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Upcoming 2022 Archive Events

Florence Farmers Market

Location: Pioneer Park, Florence, CO - Corner of Pikes Peak and 3rd Street
June to October Thu: 8:00 AM-1:00 PM

The Archive is hosting a booth at the Florence Farmers Market. Each month features a different topic, with each week focusing on a unique aspect of the topic.

Jun	Front Street, Florence – Genealogy, Buildings, Other Features, Environment
Jul	Rainbow Park – Genealogy, Buildings, Other Features, Environment
Aug	Water/Ditches/Agriculture - Drinking, Ditches, Rights, Today's Water System
Sep	Cemeteries of Florence, Cemetery Inhabitants, Symbolism, Summary
Oct	TBD

Bell Tower Cultural Center Lecture Series

Location: 201 East Second Street, Florence, CO 81226
July through November 2nd Sunday @ 3 p.m.

Jul 10	Walking Tour – Historic Florence Buildings
Aug 14	Quilt Family Tree, Ireland to America
Sep 11	James McCandless, North Carolina to Colorado
Oct 9	McCandless Family in Florence
Nov 13	McCandless Space Walk

Check our website's calendar for more information and additional events:
<https://florencehistoricalarchive.org/events/>

**Congratulations
Millie!**



Chairwoman of the Fremont County Historical Society, Gloria Stultz (left), presented the Doc Little Award to Dr. Mildred Wintz (right)

Dr. Mildred Wintz (FHA Board Member/Archivist) Receives Doc Little Award – March 2022

Excerpt from the Cañon City Daily Record By **OLIVIA JOHNSON** | ojohnson@canoncitydailyrecord.com | PUBLISHED: April 1, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. | UPDATED: April 1, 2022 at 3:56 p.m.

Since 1986, the prestigious “Doc Little Award” has been an annual presentation by the Fremont County Historical Society to a person who has made a significant contribution to the society’s goals. The award exemplifies a person who has promoted the heritage mission and has devoted their time and energy to preservation issues of the county.

The award is named in memory of Wilbur T. Little, the longtime journalist, and historian of Fremont County. He received the name “Doc” after his father because he succeeded his father as a coroner in the 1930s. Doc Little was instrumental in founding the historical society and served as its president.

The gala was fortunate enough to have Little’s son, Jim, in attendance and he had a special gift for this year’s winner.

This year’s winner was Dr. Mildred Wintz. Wintz moved to Fremont County 12 years ago and holds a Doctorate in Education. In the following years, she has been a member of multiple local organizations, such as Fremont County Heritage Commission, Fremont County Historical Society, Florence Historical Archives, Historic Preservation Societies, and sits on the Board of the PCC-Fremont Senior Mini College.

“When you sit down and talk to the person sitting next to you, the stories that come out are just amazing,” Wintz said. “There’s no such thing as an ordinary person.”

Wintz actively looks forward to the re-opening of both the St. Cloud Hotel and the Fremont Bank after undergoing restoration for future generations.

“Heritage just doesn’t stop, it wasn’t just yesterday. It’s very active right now if people realized it,” Wintz said. Wintz was given a special gift from Jim Little, Doc’s son. Jim had been going through some items that had belonged to his father when he’d uncovered an envelope addressed to Doc. In it was a silver coin meant to commemorate Cañon City’s 100th anniversary in 1972, and Jim promptly offered it to Wintz on the city’s 150th anniversary. It was a special moment as the room “awed” in response.

Become an Archive Volunteer

We are always looking for assistance with photography, video production, historical research, social media, tour guides, yellow sheeting and presenters.

Are you interested in learning about volunteer opportunities at the Archive?

Website:

florencehistoricalarchive.org

Email:

florencehistoricalarchive@gmail.com

Hours: 10am to 1pm

Monday, Wednesday,
Thursday, Friday

YELLOW SHEETING, DOCUMENTING THE ARCHIVE

By Melvena Benham

Do you like to read historical information? If you do, one of the most important jobs in an archive is just that...reading all of the history onto which you can lay your hands. All of the volunteers at the Archive love to read historical information, which makes doing Yellow Sheeting so enjoyable and leads to further research!

Yellow Sheeting is our way of recording each separate item that is brought into the Archive. The Yellow Sheet is a hand written document. We start with a series of numbers that represent each individual item. The first number represents the year that item was received. The next number represents the collection that it goes into and enhances. The collection may be a personal or family collection such as a diary, poetry, photographs, obituaries or letters, or may represent a whole series of newspapers such as the "Florence Citizen", or business records from a local business like the Rialto or Chamber of Commerce, or information regarding coal mines, oil wells, gold, cement, or agriculture. The next number tells you where this new item is located in its special collection. Then we give a brief description of the item.

