but several successive migrations over a number of years. John and Jenny Rhodes lived in Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma and finally Georgia before settling in Colorado Springs in 1915. Both the children of slaves, John taught himself to read and write and eventually gained employment as the first black brakeman on the Rock Island Railroad. Jenny took in laundry, cared for their four children and graciously opened their home at 745 North Pine Street every summer to many visiting family members, friends, and recent African American migrants to Colorado Springs.

According to early residents, race relations in the Pikes Peak Region were fluid during the latter part of the nineteenth century. Up until around 1900-1910, African Americans were more readily accepted by their neighbors as businessmen, miners, tradesmen, ranchers and farmers. Black-owned businesses were patronized by blacks and whites with little discrimination. However, as the new century turned and white settlers from the south came to the region in larger numbers — relations between blacks and whites grew strained. As a result, African American businesses suffered.

In November 1884 the Antlers Hotel followed a national trend in hotel employment and announced that it was switching to an “all colored” staff in the dining room. Overnight the Antlers hotel became the single largest employer of black men in Colorado Springs. Charles Collins was selected as the new headwaiter and black men also served as porters and bellhops. When a fire devastated the Antlers Hotel in October of 1898, dozens of African American men were thrown out of work. When the new Antlers Hotel reopened in 1901 — an all-white wait staff served guests in the dining room.

According to historian Quintard Taylor, African American churches in the West acted as “...moral and spiritual bases in an underdeveloped urban society.” In addition, they also provided financial support to widows and orphans, cared for the sick, and encouraged the western migration of other African Americans. Churches provided African Americans with intellectual and social opportunities, and often functioned as the center of black life.

As was typical in other western towns, a church was the first permanent institution created by early African American residents in Colorado Springs. In 1872, four brothers: Isaiah, John, Thomas and Oliphant Carter and their families organized what was to become the first African Methodist Episcopal Church in the area.

The integration of athletics and student life at both the secondary and college levels in Colorado Springs took place in fits and starts. Largely, integration depended on what Roosevelt Collins described as individual courage, “It just takes one person. Most times, that is all that it takes. One person to stand up.” In 1935 Collins joined the staff of CC as Athletic Trainer. He was the first African American hired by the college in a non-janitorial position.

The 1905 Colorado College football team was the first integrated collegiate team in the state. During a 1905 football game against the University of Colorado, a Boulder hotel turned away African American players Frederick Roberts and Charles Jackson to stay there. Colorado College coach John R. “Big John” Richards packed up the team and stayed in a Denver hotel. However, dormitories at C.C. were not integrated until 1950 when a student led movement changed the policy.

The failure of Civil War Reconstruction opened the way for a harsh system of discriminatory laws designed to prohibit or severely limit black political, economic and social rights and opportunities. The term Jim Crow refers to the state and local laws generally enacted between 1876 and 1965 which mandated de jure (in law) racial segregation in all public facilities. De jure segregation primarily took place in the southern states of the former Confederacy and resulted in economic, educational and social disadvantages for millions of African Americans.

In the landmark 1896 *Plessy vs. Ferguson* case, the United States Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of discriminatory state laws requiring racial segregation in public facilities under the doctrine of “separate but equal.” State-sponsored school segregation was not overturned by the Supreme Court until 1954 in the groundbreaking *Brown v. Board of Education* case which declared segregated schools unconstitutional. Other remaining Jim Crow laws were not overruled until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

By contrast, northern segregation was generally de facto (by practice) with patterns of segregation in housing enforced by realtors, neighborhood associations, bank lending practices, and job discrimination. In Colorado Springs de facto segregation meant that African Americans were denied accommodation at local hotels and restaurants. At George’s Hamburgers on South Tejon Street across

from the Courthouse, blacks could only order food to go. Several residents remember being denied service at the Walgreen's lunch counter or having their food so heavily salted it was inedible.

Early in January 1942, the announcement was made that Camp Carson was to be established south of Colorado Springs. The first buildings were completed by January 31st by over 11,000 civilian construction workers. Following the war, Camp Carson remained an important and active military installation to the relief of local business and community interests who championed its creation. Its name was changed to Fort Carson in 1954.

Camp Carson's impact was felt immediately. For many, the new installation meant job opportunities. The Groves Brothers Fuel and Hauling Company, a black-owned family business received well-paid construction contracts. Additionally, local African Americans were employed in Civil Service jobs on base. As one resident remembered, "...a lot of people were employed at Fort Carson. That was one good thing; it opened up employment that hadn't been in the community before."

However, it also created problems. Housing thousands of troops and their families, some of whom were black — strained the housing market in Colorado Springs. Historically, the black population of Colorado Springs had always remained around 2-3% of the total population. Consequently, blacks generally lived in a variety of neighborhoods but in small clusters as a result of de facto housing discrimination. In 1954, Charles Banks filed an official complaint with Colorado Senator Ed Johnson about the lack of housing available to black Army troops at Fort Carson and their families.

Most historians agree that in addition to boosting our local economy, Ft. Carson has increased racial diversity in our community. While African Americans make up only 4% of Colorado's total population, (2010 Census Data) they comprise 6.3% of the population in Colorado Springs.