Once the Yellow Sheets are filled up, they are passed to our wonderful typist to be entered into our data base on the Cloud, where this information is easily accessible by our volunteers as they assist the researchers, genealogists, or school children that contact us via the internet or in person.

Our original collection was started by Carol and John Fox a little over 50 years ago. Carol had sorted the information into boxes based on topic and stored this information in her basement, or in an area they called "the garage". In 2012, Mildred Wintz, Dorothy Cool, and Martie La Cass started the archival work of Yellow Sheeting Carol's large collection. They would meet on Tuesday mornings in Carol's basement and read history, and record what they read on the Yellow Sheets. They had a great time sharing with each other the historical gems as they discovered them. Melvena Benham joined the group in the basement when she moved into the house across the street from Carol in 2014.

In 2015, with their advanced age and increasing health issues, Carol decided that she could no longer care for her collection and turned it over to the above mentioned ladies. Since that time the Collection has grown in size as additional Collections have been donated to the Archive. Some of the Collections that came in are Archival Assists. This is a system, where the original owner retains control of their collection, and with the assistance of the Archive Staff, they are able to organize and Yellow Sheet their Collection. One of the Archival Assists is the Territorial Daughters, Southern Colorado Chapter.

The two things that an Archive needs most is new material and volunteers to read and Yellow Sheet the new information. The reading of the material has led us to do presentations at the Senior Mini College in Cañon City and at the Bell Tower in Florence. As we come across new information on our chosen topic, that information is added to the Archive. If you are interested in reading about history, contact us and become a volunteer.

Board Member Spotlight

Dorothy Cool

The Oregon Trail passed just a few miles from where I was born and raised on a small farm in Western Nebraska. Millions of early pioneers had moved to the West along the trail John C. Fremont and Kit Carson laid out for them. Then during the 1870s, trains became the best mode to travel and those old trails were abandoned. That was some seventy years before I was born so the trials and troubles of those people were long ago stories.

However, my Grandma would tell us kids about how she and her sisters used to go out to where the old Oregon Trail had been, and they would hunt for the furniture those pioneers had abandoned along the way. Nice furniture, she said, too heavy to continue dragging behind their travel-weary teams of mules or oxen. She told us that in her younger years treasures were strewn all along the path. I would sit in amazement as she talked. How the gigantic (in my young eyes) high boy dresser in her bedroom was a treasure she and her sisters had rescued from the elements along that old trail. She told of friends finding pianos that were slightly weathered from sitting years outside in the dry desert air of the sand hills of Western Nebraska.

The dearest friend of my childhood years was a girl named Carol Bird. Carol was only a year older than me and she was our nearest neighbor. Living about half a mile north of our place on another farm with her best friend Patsy. Patsy was a huge Clydesdale horse who was thoroughly enjoying her retirement on the Bird family farm. She was all that was left of a team of two matching Clydesdale horses who'd spent their younger years pulling farm machinery over the Nebraska farm land in early days. Whatever happened to Patsy's partner we never knew.

Carol and Patsy would come to our yard on a Saturday morning and we, the five Cool kids, would be awaiting in fear and anticipation. We'd first made some trial runs that'd worked out pretty well so we were ready to go on adventures. We'd load up. Carol, owner of the horse, got to place us. She'd sit almost on Patsy's neck, I (Dorothy) was next (being friends) then Bina then Dinah then Darrel then four year old Steve, over the rear end. Making six of us on board, and we were off, on that huge horse!

The landscape of Western Nebraska is rolling hills, with a lot of cut banks. We were always looking for treasures left by the pioneers but arrowheads would make us ecstatic. Patsy would obey Carol in almost all commands. However, she was retired and she refused to run! Her hoofs were huge, as big as a dinner platter, but she stepped daintily. When she trotted we would all scream, desperately hanging on to each other, and she'd slow down. Occasionally there would be some landscape she would have to climb. We'd all scream and hang on, but Steve, the littlest but toughest one of us would slide off, over her rear end. Don't know how, but she never stepped on him. We'd all pile off to check but he was always okay. I still wonder how she managed never to hurt any of us. Just imagine, six little kids on one giant horse.

Another fond memory I've got was 'going to the library.' In my young eyes I thought we lived miles from town. The Union Pacific railroad tracks were laid just feet from our house. The fellows working on the train must have held their breath in fear and anticipation just to travel past our yard. The Cool kids had lost all fear of that giant passing through a couple times a day. We would occasionally slip between the wheels as it chugged through our yard. Always we all took the short cut, on our way to and from town. Every loaf of bread or quart of milk was purchased with the help of the Union Pacific tracks. We all five of us used it. I would walk down the tracks to go to the library. The trip forward was with an armload of previously read books and the return was a load of checked out books. Every single Zane Grey or pioneer story was read by me. I was hooked on yesterday.

Hope this writing tells how I came to love history. Oh I didn't have time to pursue that love during my working years but the minute I retired it was a different story. I never get enough of reading newspapers and articles about history. Fremont County was where the West began. All the old trappers lived here. When they turned into traders (of the Indians) their lives changed. All thru the 1800's change and growth has been a daily event. Even for me today!

Schaeffer Dam Researched by Dorothy Cool

Beaver Creek was alive with fish, wild grapes, plums, currents, and cherries when the first settlers arrived in this portion of the 'Great American Desert', back in the 1860's. Those people saw large herds of antelope, deer, and other wild animals. Utes roamed freely. It was a land of plenty, and they decided to stay, a settlement was started which soon became the Glendale Stage Stop.

Their farming labors were rewarded by excellent crops. Beaver Creek ran with plenty of pure water. They raised vegetables and took them by wagon into the mining camps of Cripple Creek and Leadville during fall and winter. The old Ute Indian trail in Phantom Canyon became the highway to Cripple Creek before it ever became a railroad for the Florence Cripple Creek Line. Traffic was so congested that it took one farmer half a day to merge in with his wagon load of vegetables. In 1880's - 1890's small water companies were formed and surveys for stream flow and rainfall were optimistic. Six reservoir sites were located. Land was platted into forty-acre tracts, and later ten acres each. Altogether seventy-five miles of concrete pipe was laid for the coming water projects. All the labor was done by about 400 Spaniards. It was a common occurrence for rattlesnakes to crawl into the sections of pipe to warm themselves which frightened the workers beyond measure. These men were paid forty cents a day, without room and board.

By 1908 the pipelines were finished but a late frost that spring killed most of the crops. Many farms were abandoned due to a lack of other income. Within the next few years times got better and the town of Penrose was established. Experiments were conducted to grow sugar beets, fruit trees, wheat, corn, and others. Schaeffer Dam was finished by 1910. During its construction eleven stripped train locomotives were dumped into its base. By 1919 the community was very prosperous, water was plentiful, and farmers made the area the largest fruit growing district in the state.

Then came the eventful year of 1921! The rains began in early May and continued relentlessly. The Schaeffer Reservoir could not stand the pressure of the flood waters. On June 5, 1921, it broke! Water rushed down the valley ripping out every tree, house, and object in its path. The sound of the rushing water was said to be terrifying! Not only Penrose but all the farms and communities downstream were wiped out. The large community of Swallows was swept away. The high-water mark on the Pueblo Depot testifies to what a momentous event it was.

The people all the way downstream were devastated. Spencer Penrose stepped forward with the funds to build another temporary reservoir. Shortly afterward work began on Brush Hollow Reservoir. Today, water storage for Beaver Park comes from Brush Hollow and the Skagway reservoirs; however, a plentiful supply of water is only theoretically possible. Gone are the days of great orchards and bountiful crops. There is barely enough water for domestic use, as recent droughts have proven. Still the climate is ideal; the soil productivity has been tested. We are just waiting for the rains to come 'again'.

THIS WAS PRELIMINARY TO THE FLOOD OF 1921 WHICH DEVASTATED THE AREA.

PICTURES OF THE SCHAEFFER DAM CONSTRUCTION ARE AVAILABLE.
CONTACT RGRM&HC

**“Add Your Voice to
The Archive”**

An Ongoing Family
history project.

**Wednesdays &
Thursdays
10 am ~ 1 pm
at the Archive**

With access to the
extensive research
materials in the archive,
participants are guided
by our talented staff to
record their family
stories and experiences.

The goal is to preserve
local history while telling
stories of their Fremont
County, Colorado area
arrivals.

The project is not only to
add your story to the
Archive's Family
Collection but to capture
and preserve your story
for your descendants.

Your story will be
collected and published
into a booklet format.

For more information:

Call 719-372-1648 or
719-429-4624

**HISTORY IS FOR
EVERYONE!**

The Florence Historical Archive hosted the [Pikes Peak History Coalition](#)'s bi-monthly meeting on May 23, 2022. A continental breakfast was served prior to the Coalition meeting; followed by a tour of the Archive and lunch.



Thank you, to all of our
2022 Business/Patron/Benefactor Members



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